

COMMISSION on UNALIENABLE RIGHTS NEEDED

One of the best gifts to emerge from the Trump administration is the creation of the State Department's Commission on Unalienable Rights. It is a tribute to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that he appointed his mentor at Harvard Law School, Mary Ann Glendon, to chair the commission.

Left-wing legal groups, which think they own the subject of human rights, are apoplectic at the very thought of such a commission. A coalition of 430 left-wing organizations have asked Pompeo to dismantle this human rights commission. Their arguments are so weak as to be embarrassing.

"We object to the Commission's stated purpose," the letter says, without ever stating what that purpose is. The stated purpose is two sentences long. "The Commission will provide the Secretary of State advice and recommendations concerning international human rights matters. The Commission will provide fresh thinking about human rights discourse where such discourse has departed from our nation's founding principles of natural law and natural rights."

It is the second sentence that clearly bothers the critics. "Fresh thinking" about human rights is surely a worry to those stuck in neutral. To be sure, change can be painful, but to those who do not regard intellectual maturation to be a problem, it can yield many benefits.

Natural law and natural rights are the bedrock of our freedoms. Enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, they give homage to the Creator, the proper author of unalienable rights.

Appeals to natural law are what allowed for the dismantling of slavery. Similarly, Nazis accused at Nuremburg could not have

been convicted by appealing to the positive, or government generated, law. The Nazis maintained, quite properly, that they were simply following orders. It took the invocation of natural law to convict them. The court held that the Nazis knew in their heart that the intentional killing of innocent persons was wrong.

Critics of the Commission say it “lacks ideological diversity.” This is risible: the coalition is comprised of the most ideologically pure organizations in the nation.

Here are just a few: American Atheists, the ACLU, Amnesty International, the ADL, Freedom From Religion Foundation, NARAL Pro-Choice, and the Open Society Foundations (run by George Soros). It also includes such stellar groups as the Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center, a pro-prostitution entity funded by Soros.

Take the last one. No wonder the coalition is upset: no student of natural law and natural rights considers prostitution to be an unalienable right. Indeed, the right to trade one’s body on the street is one of those invented “ad hoc” rights.

The distinction between “unalienable rights” and “ad hoc” rights is what upsets the coalition. Pompeo drew the distinction when he announced the formation of the Commission. “The proliferation of rights not only causes tensions between rights claims,” he wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*, “it ‘blurs’ distinctions between universal, God-given rights and ad hoc state-based rights, threatening to erode the very basis of our liberal democracy.”

Pompeo learned a lot from Glendon. In her masterful book, *Rights Talk*, published in 1991, she said that the “rights-bearer as a lone autonomous individual” is closely tied to the tendency to see rights as absolute. That vision is exemplified by the ACLU (which Bill Donohue detailed in *The Politics of*

the American Civil Liberties Union and Twilight of Liberty: The Legacy of the ACLU). It entails such fanciful rights as dwarf tossing, mud wrestling, and the sale and distribution of child pornography.

Among the critics of the Commission are some Catholic figures. They are lead by Miguel Diaz, Marianne Duddy-Burke, Mary E. Hunt, and Father Bryan Massingale. That's quite a quartet.

Diaz was the U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See under Obama (a post held earlier by Glendon under George W. Bush). He was also a tireless champion of Kathleen Sebelius, the Secretary of Health and Human Services who tried to force Catholic non-profits to pay for abortions. Sebelius was most known for her work supporting Dr. George—"the Killer"—Tiller, the infamous partial-birth abortion operative.

Duddy-Burke is executive director of DignityUSA, a pro-homosexual "Catholic" group that rejects the Church's teachings on sexuality.

Hunt is most known for rejecting the Church's teachings on ordination and for accusing the Church of bigotry.

Massingale is a Milwaukee priest and Fordham professor who opposes religious liberty and rushes to the defense of gays who oppose Church teachings on homosexuality.

Ideological diversity, anyone?

What is driving the coalition of critics is their unanimous support for the rights of gay and transgender activists and their dismissive, if not contemptuous, posture towards religious liberty. Whenever there is a conflict between gay rights and the First Amendment right to religious liberty, they side with the former against the latter.

