

# PRAISE FROM STRANGE QUARTERS

*The following is a sampling of praise for Pope Francis from some rather strange quarters.*

**Ian Bassin** (former associate counsel to President Obama): “Finally, there’s our new, gay-friendly Pope. In one of the most die-hard bastions of conservatism, the Vatican, Pope Francis is rewriting the playbook by breaking the longest fever of them all—a reactionary agenda that dates back centuries. And he’s not just expressing toleration for people of all sexual orientations; in recent days he’s reasserted the Church’s role as a promoter of the needs of the vulnerable over narrow ideological crusades and even took on the corruption of our global financial order.” (Huffington Post, 10/3)

**Taylor Berman** (Gawker staff writer): “Pope Francis’s statements in the interview are important and will hopefully help the Catholic Church move past some of its more controversial and backward concerns.” (Gawker, 9/19)

**Frank Bruni** (New York Times columnist): “It’s about time. The leader of the Roman Catholic Church has surveyed the haughty scolds in its ranks, noted their fixation on matters of sexual morality above all others and said enough is enough....Hallelujah.” (New York Times, 9/21)

**Sister Simone Campbell** (President of NETWORK): “I can only imagine that those who have been focused on abortion and same sex marriage are angry at the sea change. Their crafty plans of using faith for a right-wing political agenda are crashing down around their ears. Pope Francis is saying that the Gospel cannot be used to benefit one political party.” (NYTimes.com, 9/23)

**Wilson Cruz** (GLAAD spokesman): “...this is the first time that a Pope has recognized the harm that the Roman Catholic

hierarchy's campaigns against LGBT people and families have caused." (GLAAD, 9/19)

**Chris Cuomo** (CNN host): "I feel like this may count as the pope's first miracle. Because to hear Bill Donohue saying these things is going to be very shocking. Because it really sounds like you're one of the people he's sending this message to, to be fair, Mr. Donohue, isn't it?" (CNN, "New Day," 9/20)

**Jane Fonda** (actress): "Gotta love new Pope. He cares about poor, hates dogma." (Twitter, 9/20)

**Whoopi Goldberg** ("The View" co-host): "He's been saying some very provocative things, you know. First, he said you don't need to believe in God to go to heaven because God believes in you. I like that. Then, he said the Church has to stop obsessing about abortion, gay marriage, and contraception. I think that's fantastic." ("The View," 9/23)

**Chad Griffin** (president of Human Rights Campaign): "Pope Francis has pressed the reset button on the Roman Catholic Church's treatment of LGBT people...For the sake of LGBT Catholics, it's essential that Pope Francis' inspiring words lead to transformative change throughout the Church hierarchy." (Human Rights Campaign, 9/19)

**Melissa Harris-Perry** (MSNBC host): "Anyone with even a passing understanding of church history knows that it is implicated in war and conflict and oppression, but this pope says it's time to recalibrate..." (MSNBC, "Mel-issa Harris-Perry," 9/21)

**Chris Hayes** (MSNBC host): "Last week, I confessed I had a growing crush on the new pope, Pope Francis, who has been melting my lefty heart...Pope Francis knows what he is doing and he is sending a signal about making a break with the past." (MSNBC, "All In with Chris Hayes," 9/19)

**Frances Kissling** (former president of Catholics for Choice): "It would be better still if there were no pope, no

infallibility and no bishops with fiefdoms, and if a democratic church emerged. In that church, same-sex marriage would be celebrated, contraception would be the prelude to responsible parenthood and abortion would be understood as a necessary right. It is no accident that many Christian denominations without a pope have moved in that direction.”  
(*The Nation*, 9/25)

**Daniel C. Maguire** (ethics professor at Marquette Univ.): “Never before has so much fresh air flowed through musty Vatican halls. Never has a pope said that conscience must not be sacrificed to hierarchical edicts....The second Vatican Council opened doors, while popes like John Paul II and Benedict set out to slam them shut. But Pope Francis has not only unscrewed the locks from the doors, but he’s also unscrewed the doors themselves from their jambs. Never has a pope broken so sharply from his immediate predecessor and done it all with a gentle human voice. ‘Recovering Catholics’ who long since abandoned the pelvically obsessed church of the hierarchy are taking a second look. Right wing Catholics are aghast....Church history is turning a corner. Reform from the top is a rarity but it is happening right now. Time will tell how far it goes, but right now Viva il Papa!” (Religion Dispatches, 9/20)

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## TATTOOED JESUS A HIT

During the month of October, a billboard in West Lubbock, Texas created quite a stir. It featured a tattooed Jesus; there was also an accompanying video on the website of [Jesustattoo.org](http://Jesustattoo.org).

