

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ATTACKED; SMEAR CAMPAIGN UNFURLS

Holy Week will be remembered not for religious observances in 2015, but for an assault on religious liberty. It was ignited by social media, and quickly took on a life of its own, bringing in gay activists, left-wing non-profit groups, the media, the entertainment industry, academia, the clergy, and big corporations. The cultural ramifications will be felt for years.

The Catholic League wasted no time coming to the defense of Indiana Governor Mike Pence. On March 26, he signed a law that was based on a federal law passed in 1993, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). Not only had there been no controversy when the federal law was introduced by liberal Democrats, it was signed by President Bill Clinton. Subsequent to that time, 30 states adopted their own RFRA, without a fuss. So what broke?

The 1993 law was passed to rectify a 1990 Supreme Court decision, *Employment Division v. Smith*, that nullified religious exemptions from otherwise valid laws. Under RFRA, the government could not substantially burden religious exercise without compelling justification, and even then it had to be done in the least restrictive way. In 1997, the high court said that RFRA applied only to states that had their own religious liberty acts.

Governor Pence signed the Indiana RFRA because he did not want his state to be without the protections afforded by federal law. What broke this time around is that by 2015 the gay lobby had become more powerful than ever before: it succeeded in convincing many elites that RFRA could be used to discriminate against gays. Never mind that none of these laws say anything about sexual orientation.

No sooner had Governor Pence signed the law when he was attacked by the president of the NCAA. The Indiana-headquartered collegiate sports organization threatened to pull future events from the state because the law allegedly permits discrimination. Bill Donohue immediately wrote a stinging reply (click [here](#)).

The hysteria, dishonesty, and hypocrisy that marked the anti-RFRA campaign was mind-boggling. The critics made it sound as if Christians were going to seek out gays for punishment; they lied about the contents of the bill; and they were downright two-faced in their opposition. The hostility of this campaign forced the bill to be amended.

Regarding the hypocrisy, Apple CEO Tim Cook exploded in rage at the bill, yet he invests heavily in Muslim-run nations that murder gays for being gay. Moreover, it was RFRA's critics who threatened violence—not its supporters (the owners of a pizza store who said they would not service a gay wedding received death threats).

It is a sad day when those who support religious liberty are demonized, especially during Holy Week.

APOLOGY SETTLES ISSUE

It was a bad start but it had a good ending. It was also bizarre.

Jewishbusinessnews.com posted an article in April about anti-Catholic remarks allegedly made by a businessman. Amazingly, the reporter who wrote it made patently anti-Catholic remarks himself. We protested and secured a sincere and extensive apology from the media outlet's president.

According to the accuser, the businessman said, “You don’t really believe Jesus was born to a Virgin Mother, or are you that big of a moron?” He is also accused of saying, “Is it that stupid Ash Wednesday again? You better not come to work with ashes on your head.” The victim sued for \$5 million for harassment that led to a hospitalized panic attack.

Jewishbusinessnews.com wrote about this story, mistaking the virgin birth for Immaculate Conception. Worse, the reporter wrote the following:

“To be fair, generations of Jews have found that story hard to swallow, but, hey, if old man Joseph the carpenter took her word for it, who are we to argue. Still, to us Jews it always sounded like a good recovery line when you start showing. Certainly better than the classic, ‘I fell for it’ folks use in emergency rooms. ‘God put it there’ is much classier.”

Sima Ella, who issued the apology, elicited Donohue to say, “Rarely have I seen a quicker and more sincere apology than this. All is forgiven. It is important that Catholic-Jewish relations remain good, especially these days. Case Closed.”

MARKETS AND MISSILES ARE NOT ENOUGH

William A. Donohue

When I first arrived at The Heritage Foundation in 1987, I was greeted with great skepticism by many who worked there. The D.C. conservative think-tank had chosen me to be in the first “class” of professors who were plucked from academia to spend upwards of a year as a Bradley Resident Scholar; we would

spend time writing and establishing contacts with Washington notables. I was welcomed but only lukewarmly, and that is because I was a sociologist who focused on social and cultural issues.