In short, their interpretation of human rights has nothing to do with the principles and tenets of the Founders. Their

vision is one of radical individualism and radical egalitarianism, two of the most pernicious ideological strands in American society.

Good luck to Mike Pompeo and Mary Ann Glendon. They are two of the most brilliant and dedicated Americans in public life today.

APA IS HAVING A MENTAL BREAKDOWN

It is becoming ever more clear that those who run the American Psychological Association (APA) are suffering from a mental breakdown. It is now promoting “relationship anarchy,” as well as other dysfunctional behaviors. To the APA, about the only deviant sexual behavior that is left in American society is what most of us would call normal heterosexual monogamous unions.

Its descent is traceable to 1975 when it decided to support the position of the American Psychiatric Association declaring that homosexuality was not a mental illness. That determination, which was reached in 1973, was not based on any new scientific empirical evidence; rather, it was made following years of bullying by radical gay activists.

The APA is on a tear. Earlier this year it made a strong political statement attacking men [read: heterosexual men]. It opined that a pernicious “masculine ideology” has overtaken society and must be rooted out. What are the contents of this ideology? “Anti-femininity,” which is to say the normal male tendency not to identify with effeminate men. It also includes such dangerous attributes as “achievement.” Evidently, it does

not see the sexism in this statement (it implies that women are not achievement oriented).

The latest APA endorsement of polygamy and swinging (and my favorite, the all-inclusive "relationship anarchy") was announced recently as part of the APA's "Non-Monogamy Task Force" program; it says it is promoting "inclusivity." It has not yet endorsed bestiality (which is no doubt a tribute to the animal rights folks), but who knows what lies beyond the bend? That may be next. Isn't that what "inclusivity" is all about?

Ten years ago a book was released by three psychologists, Nicholas Cummings, William O'Donohue, and Janet Cummings, titled *Psychology's War on Religion*. Bill Donohue contributed the chapter, "The War on Catholicism."

Donohue quoted Freud as saying "my real enemy" is "the Roman Catholic Church." He also detailed Jung's pathological hatred of the Catholic Church. Many other wizards in the field who shared the same bias were discussed as well. Make no mistake about it, there is a direct line between this kind of thinking and the APA's embrace of "relationship anarchy."

Let's face it, the APA leadership is actively pushing the radical gay agenda, the goal of which is to eradicate the cultural basis of Western civilization, namely the Judeo-Christian ethos. Their ideology is so entrenched that they are unable to see the psychological and social damage that is done to everyone, especially women and children, when a sexual ethic based on restraint is destroyed. And have they not learned of the body count attributed to lethal sex practices?

The APA is not a scientific body—it is an activist organization in service to sexual libertinism.

USCCB FOE SLAMS USCCB EMPLOYEE

Judy Keane is the director of public affairs at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). She was put on leave for a week after she tweeted some pro-Trump statements; she noted in her tweets that the opinions expressed were her own. This would be of no interest to the Catholic League were it not for the attack on her by John Gehring. [By the way, Bill Donohue has never met or corresponded with Keane.]

Gehring notes that some of Keane's positions, such as her advocacy of a wall to stop people from illegally crashing our borders, is at odds with the position of the USCCB. That may be but that is not Gehring's business.

Gehring once worked at the USCCB in a junior position, and he now heads a militant secularist organization—it is really nothing but a letterhead—Faith in Public Life, funded by George Soros, an atheist billionaire and notorious anti-Catholic.

In 2012, Donohue received a tip from a journalist that Gehring was trying to sabotage the bishops by briefing reporters on the kinds of questions they should ask: He wanted the reporters to nail the bishops to the wall. This was his way of undermining the bishops' Fortnight for Freedom event, an ongoing religious liberty project. Gehring advised the reporters not to buy the argument that religious liberty was under attack. He was blasted by the USCCB for doing so. To this day, Donohue is proud of making this tip public.

Since that time Gehring has been involved in the same kinds of anti-religious liberty campaigns that his Soros-funded dummy

Catholic organizations have been. In 2016, it was revealed, via the Wikileaks emails, that Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good and Catholics United were set up by Hillary Clinton operative John Podesta to create a “revolution” in the Catholic Church. Gehring’s efforts continue to serve that cause today.

