

TRUMP RIPPED FOR RELIGION-FRIENDLY STANCE

Bill Donohue comments on a piece by Claire Markham of the Center for American Progress distorting President Trump's commitment to religious liberty:

Neither President Donald Trump, nor his competitor, Hillary Clinton, are known for their devoutness, but unlike the loser, Trump is a reliable friend to people of faith. That is exactly why he is coming under fire from militant secularists. The latest hit job comes courtesy of the Center for American Progress.

John Podesta founded the organization and George Soros funds it. They make quite a pair. In the Wikileaks email exchanges, Podesta was caught bragging about his efforts to subvert the Catholic Church. Soros, as anyone who has looked at the Catholic League's website knows, has a long record of lavishly giving to anti-Catholic groups. So it is hardly surprising that one of their own, [Claire Markham](#), would rip Trump for being religion-friendly.

Markham's first salvo is so obtuse that it makes one wonder how low the hiring bar has fallen at the Center for American Progress. She accuses the Trump administration of wanting to "redefine religious liberty to only people who share its vision of faith." Vision of faith? No one save a dunce speaks that way. The administration has no "vision of faith," but it is committed to the defense of religious liberty, something Podesta and Soros have worked to undermine.

Repeating the lie that is so popular among Trump's critics, Markham decries his "Muslim ban." But there is no ban—only select Muslim-run nations with a history of sponsoring terrorism (as determined by the Obama administration) are

under a temporary ban.

Markham makes a big deal out of the White House statement on the Holocaust that did not specifically mention Jews. This political attack reflects the desire to tag Trump with being unfriendly to every religion, save Christianity. Ironically, it is not Trump or his staff who has been tagged for being an anti-Semite—it is [employees at the Center for American Progress](#).

Trump was also criticized for his desire to repeal the Johnson Amendment, the IRS rule that limits tax-exempt organizations, such as churches, from involvement in the political process. While there are legitimate grounds to question what a repeal might mean, the issue raised by Markham about a “dark money loophole for political donations” is pure demagoguery. Has anyone at the Podesta-Soros organization complained how this has affected the teachers unions and the Democratic Party?

What upsets Markham most is what Trump might do: He might issue an executive order protecting religious liberty. The draft that has circulated is magnificent, notwithstanding the need to do some tweaking. It clearly represents a commitment to expand the reach of religious rights, insulating religious individuals and institutions from being encroached upon by government. Astonishingly, Markham criticizes the draft for its “narrow view of religious liberty.” That’s Orwellian doublespeak. It is precisely because it has a broad view that she is going ballistic.

Trump’s dedication to religious liberty stands in stark relief to the assault on this First Amendment right by the Obama administration. Religious leaders have a moral obligation to support him in these efforts.

Contact Claire Markham: cmarkham@americanprogress.org