The reason for the cool reception had to do with what The Heritage Foundation does: it is a serious place for specialists to concentrate on public policy matters and foreign policy issues. There was a place down the block, the Free Congress Foundation, that addressed the issues I pursued. Hence, the question: Why was I chosen to be at Heritage?

I was chosen precisely because some top officials at Heritage wanted to broaden its perspective: they did not want Free Congress to have a monopoly on social issues. (Ed Feulner and the late Paul Weyrich founded Heritage in 1973; there was an amicable split when Weyrich wanted to go beyond the economic and international issues, which explains why he founded Free Congress.)

The bias that I had to overcome came from those whose definition of conservatism did not include social issues. I had just published my first book, *The Politics of the American Civil Liberties Union*, and I was seen as a threat to their limited understanding of conservatism. More than that, they were mostly libertarians, persons whose animus against government was so hostile that it precluded any discussion on the role of the state in promoting traditional values.

To libertarians, and to many conservatives, all that matters are markets and missiles. To be sure, I support a market economy (state-run socialism is a disaster), and I certainly support a strong national defense. But besides markets and missiles, there is a third "M" that they ignore: morality.

Two "M" conservatives suffer from myopia: they do not appreciate the role that morality plays in the making of the good society. To be exact, a market economy depends on

morality: a well-educated workforce and a strong work ethic constitute the social capital that allows for economic growth; it cannot be realized without a vibrant moral order. Citizenship, as Aristotle and Aquinas understood, depends on virtue, which, in turn, is dependent on a vibrant moral order; if citizenship is not nurtured, a nation's people may not want to risk their lives in defense of liberty.

Of course, morality plays a role that transcends its contributions to markets and missiles. Self-destructive behavior and anti-social behavior—drugs and street crime are two quick examples—tear at the social fabric, jeopardizing freedom. A self-governing society, one that seeks to keep the government at bay, is dependent on self-governing individuals; this is not possible without the third “M.”

Morality, of course, is the very stuff of religion. Tocqueville agreed, noting further that religion was the cradle of democracy. Which begs the question: If religion is so indispensable to a free society, why is it under attack?

As you can see from this issue of *Catalyst*, we spent Holy Week this year defending religious liberty. We had to defend it because of the dishonest and malicious effort to paint Christians as anti-gay bigots. It is not a healthy sign when those who reject gay marriage (which up until yesterday was nearly everyone) are called bigots by our elites. It is even worse when the business community turns on us.

The push for gay rights, like virtually all ideological movements, began in the academy. It moved quickly from higher education to the media, the entertainment industry, the publishing world, and to segments of the clergy. Those are the traditional homes where liberal ideas are fermented.

What is different about the gay rights movement—what makes it different from most other social causes—is the extent to which corporate America got on board.

The war on Indiana, for simply entertaining a religious liberty law (which was hardly unique), was unseemly. When corporations from Wal-Mart to Wall Street sign on, it is not a good sign. Not only has our cultural elite abandoned us, so has our economic elite.

We can cave or fight. There is no mythical “third way.” Yes, we need to respect gay rights, but we must do more than respect religious rights—we must trumpet them. The First Amendment guarantees religious rights, but nowhere in the Constitution are gay rights mentioned, making it ludicrous to maintain that in a showdown between these two rights that gay rights should typically prevail. A free society that does not protect gay rights may be defective, but if it does not protect religious rights it is doomed.

Markets and missiles are not enough. We need markets, missiles, and morality. Those who call themselves conservatives but do not want to conserve the traditional values that constitute our Judeo-Christian heritage are more than myopic: they are working against the moral foundations of a free society.

Unless we challenge our elites, including our corporate elites, the prospects for liberty are inauspicious.

The Secularist Assault On America's Moral Consensus

Rick Hinshaw

From the earliest days of their agitation to legalize abortion, America's modern-day secularists made inevitable the

aggressive war on religious freedom they are engaged in today.