When we saw a picture of the billboard on the Internet, we

quickly learned why some Christians might be disconcerted. At first blush, the sight of a Jesus-figure, standing with his arms outstretched, covered with tattoos, is jarring; on his body are such words as “Outcast” and “Addicted.” But the video offers a much more complete, and satisfying, picture of the intended message.

In the video, a woman is shown with a tattoo on her body that reads, “Self Righteous”; Jesus changes the inscription to “Humbled.” Similarly, a young disabled boy’s tattoo is changed from “Outcast” to “Accepted.” This theme is consistently stated throughout the presentation.

The video shows how Jesus forgives and transforms the life of sinners. It also shows how Jesus loves those who have been rejected by society, offering them hope. Indeed, the six-minute video shows how the promise of salvation awaits those who follow Jesus. As such, it is a positive and quite moving statement. We applaud this novel effort to showcase the power and glory of Jesus Christ.

The media reaction was interesting. Most stories concentrated exclusively on the billboard, not the video. Why? Because the billboard was controversial and the video was not. We would be remiss if we did not add that the media also has no real interest in promoting a positive view of Christianity.

In our October 10, 2013 news release, we provided a link to the video.

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## **MEDIA POLITICS AND THE POPE**

Every sentient human being knows about the published reflections that Pope Francis offered at the end of September

on a variety of subjects. But few know about the other matters he recently addressed, and that is because the media are not happy with the pope's decisions. Here are four examples.

- In a homily that was given on September 16, 2013, the pope said "a good Catholic meddles in politics."
- In his published interview released September 19, 2013, the pope spoke against priests who are "too lax." By that he meant, "[T]he loose minister washes his hands by simply saying, 'This is not a sin,' or something like that."
- On September 20, 2013, he denounced abortion as part of our "throwaway culture."
- On September 21, 2013, one Australian newspaper reported that a heretical priest, Greg Reynolds, was excommunicated by the Vatican for his activism on behalf of women priests and gay marriage.

There was a virtual blackout on the pope's homily urging Catholics to meddle in politics. Very few mentioned that in his well-publicized interview he cited lax priests for denying the existence of sin. The pope's comments on abortion received some coverage, but not much: only ABC's "World News Tonight" mentioned it among the big broadcasters. Aside from a few Catholic and gay blogs, news about the dissident Australian priest being excommunicated received almost zero coverage.

Most of those who work in the elite media are pro-abortion and pro-gay marriage. Not all are biased, but too many are. They have a vested ideological interest in flagging stories about the pope that may gin up the left and alienate conservatives; they also have a political interest in burying stories that have the opposite effect.

The media need a Catholic whistle-blower for its papal coverage. We gladly accept the invitation.

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# POPE COMMENTS ON ABORTION, GAYS

Last month, Pope Francis had a three-part meeting in Rome with Catholic journalists and his comments were published by *America* magazine.

The *New York Times* issued a “Breaking News Alert,” followed by a story, “Pope Bluntly Faults Church’s Focus on Gays and Abortion.” Here is what the pope said: “We cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods. This is not possible.” He also said, “when we speak about these issues, we have to talk about them in a context.”

The pope is right that single-issue Catholics need to rise above their immediate concerns. He did not say we should not address abortion or homosexuality; he simply said we cannot be absorbed by these issues. Both the left and the right should heed his message.

The article in the *New York Times* said U.S. bishops would feel the pinch of these remarks as they often appear “to make combating abortion, gay marriage and contraception their top public policy priorities.” This was inaccurate. It was not the bishops who made these issues front and center—it was the Obama administration. It would be more accurate to say the pope would find fault with the bishops if they did not resist these state encroachments on the religious-liberty rights of Catholics.

The pope also said the Church should be a “home to all” and not a “small chapel.” Pope Francis did not mean by these words, as the *Times* alert said, that these remarks were a

criticism of focusing on “doctrine, orthodoxy and a limited agenda of moral teachings.” In the previous paragraph, he spoke about “the sanctity of the militant church.” In the same paragraph where he mentioned “small chapel,” he cited the “negative behavior” of priests and nuns, saying their conduct is that of an “unfruitful bachelor” and a “spinster.” He did not say what the *Times* attributed to him.

