

CHINA AND NICARAGUA DESTROYING CATHOLICISM

Virtually every privately funded and publicly funded report on Christian persecution finds that communist and Muslim-run nations are the worst offenders. Conditions in the Middle East remain dire, and communist nations such as North Korea are just as vicious, but what is currently happening in China and Nicaragua commands our immediate attention.

North Korea makes plain that Christians have no rights, but, as Thomas D. Williams explains in his new book, *The Coming Christian Persecution*, matters are more insidious in China. It “offers a veneer of religious freedom but only on the communist party’s terms, and the state employs advanced surveillance methods to ensure that the content of Christian worship coheres with the ideology of Maoist socialism. Children under the age of 18 are not allowed in church for any reason.”

Williams does not exaggerate. They have a “Smart Religion” app that requires the faithful to register with the government as a condition of attending services. In other words, church attendance is not a private affair—it is the business of the communist government. Surveillance is ubiquitous.

According to China watcher Gordon Chang, the government is “moving in the direction where there will be no religious ceremonies or services ever permitted in China, because Beijing does not want religion in any place in China, even if it’s controlled religion.”

President Xi, the Chinese dictator, has instituted “Sinicization,” a policy where the government seeks to bring religious entities under his control, mandating eventual assimilation under the communist party’s rule. Those who are

seen as resisting this forced compliance are punished. In fact, Christians are told they must display “enthusiasm, fervor and love for the party.” They must abide by what the Communist Party mandates, “Love the Party, Love the Country, Love Socialism.”

Xi chose to single out Cardinal Joseph Zen, the 91-year old former archbishop of Hong Kong, for a public display of his iron rule. Zen was arrested last year on trumped up charges of “colluding with foreign powers.” Zen’s layman counterpart in Hong Kong, Jimmy Lai, was sentenced to jail before Christmas last year for challenging the increasingly tyrannical rule; it is a reflection of Hong Kong’s subordinate status vis-à-vis China.

Nicaraguan dictator Daniel Ortega has been cracking down on the Catholic Church for the past five years. Priests have been arrested, missionaries expelled, and Catholic institutions have been shut down. A human rights organization, Nicaraguan Nunca Más, estimates that dozens of religious leaders have fled since 2018, and that Church personnel have been deported. In 2019, the regime blocked entry of international donations.

In February Bishop Roland Álvarez was sentenced to 26 years in prison and stripped of his citizenship. He was falsely charged with treason and undermining the regime. Pope Francis blasted his imprisonment, comparing what Ortega did to the Bolsheviks in 1917 and Hitler in the 1930s. In response, Ortega closed two Catholic universities and Caritas Nicaragua, the Church’s aid organization. More important, Nicaragua has recently suspended relations with the Holy See, and on March 18 the Vatican’s diplomatic headquarters in Nicaragua was forced to close.

All totalitarian regimes fear internal threats to their power. Old-fashioned authoritarian regimes, such as Franco in Spain or the Czars in Russia, didn’t care what anyone believed in, just so long as they were in control. They are examples of

political dictatorships. Totalitarian regimes are political, economic, social and cultural dictatorships, and as such they are very much concerned about what its people think. Thought control is their signature.

Religion and the family stand in the way of totalitarian rule, and that is why they must be crushed. China and Nicaragua are both nervous about Christianity, and Catholicism, in particular, because they divert allegiance of the people away from the government. Hence, the move to force fidelity to the state.

For reasons not completely understood, Pope Francis has taken a hardline stance against Nicaragua and a soft stance against China. Catholics living in both countries deserve the strongest possible support from every nation-state, and that includes the Holy See.

STOP THE VIOLENCE AGAINST CATHOLICS

During the Easter season, it is a good time to remind ourselves of the degree to which Catholics are the targets of violent extremists.

The U.S. State Department recently released its annual report on religious violence around the world. It found that “80% of the world’s population cannot practice their faith without serious restrictions or risk.” It listed 12 nations as the worst offenders. We researched who controls them and who their principal victims are. They are listed in alphabetical order.

- Burma. Run by Buddhists, Christians and Muslims are the

targets.

- China. Run by the Communist Party, Christians, especially Catholics, and Muslims, are the targets.
- Cuba. Run by the Communist Party, Catholics are the target.
- Eritrea. Run by the Communist Party, Christians and Muslims are the targets.
- Iran. Run by Muslims, all non-Islamic religions are the targets.
- North Korea. Run by the Communist Party, all religions are the targets.
- Nicaragua. Run by the Communist Party, Catholics are the target.
- Pakistan. Run by Muslims, Christians and Hindus are the targets.
- Russia. Run by an ex-KGB agent, Jehovah's Witnesses and evangelicals are the targets.
- Saudi Arabia. Run by Muslims, all non-Islamic religions are the targets.
- Tajikistan. Run by Muslims, all non-Islamic religions are the targets.
- Turkmenistan. Run by Muslims, all non-Islamic religions are the targets.