From the start, the secularists deployed the weapon of anti-religious – primarily anti-Catholic – bigotry in advancing the pro-abortion agenda, portraying their opponents as narrowly sectarian religious zealots trying to “impose their morality” on our pluralist society.

The tactic served several useful purposes.

It enabled them to divert attention from the scientific and medical certainty – “which everyone really knows,” as the pro-abortion California Medical Association publicly acknowledged at the time – “that life begins at conception,” and that every abortion takes a human life; and to instead transform opposition to abortion into a religious issue.

And that, in turn, allowed them to accuse the Catholic Church of violating America’s “constitutional separation of church and state” in order to impose Vatican-dictated religious teachings upon all Americans.

And it permitted them to cast themselves as defenders of freedom of choice, advocates of a “live and let live” approach that would let Americans conduct themselves according to the dictates of their own conscience.

As the ensuing years have made clear, however, “freedom of choice” was never their real goal. They are every bit as determined to impose *their* secular agenda – their secular religion, as some would describe it – on our pluralist society as they claim people of faith are determined to impose our religious beliefs when we stand up for the moral consensus that had previously guided this nation for most of its history.

And in truth, they have to be.

For as Kenneth Grasso, professor of political science at Texas

State University, explains in an essay titled, "From Articles of Peace to Kulturkampf: Catholicism, the HHS Mandate, and the Problem of Religious Pluralism in America," our nation's ability to survive and flourish as a pluralist democracy has depended on our having been able to arrive at a "moral consensus" despite religious differences. This has worked, Grasso explains, because historically, "the diverse religions of America" have "shared a common Judeo-Christian tradition," and "taught substantially the same moral code."

"The type of natural law thinking that informed early American political culture saw the moral truths embodied in the natural law as largely congruent with traditional Judeo-Christian morality," Grasso writes; and thus America's "multitude" of religious sects was able to develop "traditional articles of peace" built on a shared moral consensus.

Grasso's essay is contained in *The Crisis of Religious Liberty: Reflections from Law, History, and Catholic Social Thought*, a collection of essays by prominent Catholic scholars edited by Stephen M. Krason, director of the political science program at Franciscan University of Steubenville and cofounder and president of the Society of Catholic Social Scientists.

It is this shared moral consensus—and its natural law roots—that is under attack by modern day secularists. Their attack is not – and cannot be—limited simply to specific issues, like abortion and same sex "marriage." For as Anne Hendershott writes in the foreword to the same book, "There cannot be common ground on issues like abortion or same sex marriage." The sacredness of pre-born human life and the integrity of authentic marriage – reflected for more than 200 years in the laws of every state in the union –are central to that moral consensus and its natural law foundations; and thus, those laws cannot be changed without dismantling that moral consensus.

The secularists have endeavored to do so, and "the result,"

writes Grasso, “is the culture war that today wracks the American polity – a culture war that finds its most vivid expression in the ongoing conflicts over abortion, gay marriage and religion’s place in public life – pitting the proponents of the traditional forms of biblical theism and natural law thinking against the proponents of progressivism.”

As we have seen, for the secularists the culture war has entailed scapegoating religious institutions and people of faith – primarily the Catholic Church, for as Hendershott writes, “in the current culture wars, the Church is viewed as the major barrier to full acceptance of a woman’s right to choose abortion throughout her pregnancy or a same-sex couple’s right to marriage.”

It is not clear that this strategy ever really had its desired effect upon the American people. After all, unrestricted abortion was legalized nationwide not by the will of the people, but by the *diktat* of an unelected U.S. Supreme Court.

But the strategy did have its desired effect upon those who overrode the will of the people, as a perusal of Justice Harry Blackmun’s majority opinion in *Roe* makes clear.

In any event, having found it so successful in achieving their aims with abortion, the secularists have employed this strategy repeatedly, and over the years escalated it considerably. They have moved beyond the social pressure and cultural isolation that they employed during the early years of the abortion debate to try to deprive pro-life voices of legitimate standing in the public square, to now using the coercive powers of government to *silence* people of faith and religious institutions – among other methods, using dubious “hate speech” laws to *criminalize* speech defending traditional marriage – and to *force* us to abandon the moral teachings of our faith and to *actively participate* in that which we hold to be immoral.