The pope wants each one of us to reject abortion. He also wants us to help women who have had one to find peace with God. Furthermore, Pope Francis wants us to reject gay marriage, but not gays because they are gay. Kudos to Pope Francis.

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## **AN AMERICAN MOMENT**

On Monday, November 11, 2013, the Frontline Project is sponsoring the second annual “An American Moment.” An American Moment will again include one moment of silent prayer – to thank our military for their service, to pray for the peaceful repose of those who have died, and to pray for the intentions of those still living. The event will take place at noon in each respective time zone, all across the world, on Veteran’s Day 2013. We invite you and all the members of the Catholic League to participate with us in this worldwide event and to help us spread the word in your area.

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# RELIGION AND INTELLIGENCE

It is an old story: “the premise that religious beliefs are irrational, not anchored in science, not testable and, therefore, unappealing to intelligent people who ‘know better.’”

While not specifically endorsing that pejorative description of religious belief, a piece that was published online last August by the Personality and Social Psychology Review uses “a meta-analysis of 63 studies” on the subject to posit “a reliable negative relation between intelligence and religiosity.”

That concluded, they proffer three possible explanations: atheism as nonconformity, the idea that “intelligent people are less likely to conform to religious orthodoxy”; cognitive style, the contention that intelligent people are more analytical (read “thoughtful”) while religious belief relies on “intuitive” thinking: “reflexive, spontaneous, mostly non-conscious”; and finally, functional equivalence, which holds that religion is primarily motivated “to satisfy needs,” such as a sense of personal (or compensatory) control, self-regulation, self-worth, and attachment (to avoid loneliness); and that “intelligence” also satisfies these needs, obviating the need for reliance on religion.

The authors base the “non-conformity” model on the dual assertions that “more intelligent people are less likely to conform,” and that “atheism can be characterized as non-conformity in the midst of religious majority.” But their model is too broad when they speak of “societies where the majority is religious.” People’s inclination to conformity is arguably better measured by how easily they conform within the smaller subcultures in which they live their everyday lives.

Consider, for example, two highly influential American



subcultures: secular college campuses and the entertainment world. In both, non-belief in religion—in many cases outright hostility toward religious belief—predominates. Within these subcultures, it is unquestionably those who profess religious belief, not those who reject it, who can be said to be the nonconformists; does that, in itself, make religious believers in those circles more intelligent than their non-believing counterparts?

The “functional equivalence” argument presupposes that religion is a man-made construct developed to fulfill certain human needs. That it may be of supernatural origin—i.e., that God may actually exist, and that He reveals His existence to us through the gift of human reason—must be summarily dismissed for this explanation to have any validity; and so, to adopt this explanation is to have begun with a bias against religious belief that undermines the analysis. Moreover, when the authors contend that “intelligence is associated with better self-regulation and self-control,” one need think only of the rampant hedonism and self-destructive behavior of so many of the self-absorbed—and anti-religion—Hollywood set, to see the holes in such a generalized linkage of atheism to higher intelligence.

That leaves us with the “cognitive style” argument, which is difficult to quantify. There is, first, the question of which testing approaches best measure such “intelligence.” The Personality and Social Psychology Review piece dismisses grade point averages (GPA) in favor of “widely used” and detailed intelligence tests. MIT Sloane Professor Shane Frederick, however, maintains that his three-question Cognitive Reflection Test “predicts such characteristics as well as and sometimes better than much longer cognitive tests.” So which is more effective, especially when applying such general cognitive results to specific questions such as the relationship of intelligence to religious belief?

Then there is the level of objectivity of the

researchers—those who develop such tests, those who interpret them, and those who apply them to sociological questions like the one being addressed here. The authors acknowledge the existence of “majority atheist subcultures,” listing “scientists” as one. As we have just discussed, secular academia—from where these studies emanate—is another. Is it wise to expect an objective analysis of the relationship between intelligence and religion from those in a “high intelligence” profession dominated by atheist thinking?

Wiser, it would seem, to apply a healthy dose of skepticism toward the assertion of a disconnect between religion and intelligence, put forth by researchers whose intellectual conformity predisposes them to reach such a conclusion.

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## **EVANGELICALS AND SEXUAL ABUSE**

The grandson of evangelist Billy Graham, Boz Tchividjian, said in October that evangelicals have a big problem with the sexual abuse of minors. When asked how the problem in the evangelical community compares to that in the Catholic community, he said, “I think we are worse.”

