

# TAMPA TRIBUNE KEEPS BIGOT ON PAYROLL

On November 18, *Tampa Tribune* columnist Daniel Ruth wrote a column questioning the relationship between Governor Jeb Bush's religion (he is a convert to Catholicism) and his suitability for public office. Bush supports school prayer, limits on abortion, school vouchers and the like.

As Ruth sees it, "if Jeb Bush appears for his second inaugural wearing a miter, vestments and carrying a staff, one might conclude he has taken this whole 'Christian conservative political agenda' thing just a pinch too far." Ruth implores readers to remember that Bush "was re-elected governor of Florida, not vicar general"; Bush, he says, should recall he "won an election, not a canonization." Ruth also warns that Bush might "turn the state into a regulatory theocracy." Finally, Ruth mocks Bush for converting to Catholicism saying, "he missed out on all the fun of having the living daylights beaten out of him as a child by the Sisters of Holy Inquisition."

Here's how Catholic League president William Donohue responded:

"Imagine a columnist from a mainstream newspaper questioning Joseph Lieberman's Jewishness and his suitability for public office. Lieberman, after all, is a rabid defender of Israel and partial-birth abortion, two issues that are popular among Jews. Let's go further: 'If Joseph Lieberman appears for his next inaugural wearing a yarmulke, Star of David and prayer shawl, one might conclude he has taken this whole Jewish liberal political agenda thing just a pinch too far.' Or this: 'It is worth remembering that Lieberman was re-elected senator of Connecticut, not Chief Rabbi.' Picture this: 'Lieberman might turn the state into a regulatory theocracy.'

Finally, because Lieberman never converted to Islam, 'he missed out on all the fun of learning how brutal and oppressive the imperialist theocratic-state of Israel really is.'

"Ruth is more than a bigot, he's a hypocrite. He wants professors fired for views he abhors (see *Tampa Tribune*, Aug. 25) yet he regularly abuses his own free speech rights."