The Observatory for the Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians in Europe recently documented more than 500 anti-Christian hate crimes, including four homicides, in 2021; the most vicious attacks were against Catholics. In addition to murder, there were approximately 300 acts of property damage. There were about 80 cases of theft, ranging from religious objects to consecrated hosts.

A new report from Canada showed that hate crimes against Catholics rose 260 percent in 2021; they were the most targeted of any religious group in the country.

In the United States, Catholic churches were targeted over 300 times since 2020. Recently, a Catholic church in Nebraska was ransacked.

Pro-abortion protesters have resorted to violence in several cities, and in the wake of the transgender mass killer in Nashville, many in that community have made violent threats against those who are critical of their radical agenda. The urban terrorist group, Antifa, is among the worst of the pro-abortion thugs.

In 1989, when St. Patrick's Cathedral was invaded by gay terrorists from ACT-UP—they interrupted Mass and spat the Eucharist on the floor—Fr. Benedict Groeschel tried to calm down Cardinal John O'Connor by telling him it is a backhanded compliment that we Catholics were chosen for violence. The enemy knows who stands the strongest against them.

Much the same could be said today, though that should not be read as a plea for passivity. The violence against Catholics must end, whether it is coming from religious or secular extremists.

TWO TIERS OF JUSTICE

It has become increasingly obvious that there are two tiers of justice in the United States: one for those favored by the ruling class; and one for those whom the ruling class despises. Take, for instance, what is going on in the state of Washington.

On March 6, Bill Donohue wrote to Dr. Alan Spicciati, Superintendent of the Auburn School District in Washington about a bigoted remark made by a teacher, Kelly Love; she teaches at Auburn School District 408.

The letter Donohue received on March 21 from Vicki Alonzo, Director of Communications, said that Love's remarks (a tweet) represented her own "personal opinion." Moreover, she said,

“Auburn School District staff members do not lose their First Amendment rights to free speech as a public employee.” Not a word was said about Love’s hate speech.

For the record, Love tweeted about another teacher’s interest in alerting parents to some school policies that were being kept from them. In reply, she said, “I cannot disagree with this more. So many students are not safe in this nation from their Christo-fascist parents.”

In Donohue’s letter to Dr. Spicciati, he said, “Such a sweeping anti-Christian remark runs counter to the Auburn School District’s policy on equity.” He then quoted from it, stating that “Love violated these tenets.” asked what he was going to do about this. Now we know—nothing.

Consequently, Donohue wrote to Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Schools for the state of Washington. He noted that there are three problems with the response he received from the Auburn School District.

First, if Love had used an obscenity in a tweet discussing sports, that would be inconsequential. But her bigoted remark was aimed at the majority of Americans, and she no doubt has many Christian students in her classroom. How can she be expected to treat them fairly?

Second, there is the question of the Auburn School District’s equity policy. It is meaningless unless it is enforced.

“Students are affirmed in their cultural connections.” “Teachers are personally inviting.” It seems plain that Love cannot measure up to these equity standards. If she had made a racist remark against African Americans, are we to understand there would be no consequences?

Third, it is simply not true to say that public employees in Washington can say whatever they want. Not when it crosses the line.

In January 2020, it was reported by local media that Rafaela Kayryakoff, a first-grade teacher at Meridian Elementary School in Kent, tweeted that Mexicans were one of the “ridiculous immature vile cruel and extremely evil cultures that need to be genocided!” She also tweeted that “Jews dont [sic] belong in Christian countries what do they do not understand?” She also slandered Mormons.

After her principal learned of her tweets, Kayryakoff received a letter of warning from the district. She was accused of violating its equity policy, among other things. She was then required to complete an online training module about implicit bias. She was also sent to another school district. Finally, she resigned.

In 2021, Capt. Todd Miller, who served in the King County Sheriff’s Department, was suspended without pay for making a racist remark on Facebook. That same year, a detective, Michael Brown, was *fired* for posting a series of racist comments on Facebook.

All three of these state employees were sanctioned, in one way or another, for their bigoted statements. Yet absolutely nothing has been done about Kelly Love’s anti-Christian remark. This kind of duplicity is indefensible. Is there one standard for anti-racial and ethnic remarks, and another for anti-religious remarks?

Donohue asked Reykdal two questions. “Are you, too, convinced that Love’s case is purely a matter of free speech? If so, do you think the authorities erred in sanctioning the three cases I just cited?”

We made sure that a whole lot of people in senior positions in Washington knew about Donohue’s letter. We also asked our list of email subscribers to contact Reykdal.