The Liberty University law professor runs an organization designed to combat sexual abuse, Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment (GRACE). “Protest-ants can be very arrogant when pointing to Catholics,” he said. He is very blunt, taking Protestant institutions to task for not acting responsibly. He said they need to be less concerned about protecting their institutions and more concerned about dealing with the molesters. “We’ve got the Gospels backwards,” he said. Sounds familiar.

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# DON'T BE SHOCKED BY POPE FRANCIS

*The following article by Bill Donohue was published as an op-ed on the website of CNN on September 20:*

Not in my lifetime have I witnessed a pope who has so quickly succeeded in making more Catholics, and non-Catholics, hyperventilate than Pope Francis. Indeed, some are ready to jump off the bleachers. They all need to calm down.

Pope Francis is delightfully frank, and that is what makes him positively engaging. He is also provocative, in the best sense of that word: he seeks to challenge us, shaking us out of our comfort zone. But he is not about to turn the Catholic Church upside down and inside out. Such talk is pure lunacy.

In a three-part meeting in Rome with Catholic journalists last month, Pope Francis offered his thoughts on a wide range of subjects; they were published today by *America* magazine, the Jesuit weekly. Everyone should read it for themselves.

There is nothing new about ripping what a famous person said out of context, and that is exactly what is going on now with Pope Francis. The "Breaking News Alert" by the *New York Times* is titled, "Pope Bluntly Faults Church's Focus on Gays and Abortion."

In the *Times* alert, it says the pope discusses how "the Roman Catholic Church has grown 'obsessed' with preaching about abortion, gay marriage and contraception," and that he has been criticized for doing so. It also quotes him saying the Church should be "home for all" and not a "small chapel" that is "*focused on doctrine, orthodoxy and a limited agenda of*

*moral teachings.*" (My italics is provided to show that this is the paper's interpretation of what the pope said about "home for all" and "small chapel".)

Regarding the pope's statements on abortion and gay marriage, here is what he said: "We cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods. This is not possible." He also said, "when we speak about these issues, we have to talk about them in a context."

What the pope said makes eminently good sense. For example, when I became president of the Catholic League twenty years ago, I visited the chapters around the nation and found that many were single-issue entities. Some focused exclusively on abortion; others were obsessed with homosexuality; still others demanded we just concentrate on medical ethics. I shared many of their concerns, but I also told them we are an anti-defamation organization, and should not become preoccupied with other matters, no matter how noble.

The pope is right that single-issue Catholics need to rise above their immediate concerns. He did not say we should not address abortion or homosexuality; he simply said we cannot be absorbed by these issues. Or any others!

Laurie Goodstein's article in the *New York Times* on the pope's comments says U.S. bishops will feel the pinch of these remarks as they often appear "to make combating abortion, gay marriage and contraception their top public policy priorities." This is inaccurate. It is not the bishops who have made these issues front and center—it is the Obama administration. It would be more accurate to say the pope would find fault with the bishops *if they did not resist these state encroachments on the religious-liberty rights of Catholics.*

The *Times* alert was wrong to characterize the pope's "small chapel" remark as a criticism of focusing on "doctrine,

orthodoxy and a limited agenda of moral teachings.” In the previous paragraph, he speaks about “the sanctity of the militant church.” In the following sentence, the pope says, “[W]e must not reduce the bosom of the universal church to a nest protecting our mediocrity.” Excellent. Then, in the same paragraph, he cites the “negative behavior” of priests and nuns, saying their conduct is that of an “unfruitful bachelor” and a “spinster.” He most emphatically did not say what the *Times* attributed to him.

Pope Francis unequivocally rejects both abortion and gay marriage. Elsewhere, he has said, “[T]he moral problem with abortion is of a pre-religious nature because the genetic code of the person is present at the moment of conception. There is already a human being.” Similarly, he says, his opposition to gay marriage “is not based on religion, but rather on anthropology.”

Pope Francis wants us to oppose abortion. He also wants us to reach out to women who are contemplating one, and to help women who have had one to find peace with God (that’s why the Catholic Church has Project Rachel). He wants us to oppose gay marriage. He also wants us not to reject gays because they are gay. This is sound Catholic teaching. Kudos to Pope Francis.

