

TROUBLING OBAMA APPOINTEES

With the nomination of Dawn Johnsen to be assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel and the appointment of Harry Knox to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, President Obama showed that his administration has no problem appointing anti-Catholics.

As past staff counsel for the ACLU and legal director for NARAL, Dawn Johnsen has done more than consort with the enemies of Catholicism—she has sought to undermine the Church. In the late 1980s, Johnsen worked on a lawsuit, *United States Catholic Conference v. Abortion Rights Mobilization*, that sought to strip the Church of its tax-exempt status. Thus, she is not simply a critic of the Church's pro-life position—she wants to cripple the institution.

Most Americans are appalled at the thought of partial-birth abortion, but not everyone. For example, Johnsen has said that even the term “partial-birth abortion” is “intentionally provocative,” but there is no evidence that she has ever described the hideous procedure that way.

As soon as President Clinton took office in 1993, he took the occasion to sign five executive orders overturning abortion restrictions. Dawn Johnsen wrote every one of them.

The U.S. bishops strongly oppose the Freedom of Choice Act, a law so draconian that if it were enacted (which Obama has said he would sign) it would force Catholic hospitals to start performing abortions or have their funding pulled. Who helped write this bill? You guessed it, Dawn Johnsen.

To say that Johnsen has a problem with Catholics is a monumental understatement, but she is not alone. With his past anti-Catholic statements, Harry Knox, the director of the religion and faith program at the Human Rights Campaign (HRC),

has proven that he is unfit to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

On the HRC website, it says that Knox was “denied ordination because he is gay.” That is patently untrue. He was denied ordination in the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ because he is a sexually active homosexual. Knox has also said that the Bible is inaccurate in its condemnation of homosexuality. Despite these troubling statements, his open disdain for Catholicism is what makes him a bad choice for this position.

When Pope Benedict XVI said that condoms are not the answer to HIV/AIDS, he was simply voicing common sense: the promiscuous distribution of condoms has coincided with a precipitous increase in HIV/AIDS. But to gay activists, like Knox, the pope was considered a liar. Indeed, Knox instructed the pope to “start telling the truth about condom use,” holding the Holy Father accountable for “endangering people’s lives.”

Knox even went so far as to say that because the Knights of Columbus—like most Americans—oppose gay marriage, they are “foot soldiers of a discredited army of oppression.”

Because of comments like these, Indiana Congressman Mike Pence called on the president to withdraw Knox’s appointment and to “select a person who can serve the faith-based community with the respect and dignity it deserves.”

Though Knox is not Catholic, he could not resist blasting the Church’s 2005 decision to ban homosexual candidates to the priesthood who “supported gay culture.” He branded this position as “an attempt at mind control” and a “dangerous and immoral” stance. In other words, Knox wants candidates like himself, practicing homosexuals so radical that even liberal mainline Protestant denominations turn them away.

With these appointments, Catholics should take note: the Obama administration doesn’t blink when it comes to appointing anti-

Catholics for positions.