We copied 81 notables:

- 14 staff members in the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- 7 staff members in Gov. Jay Inslee's office
- 2 law enforcement officials
- 9 Cabinet Members
- 16 State Representatives
- 8 State Senators
- 2 Directors of the Auburn School Board
- 5 members of the Auburn School Board
- 1 teacher
- 13 newspaper editors
- 2 Catholic dioceses
- 2 members of the state Catholic Conference

Knowing how protective the teachers' unions are of their own, we don't expect much to come of this. But the guilty teacher, Love, now has our complaint in her file. It is not likely she will go down this road again.

SOROS IS GUILTY AS CHARGED

George Soros has been one of the most prominent philanthropists serving the radical left-wing agenda for decades. Everyone knows it, yet there is a coordinated effort of late to bail him out, saying his critics are "anti-Semites," looking for a "boogeyman." His allies are particularly miffed about reports that Soros is funding criminal-friendly district attorneys across the nation.

Here's a recent sampling of efforts to brand Soros' critics as anti-Semitic. In the last several weeks, the following news stories were written with that objective in mind.

- "Soros...has been a frequent boogeyman for Republicans. In

recent years, they have often used the phrase 'Soros-backed' to attack Democratic candidates. Some have said this line of attack is an antisemitic dog whistle..." Josh Israel, americanindependent, March 22

- "This is how anti-semitism takes root and spreads." Teacher's union chief Randi Weingarten (quoted in above story)
- "Democrats and outside experts have often described the attacks on Soros, who is Jewish, and the groups that received donations from the billionaire, as antisemitic." cnbc, March 22.
- "Scapegoating Soros, who is Hungarian and Jewish, also perpetuates deep-rooted false ideas about Jewish people and immigrants to underscore the conspiracy theory that he is a shadowy villain orchestrating world events." AP International, March 22.
- "Mr. Soros...has been for years a boogeyman on the right, confronting attacks that portray him as a 'globalist' mastermind and that often veer into antisemitic tropes." New York Times, March 24.
- "It's a screaming antisemitic dog whistle." Rabbi Doug Alpert, Kansas City Star, March 31.
- "[Trump] is using anti-Jewish stereotypes and historical hatred to raise money." USA Today Online, April 1.
- "Moreover, the repeated mention of Soros plays into antisemitic conspiracy theories..." Washington Post, April 1.
- "[Rashad] Robinson also called the Soros attacks antisemitic..." Mediaite, April 1.
- "There is a centuries old antisemitic trope Erin about the sinister Jewish puppet master...and attacks on Soros are often either explicitly antisemitic attacks or dog whistle attacks, involving that trope." Daniel Dale, CNN reporter (quoted in above story).
- "The increasing mainstream flirtation with antisemitic stereotypes and rhetoric has made the subject of attacks on Soros harder and harder to deny." vox.com, April 3.

- “This has nothing to do with Soros...it has everything to do with a very old, antisemitic view that even though Jews are small in number, they really control everything.” Brandeis professor Jonathan Sarna. Washington Post, April 3.
- “He’s Jewish, which brings with it all sorts of connotations if one wants to play on anti-Semitism.” Emily Tamkin, NPR, April 6.
- “Billionaire philanthropist George Soros has long been a bogeyman for the far right...The attacks, observers say, also smack of anti-Semitism.” Anuj Chopra, AFP, April 9

Not one of these persons who made the charge that Soros’ critics are driven by anti-Semitism quoted even one person to make their case!

As a critic of Soros, Bill Donohue has no problem being specific about his position, and it wouldn’t matter a hoot to him if Soros’ name was George O’Malley.

The following is taken from Donohue’s new book, *War on Virtue: How the Ruling Class is Killing the American Dream* (it was released April 18 and is available on Amazon and Sophia Institute Press).

“Many corrupt district attorneys—those who refuse to prosecute dangerous criminals—got their job with the help of Soros. He gave Alvin Bragg \$1 million when he was running for DA in Manhattan in 2021; he gave George Gascón nearly \$3 million when he ran for DA of Los Angeles in 2020. In 2022, it was reported that he gave \$440 million to elect seventy-five ‘social justice’ prosecutors. The one thing he didn’t deliver was justice, especially for crime victims.

“Between 2016 and 2022, Soros gave more than \$29 million to a personal network of political action committees specifically established to back radical DA candidates. By mid-2022, one in five Americans, or seventy million people, were living in a jurisdiction overseen by a Soros-backed prosecutor. Soros DAs

were running New York, Chicago, Saint Louis, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles as well as many smaller cities and towns. Soros also received help from his prized client, Black Lives Matter, to lead the charge to defund the police and abolish prisons.”

No doubt there are anti-Semites who have attacked Soros, but it is scurrilous to tar all his critics as bigots. Soros is guilty as charged.

One final note. Soros knows a personal thing or two about anti-Semitism. As a young man he became a Nazi collaborator. In a “60 Minutes” interview, he admitted that he helped confiscate property from Jews. He told Steve Kroft that he never regretted doing so. When asked if this was difficult, Soros said, “Not, not at all. Not at all.” Stunned, Kroft said, “No feeling of guilt?” “No” came the reply.