*Some critics erroneously implied that the pope is soft on abortion. He is not. Here are his thoughts as recorded in the book, On Heaven and Earth:*

*“The moral problem with abortion is of a pre-religious nature because the genetic code of the person is present at the moment of conception. There is already a human being. I separate the issue of abortion from any religious concept. It is a scientific problem. To not allow further progress in the development of a human being that already has the entire genetic code of a human being is not ethical. The right to life is the first human right. Abortion is killing someone that cannot defend himself.”*

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# HOLLYWOOD AND HITLER

Rick Hinshaw

Ben Urwand, *The Collaboration: Hollywood's Pact with Hitler* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013)

It's quite easy – and quite morally offensive – for those safely removed in time and place from the horrors of Hitler's genocide to point fingers of blame at others – the German people, the Holy See (despite compelling evidence to the contrary), even victims of the Holocaust – for not doing enough to stop it.

But what if there were powerful people who – themselves safely removed from Hitler's terror – not only failed to use their power to oppose him, but actively collaborated with the Nazis, and for the basest of motives: financial gain.

Such is the thoroughly documented case that Ben Urwand, a junior fellow in the Society of Fellows at Harvard University, lays out against all of the major Hollywood studios.

The roots of this collaboration lay in Hitler's recognition of the propaganda value of film.

Sometimes, propaganda value was found in American films produced for entertainment. For example, the Nazis found "strong National Socialist tendencies" in films like "The Lives of a Bengal Lancer" (1935) and "Mr. Deeds goes to Town" (1936); positive portrayals of fascism's "leader principle" in such movies as "Our Daily Bread" (1934) and "Mutiny on the Bounty" (1935); and effective satirizing of democracy in "Mr. Smith goes to Washington" (1939).

While American companies were marketing such movies in Germany to make money, not provide Nazi propaganda, they seemed little concerned when that happened; for as Urwand notes, "ever since MGM's "Gabriel over the White House" (1933) the Hollywood studios had released one pro-fascist film after another – films that expressed dissatisfaction with the slowness and inefficiency of the democratic form of government."

More flagrant was the controlling influence Hollywood – anxious to preserve its lucrative German market – allowed Nazi Germany to exert in drastically altering numerous American movie scripts, and completely quashing the production of others.

The stage had been set in 1930, several years before Hitler came to power, when the Nazis fomented national opposition to the portrayal of Germany in Universal Pictures' "All Quiet on the Western Front." When the German government banned the film – negating what one Universal representative said would have been "a huge financial success" – Universal president Carl Laemmle presented a new, heavily edited version. When told it could be approved for screening in Germany only if he instructed all Universal branches throughout the world to make the same cuts to the film, he agreed.

"The Nazis' actions against "All Quiet on the Western Front," Urwand writes, "set off a chain of events that lasted over a decade. Not only Universal Pictures but all the Hollywood studios started making deep concessions to the German government, and when Hitler came to power in January 1933, the studios dealt with his representatives directly." That meant dealing with Georg Gyssling, a German diplomat and Nazi party member who was dispatched to Los Angeles as a "permanent representative ...to work directly with the studios on all movies relating to Germany."

Gyssling was a hard-liner, and he had at his disposal "Article Fifteen" of Germany's 1932 movie quota law, stating, as Urwand

explains, that "if a company distributed an anti-German picture anywhere in the world, that company would no longer be granted import permits for the German market."

Gyssling immediately targeted Warner Brothers' "Captured," a film set in a German prison camp during World War I. There was "hardly anything" in the film "to which Gyssling did not object." Although Warner Brothers made some of Gyssling's demanded cuts, the Propaganda Ministry in Berlin denounced "Captured" as a hate film and invoked Article Fifteen, closing the German market to Warner Brothers.

The message was received. "For the remainder of the decade," Urwand writes, "the studios still doing business in Germany were very careful to remain on good terms with Georg Gyssling. Every time they embarked on a potentially threatening production, they received one of his letters reminding them of the terms of Article Fifteen." In response, "they did not make the same mistake as Warner Brothers. They simply invited Gyssling to the studio lot to preview the film in question, and they made all the cuts that he requested. In an effort to keep the market open for their films ... they were collaborating with Nazi Germany." The collaboration was especially evident in efforts to emasculate – or kill – the few film scripts in 1930s Hollywood that portrayed the evils of Nazi Germany. And it was aided by the obsequiousness of the Hays Office, the organization headed by Will Hays "that represented the major Hollywood studios."

