

SECULAR LITMUS TEST FOR NIH APPOINTEE?

Francis Collins, President Obama's pick to head the National Institutes of Health, is the former director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, and was an excellent administrator. He is also evangelical. *Science* magazine does not exaggerate when it said, "some are concerned about his outspoken Christian faith."

Among those concerned are outspoken atheists Jerry A. Coyne of the Univ. of Chicago, anthropologist Eric Michael Johnson, Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker and the Univ. of Minnesota's PZ Myers.

Coyne gave Collins high marks as an administrator, but that's not enough. "Certainly, private expressions of faith are absolutely fine, but Collins has chosen to make his views public..." Similarly, Johnson said, "I don't doubt Collins's skills as a scientist or as an administrator," but notes nonetheless that his religion "makes some researchers uncomfortable."

Pinker was not bothered by Collins being "a devout Christian," but he did object to his alleged "public advocacy," offering that he does not want "an atheist-litmus-test for science administrators." In fact, when President Bush's Council on Bioethics had several Catholics on it, Pinker accused the president of seeking to impose "a Catholic agenda on a secular democracy." In other words, Pinker is no stranger to intolerance.

Myers, of course, is most well known for desecrating a consecrated Host. It would take something miraculous for believers to take him seriously.

This may not be a blacklist, but we Catholics have some advice

for our atheist friends: be careful of placing yourself in the near occasion of sin.

CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR WITHDRAWS FROM NYU

Dr. Thio Li-ann, professor at the National University of Singapore, was invited to teach at New York University Law School this fall. After it was discovered that the Christian professor, while serving as a Singaporean lawmaker in 2007, opposed a repeal of the law proscribing homosexual acts, NYU students and alumni organized to protest her appointment. She subsequently withdrew her interest in teaching at NYU.

On July 23—the day that the *New York Times* published a story about Professor Thio, Bill Donohue e-mailed and wrote to NYU's law school dean, Richard Revesz.

In a July 23 statement on Professor Thio, Revesz tried to flip the issue of intimidation by blaming her for creating “an unwelcoming atmosphere.” In Donohue's letter he pointed out that Revesz said that she “replied to them [critics of her appointment] in a manner that many member [sic] of our community—myself included—consider offensive and hurtful.” Donohue then asked Revesz to identify “a single sentence that is at all untoward.”

On August 6, Donohue received an e-mail from Revesz stating, “I welcome differing viewpoints and appreciate hearing from you [Donohue].” But Donohue's letter did more than register a disagreement—he challenged Revesz to identify a single sentence in Thio's response to her critics that was, in Revesz's words, “offensive and hurtful.” Revesz knew that

there weren't any and the best he could do was to say that "comments were made [by Thio] that were viewed as offensive by those with opposing viewpoints."

Revesz allowed the anti-free speech bullies to score a victory. He seems to love diversity, except for the only kind that should count on a college campus—diversity of thought. This is clear by his treatment of Thio. It's plain to see that he refused to take up Donohue's challenge and point out a single sentence that was "offensive and hurtful."

Professor Thio was hounded out of NYU for political reasons. The fact that Revesz could not provide evidence to support his position effectively vindicates Thio.

JUSTICE GINSBURG NEEDS TO EXPLAIN HERSELF

Excerpts of a *New York Times Magazine* interview with Ruth Bader Ginsburg, which appeared on July 12, included the following quote by the Supreme Court Justice about the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion: "Frankly I had thought that at the time *Roe* was decided, there was concern about population growth and particularly growth in populations that we don't want to have too many of."

By contrast, consider what Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, said about this subject:

- "Eugenic sterilization is an urgent need...We must prevent Multiplication of this bad stock."
- "Birth control must lead ultimately to a cleaner race."

- “We are paying for, and even submitting to, the dictates of an ever-increasingly spawning class of human beings who never should have been born at all.”
- “We don’t want the word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population.”

There is another reason why Ginsburg needs to clarify her remark. Before she was seated on the Supreme Court in 1993, she hired 57 law clerks over a period of 13 years. All were white. Now if Antonin Scalia, for example, were associated with her disturbing remark, and if he had never hired a single African American, he would have been branded a racist. The fact that Justice Ginsburg was never questioned about her explosive comment is simply astounding.

POPE AND OBAMA NOT ON THE SAME PAGE

When Pope Benedict XVI released his encyclical *Charity in Truth* reports were that the Holy Father was to the left of President Barack Obama on some issues.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good advised Catholics to suggest that their pastors give homilies “highlighting the Pope’s reflections on social justice and the common good.” Notice what they excluded: the pope’s thoughts on the sanctity of human life, bioethics, the indiscriminate acceptance of all lifestyles, sexuality as a form of entertainment, etc.