Gehring has no moral leg to stand on by criticizing Judy Keane. His hatred of the USCCB, as well as Church teachings on moral issues—to say nothing of his alliance with George Soros—automatically disqualifies him.

PA GRAND JURY REPORT ONE YEAR LATER

On August 14, 2018 Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro released a grand jury report on six of the eight Catholic dioceses in the state. News reports said he found evidence of 301 priests who abused more than 1,000 children over a period of 70 years.

As Bill Donohue said at the time, and will say so again, those reports were thrice false: a) not all the alleged offenders were priests b) most of the alleged victims were not children (they were adolescents) and c) the report was not evidentiary—it was investigative—meaning that the accused priests were not given an opportunity to rebut the charges.

What has happened since the report was released? Of the 301 persons named, two wound up facing criminal charges and were sent to prison. Most of the offenders either had already been thrown out of the priesthood or were dead. Shapiro knew this going into his probe, yet he spent a colossal amount of the

taxpayers' money on this gambit, simply to make a name for himself. In doing so he followed in the footsteps of others.

From the beginning, the investigations of the Catholic Church were classic cases of religious profiling. To be exact, never once did Shapiro, or any of his predecessors, conduct an investigation into any other institution, religious or secular. Nor has Shapiro done so in the past year. It is only the Catholic Church these top cops like to pursue.

The first investigation into the sexual abuse of minors in the Catholic Church that was conducted by a Pennsylvania executive occurred in 2001. It was also the start of the religious profiling probes. Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham was given a specific charge "to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations." She never did. She chose only the Catholic Church: Jews, Muslims, and Protestants were all given a pass. And, of course, the public schools were never of any interest to her.

In 2005, Abraham gave up: not a single priest was prosecuted. That's because she could not prosecute old cases, something she knew from the get-go. In other words, she ripped off the taxpayers, making them pay for her wild goose chase.

In 2011, Abraham's successor, Seth Williams, tried to outdo her. He wanted to bring down the archbishop of Philadelphia, but that didn't work out too well for him. Instead, he brought down himself. In 2017, he was sentenced to five years in prison on multiple counts of bribery, extortion and fraud. He even robbed money set aside to pay for his own mother's nursing home care, using it to fund his lavish lifestyle. He was taken out of court in handcuffs.

Next up was the beginning of the state efforts to get the Catholic Church. In 2014, a grand jury was seated by Attorney General Kathleen Kane. She wanted to bring down the Catholic

hierarchy as well. But like Williams, that didn't work out too well for her. Instead, she brought down herself. In 2016, she was sentenced to 10-23 months in prison for committing multiple felonies: she leaked sealed, confidential grand jury documents to the media and then lied under oath. She was taken out of court in handcuffs.

Kane had no legitimate reason to start her probe. Ironically, it all began when a bishop contacted the local authorities about offenses that came to his attention committed by someone under his watch. Had he said nothing, there would have been no grand jury investigation by either Kane or Shapiro. Instead of commending the bishop, Kane took advantage of his honesty to go after the Catholic Church throughout the state.

In November 2011, Bishop Mark Bartchak, who headed the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, learned of offenses committed by Brother Stephen Baker in the 1990s at Bishop McCort Catholic High School in Johnstown. He immediately notified the authorities. The police never contacted Cambria County District Attorney Kathleen Callihan; once she learned of this case, she decided not to start a grand jury probe. Instead, she asked for a state investigation, handing the matter over to Attorney General Kane.

Now imagine for a moment if a public school superintendent in central Pennsylvania were to turn in a teacher believed to have sexually abused a student. Imagine further that the local district attorney decides to contact the state's attorney general—instead of conducting his own probe—and this leads to an investigation of every school district in the state. And that, in turn, triggers state investigations of the public schools throughout the nation.

This would never happen, not in a million years. To this day, the public school industry is protected in Pennsylvania, even though the Associated Press reported five years ago that the Keystone State ranked No. 2 in teacher sex crimes in the

nation. It is also protected in every other state, shielded by the teachers' unions and the politicians they fund.

The politics of sexual abuse is almost as disgusting as sexual abuse. We've been played. This is not about justice—it's about selectively choosing one class of offenders to prosecute. It's called religious profiling. It ought to be as invidious as racial profiling, but obviously it is not.