In 1933, when RKO – which did not do business in Germany – tried to make "The Mad Dog of Europe," about Hitler's persecution of the Jews, the producers, Urwand reports, were told by Hays "that their activities were endangering the business of the major Hollywood studios" in Germany. When Hollywood agent Al Rosen obtained the rights to the film, he said he had it "on good authority" that Gyssling had approached the Hays organization "to use its influence with the producers in Hollywood to make me stop the production."



Rosen vowed to go forward but he was unable to raise financial support from Hollywood's powerful executives, with Louis B. Mayer, head of MGM, telling him, "I represent the picture industry here in Hollywood ... we have terrific incomes in Germany and, as far as I am concerned, this picture will never be made." It wasn't.

"The first crucial moment in the studios' dealings with the Nazis," writes Urwand, "was one of pure collaboration: the studios collectively boycotted the anti-Nazi film "The Mad Dog of Europe" to preserve their business interests in Germany."

When, in 1936, "MGM planned to assemble some of its greatest talent" to bring to the screen Sinclair Lewis' novel, *It Can't Happen Here* – "the most important anti-fascist work to appear in the United States in the 1930s," Urwand calls it – the Hays Office issued dire warnings that the film "would have damaging impact on Hollywood's foreign markets."

"Mr. Hays says that a film cannot be made showing the horrors of fascism and extolling the advantages of liberal democracy," Lewis said after MGM cancelled production, "because Hitler and Mussolini might ban other Hollywood films from their countries if we were so rash. I wrote, "'It Can't Happen Here,'" Lewis added, "but I begin to think it certainly can."

The studios were also complicit in Nazi efforts to purge Jews from the film industry. In March 1933, the American film companies in Germany, pressured by the Nazi-affiliated Salesmen's Syndicate, pulled their Jewish workers off the job – first temporarily, then permanently. Ultimately a compromise was worked out, whereby the companies were granted exemptions for their "most desirable Jewish salesmen." "The rest," Urwand reports, "had to go."

"U.S. film units yield to Nazis on Race Issue," was the headline in "Variety," which reported, "American attitude on the matter is that American companies cannot afford to lose

the German market at this time no matter what the inconvenience of personnel shifts."

In 1936, Urwand recounts, Germany's chief censor, Dr. Ernst Seeger, announced that "the American companies could not bring in pictures employing Jews in any capacity." This coincided with what one commentator described as "the almost complete disappearance of the Jew from American fiction, stage, radio and movies." While this was due at least in part, Urwand explains, to a desire to damp down anti-Semitic reaction in America, for the Hollywood studios it dovetailed nicely with their efforts to please their Nazi business partners.

Their desire to purge Jews from the film industry did not, Urwand points out, preclude the Nazis from doing business with major Hollywood studios, many of them headed by Jews; nor, Urwand laments, did it stop these Jewish film executives from doing business with the Nazis.

"The excuse of ignorance can immediately be ruled out," he states. "The Hollywood executives knew exactly what was going on in Germany, not only because they had been forced to fire their own Jewish salesmen but also because the persecution of the Jews was common knowledge at the time." At this very time, "the largest Jewish organization in the United States, the American Jewish Congress," was sounding the alarm and calling for a boycott on German goods.

The Nazis also benefited from the studios' efforts to get around a 1933 law that prohibited foreign companies from taking their money out of Germany. Paramount and Twentieth Century-Fox produced newsreels of Nazi events inside Germany, which they could sell around the world. The newsreels, predictably, brought the world staged, positive Nazi propaganda. MGM, which did not do newsreels, devised another scheme. In 1938, they began loaning money to certain German firms, receiving in exchange bonds they could sell abroad. However, the firms they were loaning money to, the American

trade commissioner pointed out, “are connected to the armament industry especially in the Sudeten territory or Austria. “

“In other words,” Urwand writes, “the largest American motion picture company helped to finance the German war machine.”

Ben Urwand has presented a damning account of what he correctly terms “a dark chapter in Hollywood history” and “a dark chapter in American history.”

Some might be inclined, more than 70 years later, to echo Hillary Clinton’s take on Benghazi: “What difference does it make at this point?”

It makes a difference, first of all, because all history makes a difference, if told truthfully and learned from. It makes a difference because it dramatizes the terrible evil that results when material gain is pursued at all cost, in utter disregard for human life, human rights and human freedom. It makes a difference because – as the *September Catalyst* noted – Hollywood today is engaged in exactly the same kind of collaboration with another oppressive, inhuman regime, Communist China.

It makes a difference because it never should have happened—and we need to know that it did. It makes a difference because it should never happen again—and we need to know that it is.

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