In his encyclical, the pope says that “*respect for life*” [his italics] is “an aspect which has acquired increasing prominence in recent time, obliging us to broaden our concept

of poverty....” Are the pope’s new fans prepared to think of abortion as a poverty issue?

The best way to service the poor, according to the pope, is not to create bureaucratic monstrosities that cripple the dignity of the indigent. “By considering reciprocity as the heart of what it is to be a human being, [the principle of] subsidiarity is the most effective antidote against any form of all-encompassing welfare state.” Similarly, he admonishes us not to promote “paternalist social assistance that is demeaning to those in need.” Not exactly what those who work for HHS want to hear.

Finally, when the pope slams greed and criticizes a market economy shorn of moral principles, he is hardly upsetting most of those who champion the rights of the unborn.

CULTURE AT WAR

L. Brent Bozell III

In my line of work you can be on the receiving end of some pretty interesting mail. When it’s a manila envelope without a return address, if it isn’t anthrax, it’s some nut’s compilation of faded newspaper articles dating back to the 60s allegedly proving some bizarre point; or even worse, it’s a manuscript; or worse still, it’s a printed (as opposed to published) manuscript: that nut spent his life savings writing some tract no one will ever read. Invariably it’s about some sort of conspiracy, and if it’s deep enough, you’ll find the papists in Rome behind it all. The other day one of those books hit my desk. “The United States must soon face the most deadly enemy it will ever face,” it begins. Thinking about this article I perused it to satisfy an itch: How long would

it be before the author fingered the Catholic Church as the villain out to destroy America? Would you believe page 2? "Russia, Prussia, Austria and Pope Pius VII, king of the Papal States, entered into a secret treaty to do so." There you have it.

The attack on Christianity, particularly Catholicism is broad, dangerous and, indeed, in some ways already successful. It is the believers against the unbelievers, except the unbelievers are nihilists out to destroy the West. And it's all captured by The Catholic League's president, Bill Donohue, in his new book, *Secular Sabotage: How Liberals are Destroying Religion and Culture in America*.

But first, full disclosure. I am a Roman Catholic. I like saying that. A few years ago I was invited to speak at a fundamentalist Christian convention. Good people though they were, they couldn't understand why I was offended when they insisted that as a condition of my appearance (on a weekend, no honorarium, paying my own travel), I had to first submit a written statement of personal faith. No, I said, if you can't accept at face value my faith, then best to cancel me. No, they implored, don't cancel. Please speak. But this is a requirement for all our speakers. Back and forth we went, all the way to the eve of the convention, with all sorts of high officials intervening. Finally we reached an accord. I would, indeed, provide a written statement of personal faith, but they would accept whatever it was I wrote. I am a Roman Catholic. That's all they got, because that's all they needed.

Second disclaimer: I'm on the Board of Advisors of the Catholic League. I've been involved with this terrific organization for many years, dating back to my participation in a colloquium in 1993, later published, and exploring the extent to which the news media have an anti-Catholic bias. I serve on this board because Bill Donohue invited me, and I've never been able to refuse Bill Donohue anything.

Which naturally leads to the third disclaimer: Bill Donohue is a friend, and I like him. There are an awful lot of people I know in the world of public policy, many of whom I respect and admire. But beyond respecting his wisdom and admiring his courage, I just plain like Bill Donohue. I like his Irish feistiness. I like his sense of loyalty. I like his sense of humor. Most of all, I like how he drives his opponents mad. And with *Secular Sabotage* he could be expected to be stricken from all manner of Christmas card lists except the people he skewers don't believe in Christmas.

Secular Sabotage is serious business. Donohue insists the United States should be considered unequivocally a Christian country. Eight out of ten Americans consider themselves as such. Indeed— and I didn't realize this—the United States is the most Christian country, in quantitative terms, in the world. “In fact,” states the author, “the U.S. is more Christian than Israel is Jewish.” And yet if this is so, why can't we celebrate Christmas? Why can't our children pray in school? How did we just elect a president who insisted the United States ought not to be considered a Christian nation?

The popular culture's hesitation to acknowledge the truth of this country's Christian identity is a direct measure of the success a tiny minority of Americans has enjoyed in thoroughly intimidating the majority. While Donohue discusses secular sabotage he is clear that these ought not to be considered simple secularists existing alongside the faithful. They are nihilists out to expel Christianity not just from the public square but from the public conversation entirely. And they are powerful enough to be succeeding.

The Christian nation has at its core the nuclear family. Erase the notion of the nuclear family and you've destroyed the Judeo-Christian identity of America. The secular saboteurs know this, which is why the author writes they “not only seek to destroy the public role of Christianity, they seek to sabotage the Judeo-Christian understanding of sexuality.” The

sexual revolution of the 60s, no matter how morally improper, at least believed itself to be governed by the goal of love. The sexual revolution today has no such illusions. As Donohue documents, it is about instant self-gratification; and rather than build a separate societal structure, the nihilists simply want to tear down existing norms. How else to explain the radical feminists' zealous obsession with abortion?

