

ANTI-CATHOLICS STAFF DNC PANEL

If the KKK hosted a panel discussion on race relations at the Republican National Convention, the Republicans would rightly be condemned. But no price was paid by the Democrats for allowing the most anti-Catholic organization in the nation, Catholics for Choice (CFC), to host a panel at the Democratic National Convention (DNC) entitled “Keeping the Faith in the Democratic Party: Protecting Religious Liberty for Everyone.”

CFC is not simply a pro-abortion group: it has been condemned twice by the bishops’ conference, and its stated goal, according to its previous head, Frances Kissling, is to “overthrow” the Catholic Church. The current president, Jon O’Brien, is equally vicious and an opponent of the religious liberty campaign organized by the U.S. bishops. Thus the perversity of having him lead a panel discussion on religious liberty.

In 1995, Marjorie Reiley Maguire, a longtime associate with CFC leadership, branded it “an anti-woman organization” staffed by people who *never* go to Mass. Funded by the likes of the Ford Foundation, it would collapse if it had to rely on contributions for support.

Speaking at the event were activists from a CFC-organized umbrella group, the Coalition for Liberty & Justice. Several of the groups that comprise this entity have hijacked the Catholic label in service of their anti-Catholic agenda. They include: CORPUS, DignityUSA, New Ways Ministry and the Women’s Ordination Conference. An array of radical left-wing groups with a history of Catholic bashing were also in attendance.

In other words, the DNC’s idea of religious liberty meant welcoming anti-Catholic bigots to deliver their message of

hate.

ATHEIST AGAINST ATHEIST

A war recently broke out over money between the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) and American Atheists. Both appeal to the same small pool of angry nonbelievers, and there is only so much dough to go around.

American Atheists sought to put its vile message on billboards in Tampa and Charlotte, home of the two political conventions. It got shut out of Tampa, and then announced it was pulling its billboards in Charlotte, allegedly because of threats. Enter FFRF: it succeeded in getting its billboards posted in both cities.

So what was the problem? FFRF was furious that many were mistakenly attributing its billboards to American Atheists. In a press release, FFRF said, "Please do not confuse FFRF's billboard message with that of another atheist group, which tried unsuccessfully to place a very different message in Tampa, and which has voluntarily removed its billboards in Charlotte." In other words, FFRF wanted the credit, and the cash that comes with it.

FFRF was right about one thing: the messages were not identical. American Atheists sought to dump on Mormons and Christians, saving its most vicious comments for the latter. The Christian God, it said, was "Sadistic," the product of a "Useless Savior" who "Promotes Hate." By contrast FFRF's message was not hate-filled: it simply said, "God Fixation Won't Fix This Nation." This may be moronic, but it is not negative.

The Republicans are largely composed of the faithful, and the Democrats are largely populated by secularists; the former won't convert and the latter already have. So why bother? To insult the GOP and loot Dems. Believe it.

CARDINAL DOLAN AND THE DNC

After Cardinal Timothy Dolan agreed to give the closing benediction at the Republican National Convention (RNC), he told the Democrats that he would be happy to do the same for them. He was rebuffed.

Bill Donohue told the *New York Post* that the invite was smart politics. "The Catholic vote is the most critical vote," he said, "So, why wouldn't you ingratiate yourself to the pope of America and send a wink and a nod to Catholics?"

The week following Cardinal Dolan's announcement, he was hammered by liberals for accepting the RNC invitation. They looked foolish when the DNC announced that he would close their convention as well. Here's a sample of what they said.

Andrew Sullivan called Dolan "The Republican Party Cardinal." John Gehring of Faith & Public Life said he was "baptizing the Republican nominee." Mike O'Loughlin at *America* accused him of "being a shill for the GOP." The *National Catholic Reporter* said he was "playing a dangerous game." Sarah Posner at Salon said his acceptance "solidifies a partisan partnership between the GOP and the Bishops." Niall O'Dowd at the *Irish Voice* said his presence "is a dog whistle to all Catholics out there to support the GOP candidates." And the *Los Angeles Times* said that he had "placed his imprimatur" on the Republican strategy.

The fundamental difference between Cardinal Dolan and these critics comes down to one thing: he is a man of principle and they don't know how to spell the word. What this shows is that Cardinal Dolan is able to rise above the politics of the moment. But to those who view the world exclusively through the lens of power, this is completely unintelligible.

GOD DUMPED, THEN REINSTATED, BY DNC

A major PR disaster erupted during the Democratic National Convention (DNC) when it was discovered that the word "God" had been excised from the Democratic Party Platform.

It should have come as no surprise that the mention of the word "God" would send shivers down the spine of the Democratic faithful. After all, the same Platform said it's a good idea for two men to get married; the public needs to pay for abortions; the public must pay for a healthcare policy it rejects; the Catholic non-profit community must pay for abortion-inducing drugs, etc.

Indeed, the Obama administration has a "God problem." On several occasions, President Obama has omitted the words "by their Creator" when citing the Declaration of Independence. He has also erroneously said that the national motto is "E Pluribus Unum"; it is "In God We Trust."

The Platform deleted the word "God" when discussing our "God-given potential." In 2008, the Platform spoke to the issue of having a government that "gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their *God-given* potential." The italics, which we added, were deleted from the 2012 Platform.

The night that the news broke about the removal, CNN's Piers Morgan pressed DNC chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz on the excision. She dodged the question by saying, "We have a commitment through all faith traditions that our values are reflected in our policy. And that means that we should look out for the least of these, that we should fight for the middle class, that we should let everybody in America have an opportunity to be successful."

Morgan wasn't buying it. "This is, somebody has deliberately taken out the word 'God' because it was in the last one," he said. In response, Wasserman Schultz remarkably said, "I can assure you that no one has deliberately taken God out of the Platform." Morgan pressed her again, "So it was an accident?" She refused to answer.

As if we needed more proof of the Democrats' religion problem, consider what happened when the DNC's Faith Council met for a session. Though thousands were in Charlotte, a total of 150 showed up at the session. Did they discuss faith-based solutions to social problems, or the role of religion in public life? No. According to one source, they were fixated on such issues as voter suppression and affordable healthcare.

Had the Democratic faithful, disproportionately comprised of atheists and agnostics, known that the Faith Council wasn't going to talk about God, they could have packed the house.

After taking heat for removing the word "God" from its Platform, the DNC finally decided to put it back in. When it was proposed to place "God" back in the Platform the delegates were not persuaded so the DNC did so by fiat, and then lied about the entire event.

The Obama camp would have us believe that the president intervened to save the day, ordering the delegates to rediscover God. But it was too late: the Obama campaign had already told Politico that Obama had personally approved the

Platform, choosing to intervene only after the pushback began.

Wasserman Schultz said the decision to excise God was “essentially a technical oversight.” David Gergen told CNN viewers the same thing. But someone threw God out. Moreover, even if the oversight process failed, it does not explain why the word “God” was initially deemed offensive, thus meriting deletion.

Platform committee head, former Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, explained the revised wording by saying, “I wouldn’t call it an error. It was a clarification.” Michelle Obama called the whole thing “a non-issue; and I think it’s a distraction.” Obama’s faith-based director—of all people—Rev. Derrick Hawkins, also said the flap about God was “a non-issue.”

Terri Holland, a New Mexico delegate, disagreed with these assessments. She said the changes were made to “kow-tow to the religious right.” This is revealing: speaking about God in the Platform is not the kind of thing that thoughtful Democrats want to be associated with. Evidently, one has to be a right-wing loon to reference our “God-given potential.” Her honesty speaks volumes about the real sentiment of the Party. It is very much appreciated.