This first took the form of conditioning access to public resources on adherence to the secularist agenda. During the welfare reform debate of the mid-1990s, George Weigel wrote that “The current welfare system is managed by those same folks who have brought you Official Secularism as America’s quasi-establishment of religion. In city after city, and in order to qualify for federal funding, church-based agencies have had to agree not to do anything terribly ‘religious’ in their work with the poor.”

In a more recent example, the Obama Administration withdrew federal funding from a U.S. Bishops anti-human trafficking program – even as the Administration acknowledged that it was one of the most effective of such programs – because the bishops did not include abortion and contraceptive “services” for victims of human trafficking.

But this effort still left religious entities the option of declining federal funds in order to continue conducting their ministries in accord with their religious teachings. So now the secularists have moved to outright government coercion – under penalty of law – to force religious compliance with directives that offend against their moral teachings.

As we know, the Obama Administration’s Health and Human Services mandate *requires* faith-based entities to provide “health” insurance for their employees that includes abortions, contraceptives, and sterilization.

And in state after state, Catholic adoption and foster care agencies are being forced, by law, to either place children with same sex or unmarried heterosexual couples, in violation of the Church’s teachings on marriage, or abandon their adoption and foster care services, and their moral commitment to finding homes for displaced children.

People of faith who own businesses are being told they have no discretion to decline to provide “services” that violate their

religious beliefs. As we have seen play out most recently in Indiana, powerful secularized corporate interests are putting their considerable economic weight behind efforts to force states to legally require that caterers, florists, bakeries, and other family-owned businesses participate in same-sex wedding ceremonies, regardless of their religious convictions.

And of course, making all this more insidious – if that is possible – the Obama Administration, under the guise of providing “conscience exemptions” from its HHS contraceptive-abortionifacient mandate, has taken upon itself the power to define which of a Church’s ministries are legitimately part of its religious mission. It has thus decreed that Catholic health care agencies, Catholic Charities, and Catholic higher education institutes are *not* part of the Church’s religious mission – regardless of what Church teaching and tradition, let alone the Gospel of Christ, tell us.

That the secularists are so determined, now that they have achieved so much of their agenda, to force people and institutions of faith to actively participate in that agenda, confirms that they have never really been about “freedom of choice” – that they are, as I said earlier, every bit as determined to impose *their* secular agenda on our pluralist society as they claim people of faith are to impose our religious beliefs when we stand up for our nation’s long-held moral consensus.

The secularists are not satisfied simply to have torn down the moral standards that have guided our culture and informed our laws. They must also bring people of faith – and especially the Catholic Church – to heel, forcing us to *participate* in same sex marriage, in placing children for adoption with same sex or unmarried couples, in the destruction of pre-born life.

Why?

Part of it is strategic. If they can force people and

institutions of faith to be actively involved in abortions, or same sex weddings, or other anti-life or anti-family policies, how do we credibly maintain public opposition to those practices? Our voices are effectively discredited, and the culture war is over.

I would suggest that it also has something to do with the natural law. Recall how King Henry VIII, when he wanted a divorce that the Church could not grant, simply named himself head of the Church of England, granted himself the divorce, and married the second of his six wives. Thomas More did not rebuke the King. He simply maintained his silence, unable to publicly assent to the marriage. But, as Randy Lee, professor of law at Widener University, writes in Krason's book, "that didn't seem like enough to Henry. ... incrementally, like water torture, drop by drop, Henry took from Thomas More his office, then his status, then his wealth, then his friends, then his personal liberty, then his family, and ultimately his life."

Why? Why was Henry so obsessed with forcing Thomas More to assent to his divorce and remarriage? I would submit that it was because he was himself terribly conflicted, knowing deep within himself that what he had done was wrong. But if he could get Thomas More, a prominent Catholic of saintly virtue and impeccable integrity, to go along with the marriage, perhaps it could ease his conscience.