How else to explain the radical gays' overt hatred of the Catholic Church? Several years ago I attended an early morning Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. It was celebrated by the late John Cardinal O'Connor. I noted a large battery of uniformed police guarding the door and lining the aisles. When I raised this issue later at breakfast with Cardinal O'Connor, he just smiled rather sadly. An aide pointed out that the size of the daily police presence was in direct relation to the number of death threats aimed at him.

Secular Sabotage documents this hatred in a far more prescient manner. Donohue is an eyewitness and retells, with a riveting first hand narrative, the horrific attacks on St. Patrick's by gay radicals in 1994 and again in 1995. If Catholics who read these passages are shocked and infuriated once more, then Donohue has succeeded. He insists we not forget.

Perhaps nowhere is the anti-Catholicism more prevalent than in the arts and Donohue exposes the bigotry with a surgeon's precision. He reminds us of the ugliness of Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe, men who took taxpayers' money (grants from the woefully incompetent National Endowment for the Arts) only to produce repugnant "art" aimed at offending Christians. He introduces us to others like Robert Goober, an ex-Catholic gay man, whose "art" exhibition in Los Angeles in 1997 included a sculpture of Our Blessed Mother, pierced with a phallic culvert pipe. There's Garilyn Brune who was awarded the grand prize in a L.A. art festival the year prior. His drawing depicted a priest performing fellatio on Jesus Christ. There's John Santerineross, whose photograph featured a woman

with her genitals cut and bleeding unto a crucifix. There is...well, enough. As Donohue tells us, obscenity and blasphemy are joined at the cultural hip of the nihilists.

Donohue travels to Hollywood to document the attacks on Christianity by an artistic community that insists it only reflects reality yet constantly paints a picture that is the antithesis of reality ("The Last Temptation of Christ"); insists it only follows market impulses, yet produces anti-Catholic fare when there is zero market demand for it ("Dogma," "The DaVinci Code," "Priest," "Angels and Demons") and claims to respect its audience yet sneaks anti-Christian bigotry into even children's movies ("The Golden Compass").

The anti-Christian, anti-Catholic agenda of the nihilistic secularists is not confined to the cultural. It is now in the open, very political, and absolutely determined to crush the Judeo-Christian identity in America. For Donohue 1972 is a pivotal year, the year he believes that religious conservatives chose the Republican Party and secular liberals the Democratic Party for their respective homes. But it's one thing to promote a secular political agenda, it's quite another to come out with a pronounced anti-Christian one. Donohue documents that emergence during the Clinton years with the likes of Dr. Jocelyn Elders, the Surgeon General-designate who believed it was government's job to teach teenaged girls how to have proper illicit sex. He tracks the increasingly shrill attacks against Christians in general and the Catholic League in particular by the radicals at the Democratic National Committee; he exposes how in 2004 Sen. John Kerry, a self-described "devout Catholic," hired a spokeswoman for ACT-UP, the gay group that attacked St. Patrick's Cathedral, as his Director of Religious Outreach; and how in 2007 presidential candidate John Edwards hired religious bigots to organize his Internet presence.

The evidence will show that in all these cases there was overreach and the subsequent backlash. So why do it? That is

the strength of the militant Democratic Party base: strong and wealthy and uncompromising and impatient. It was also another demonstration of the superior political acumen of Team Obama. Though arguably even more radical than his predecessors, Obama showed tremendous discipline in muting his radical agenda during the campaign. So vague was he on the issues that 54 percent of the voters believed the disciple of the hateful Rev. Wright was “friendly” to religion.

Bill Donohue saves his best for last. He believes there are some positive signs. Young people seem not to be as radical as their parents. (How ‘bout them apples?) There are new alliances being created among conservative Catholics, Protestants and Jews. And then there’s this nugget: “But not all agnostics and atheists are secularists at heart.” At first blush this doesn’t seem to make sense.

The late great Steve Allen didn’t make sense, either. A fallen-away Catholic, Steve as a self-proclaimed agnostic who openly championed all manner of liberal political causes. But few were as upset and outspoken as he against the left’s attacks on Christianity and Catholicism.

In the final analysis it may be liberals who are trying to destroy religion and culture in America, but it’s not all liberals, as Steve Allen, Sen. Joe Lieberman and others have shown. And it’s not just liberals. The libertarians’ refusal to defend the Judeo-Christian tradition indicts them as well. But no matter who it is attacking the Christian faith, there’s one thing for certain: that fellow will have to face Bill Donohue.

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