Similarly, I submit, while our modern day secularists deny and ridicule the concept of a natural law, they cannot escape it – it is imprinted by God on every human heart. Somewhere, deep within, there is a nagging discomfort – within individuals and within our secularist nation as a whole – a discomfort they do not understand, but cannot escape. But if they can force people of faith – and especially the Catholic Church, the foremost defender of the timeless moral teachings on which our nation was founded – to go along, maybe they can free themselves of the nagging doubts which they will not acknowledge but cannot escape.

Rick Hinshaw is editor of *The Long Island Catholic* magazine.

NCAA OPPOSES RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Below is a copy of a letter written by Bill Donohue to NCAA president Mark Emmert commenting on legislation signed on March 26 by Indiana Governor Mike Pence that affirms religious liberty.

March 27, 2015

Mr. Mark Emmert
President
National Collegiate Athletic Association
700 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6222

Dear Mr. Emmert:

I read with interest your concerns about the welfare of student-athletes who will compete in Indianapolis over next week's Final Four weekend. Your concerns are not noble—they are demagogic.

After Indiana Governor Mike Pence signed the state Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) yesterday, you said that you were concerned "how this legislation could affect our student-athletes and employees. We will work diligently to assure student-athletes competing in, and visitors attending, next week's Men's Final Four in Indianapolis are not impacted negatively by this bill."

Why the high alert? Do you expect that Christians will take to

the street looking for homosexuals to taunt and assault simply because the religious liberties of store owners have been affirmed? If that is not what you mean, then be explicit: What kind of negative impact will you be looking to guard against?

When Governor Pence signed this law, he joined 30 states, and the federal government, in securing religious-liberty protections based on some version of RFRA. You know perfectly well that student-athletes who have competed in these states have *never* had their rights abridged because of such legislation. If anything, their rights have been expanded. So to say that things might be different in Indianapolis is nothing less than an invidious scare tactic. It also smacks of hostility to religion.

Governor Pence signed the state RFRA because without it, the federal law, which was passed in 1993, would not apply to Indiana (the U.S. Supreme Court stipulated in 1997 that it only applied to states that had adopted their own RFRA). Should the people of Indiana be denied the same coverage that affords most Americans? After all, 19 states have their own RFRA and another 11 have similar laws.

The federal RFRA, upon which all state variations are based, was sponsored by Rep. Nancy Pelosi in the House. Is she the enemy of gays? Sen. Edward Kennedy sponsored it in the Senate. Was he anti-gay? President Bill Clinton signed it. Did he seek to create a hostile environment for gays? Is President Barack Obama also an anti-gay bigot? He voted in favor of the Illinois RFRA when he was in the state senate.

Is there any evidence that RFRA has subsequently fostered a negative milieu for gays, or anyone else? If so, please share it with the rest of us. It is hardly controversial to say that what these aforementioned Democrats did was to merely affirm our First Amendment right to religious liberty. That is what Governor Pence is doing now.

Have you actually read RFRA? Or are you relying solely on politically correct, and factually bogus, interpretations? For example, nowhere in the federal legislation, or in any of the state versions, is there any mention of sexual orientation. RFRA simply ensures that the government cannot “substantially burden” a person’s exercise of religious liberty unless there is a “compelling government interest,” and that it is the “least restrictive means” available. It doesn’t create a hostile environment for anyone.

When Governor Pence signed this law, he stressed that it does not apply to disputes between private parties unless there is some government involvement. He is correct. So much for the hype about business owners running roughshod over an individual’s constitutional rights.

I want to make it clear that I am not writing to you at the behest of Governor Pence. I have never met, nor had any contact with, either him or anyone on his staff. Furthermore, I am neither a Republican or a Democrat. I am the president of the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization, and as such I am concerned about real-life threats to religious liberty (e.g, the Health and Human Services mandate of the Affordable Care Act that would force Catholic non-profit entities to fund abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization in their health plans). It is because of such draconian bills that states are adopting RFRA protections. They are not doing so as a pretext to abridge anyone’s rights.

It would be such a relief to learn that you are reconsidering your threat to pull future NCAA events from Indianapolis. But if you do not reverse your position, then you have a moral obligation to raze all of the lavish buildings that comprise the NCAA headquarters in Indianapolis and set up shop someplace else. This would include bulldozing your brand new 130,000 square-foot addition to the NCAA’s national office in White River State Park. Don’t forget to level the Hall of Champions as well.

Surely you could set up shop in one of the minority of states that do not support RFRA. Were you to stay put, someone might think you are a phony, among other things.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President

HYSTERIA AND DUPLICITY OVER INDIANA LAW

The federal RFRA was passed in 1993, and since that time thirty states have adopted their own RFRA, or a variation of it. These laws have not engendered a single act of discrimination against any American, yet when Indiana Governor Mike Pence signed his own state's law protecting religious liberty, critics went berserk.

"Bill Allows Businesses to Reject Gay Customers" said CNN. ABC-host George Stephanopoulous sounded the same alarms, and pointedly refused to ask Pence about the law's positive impact on religious liberty. Similarly, at a recent press conference, Indiana's top two lawmakers were asked many questions about gays, but not religious rights.

Former NBA star Charles Barkley has urged a boycott of Indiana. GenCon, the gaming company, has threatened to leave Indiana, and Angie's List has put its planned campus expansion project in the state on ice. The mayors of Seattle and San Francisco have banned city travel to Indiana.

Top hysteria prizes go to Mike Lupica of the New York *Daily*

News, actor Ashton Kutcher, and Apple CEO Tim Cook. Lupica argued that it was as important to oppose this law as it was to fight for the right of women to abort their babies. Kutcher wondered whether Jews may now be banned from Indiana. And Cook compared the religious liberty law to “Whites Only” signs during Jim Crow.

Top duplicity prizes go to Senator Chuck Schumer and Hillary Clinton. Schumer slammed the Indiana RFRA law, but in 1993 he voted in favor of the federal RFRA, warning that unless it were passed, “the practice of using sacramental wine, wearing a yarmulke, kosher slaughter and many other religious practices all could be jeopardized.” Clinton’s husband signed RFRA into law.

It’s not clear what is worse—the demagoguery or the phoniness.

POLL DISTORTS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ISSUE

In January, an AP-GfK poll found that 57 percent agreed that “wedding-related businesses with religious objections should be allowed to refuse service to same-sex couples.” An April Reuters/Ipsos poll was released that tapped the following questions:

“Businesses should not be allowed to discriminate (by refusing services or a job) because of their religious beliefs.” 59 percent agreed and 24 percent disagreed.

“Businesses should have the right not to hire certain people or groups based on the employer’s religious beliefs.” 56 percent disagreed and 26 percent agreed.

“Businesses should have the right to refuse services to certain people or groups based on religious beliefs.” 54 percent disagreed and 28 percent agreed.

In its news story, Reuters said, “Most Americans Side with Gays in Religious Freedom Disputes.” This is dishonest.

The AP poll was itself biased: it only asked if businesses could refuse to service a gay wedding. Had it also asked if the government should force business owners who have religious objections to gay marriage to service a gay wedding, the majority siding with business owners would have been even higher than 57 percent.

The Reuters poll is much worse: not only are the questions similarly front-loaded against business owners, they do not mention gay marriage, never mind servicing a gay wedding. Moreover, questions about hiring are entirely different; they only muddy the real issue even further.

There are three different issues here, not one: serving a gay person; hiring a gay person; and servicing a gay wedding. The latter is not identical to the other two, and it alone is being contested by people of faith. The distortion by Reuters is deliberate and detestable.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION IS NOT ANALOGOUS TO RACE

The conventional wisdom says that there is no difference between sexual orientation and other demographic characteristics. The conventional wisdom is wrong.

Sexual orientation is profoundly unlike such categories as race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, and religion. Why? Because unlike the traditional social classifications, sexual orientation has a teleology, or end point.

Race, for example, is not oriented toward anything; it has no object. But sexual orientation has a teleological trajectory: it is defined by the object of the orientation, which is either heterosexuality or homosexuality. Importantly, from time immemorial, sexuality has been seen in value-laden terms, and not just in the West. For example, incest has been declared taboo in every society in the history of the world. Moreover, all the world's religions either find homosexuality to be morally objectionable or do not pass judgment on it. None accept it.

It is therefore inappropriate to maintain that sexual orientation is analogous to race. Does this mean that gays should not be protected in law from being discriminated against in public accommodations? No. Indeed, they should be protected, as *individuals*. That is why it should be illegal not to serve a gay person in a restaurant. However, when a restaurant owner who has religious objections to gay marriage refuses to service a gay wedding (assuming he has no problem serving gay individuals), he is not objecting to the individuals, but to the meaning of the wedding. His rights should be protected.

In other words, sexual orientation ineluctably carries behavioral significance. To be exact, we are talking about conduct, and as such it is subject to moral evaluation. That is why it is bogus to compare sexual orientation to race; it's apples and oranges. For this reason, the conventional wisdom needs to be revised.

“LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME” CUOMO RIPS INDIANA

A couple of weeks ago, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo issued an edict banning non-essential state funded or state sponsored travel to Indiana. It is entirely fitting that a governor who previously told Catholic human rights activists to get out of New York would elect to punish the people of Indiana because they want to strengthen their religious rights.

Just last year, Cuomo said that those who defend the civil rights of unborn boys and girls were “extremists” who “have no place in the state of New York.” Perched on his self-created mantle of virtue, our Imperial Governor decided who belongs and who does not. He did not say how he expects to carry out his Diaspora.

Cuomo’s commitment to inclusion obviously stops when it comes to Catholic human rights activists in New York, and now he has extended his punitive reach to the mid-West. Thus has he added to his “Love Me or Leave Me” legacy.

INDIANA PIZZERIA SAYS NO TO GAY WEDDINGS

Recently, the owners of Memories Pizza in Walkerton, Indiana had to close their doors for eight days after receiving a

hostile reaction for agreeing with the Indiana religious liberty law. The O'Connor family has owned the pizzeria for nine years, and said it would not provide pizzas for a gay wedding. "We're not discriminating against anyone," explains Crystal O'Connor, "that's just our belief and anyone has the right to believe in anything."

Ms. O'Connor would have no ground to stand on, either morally or legally, were she to say that her store will not serve gays. But she has not said that. In fact, she has explicitly said she would never refuse gays. What she has said is that if her family were to service a gay *wedding*, it would have to violate its sincerely held religious convictions.

The O'Connor case brings into stark relief the difference between discriminating against a person and servicing an event. The difference is even more acute when the event carries religious significance.

Not only has Memories Pizza received threatening phone calls, but anti-Christian comments and pictures of nude men have also been sent to the owners. We need to call this for what it is—cultural fascism. It should be condemned by everyone, most especially by those who have voiced their objections to the store owners. There are serious issues at stake, and no one should be demonized for his position.

Refusing to serve a gay person in a public accommodation is morally and legally indefensible, but it is equally indefensible to mandate that the owners of a private business must violate their sincerely held religious convictions by acceding to a request to service a gay wedding. Individuals have rights, and this includes the right not to be coerced into affirming *causes*, as opposed to servicing individuals, that they find morally objectionable.

The American people can split the difference, even if our elites cannot. In an AP-GfK poll released in January,

respondents were asked the following: "In states where same-sex couples can be married legally, do you think that wedding-related businesses with religious objections should be allowed to refuse service to same-sex couples, or not?" The result: 57 percent said, "Yes, they should be allowed to refuse service"; 39 percent disagreed, and 4 percent refused to answer.

Notice how the question was worded: it asked if it was acceptable "to refuse service." Here is another way to get at this issue: "In states where same-sex couples can be married legally, do you think that wedding-related businesses with religious objections should be forced to service same-sex couples, or not?" Worded this way, it is a sure bet that even more respondents would take the side of the businesses.