

LEFT JOINS KLAN IN PUSHING ANTI-CATHOLIC PARANOIA

By Don Feder

Democrats lost the evangelical vote decades ago. As the last election showed, they are now in danger of permanently losing Catholics.

But the left has devised an ingenious technique for winning back disaffected Catholics – insult their Church and its leader. And they thought of this all by themselves?

As part of the campaign to defeat the Republican push to end the judicial filibuster, on May 17, 2005, MoveOn.org, PAC ran an ad appealing to anti-Catholic paranoia. The broadside was an altered photo that showed Pope Benedict XVI standing outside the Supreme Court's chambers. The pontiff appears to be holding a gavel.

The caption reads: "God Already has a Job..... He does not need one on the Supreme Court. Protect the Supreme Court rules." Huh?

This is gibberish. The filibuster debate concerned changing the *Senate's rules* to end the minority veto of the president's judicial nominations. It had nothing to do with the rules of the Supreme Court.

Still, the clear implication of the ad is that if Bush (a Methodist) is allowed to have an up-or-down vote on his nominees (most of whom are also Protestants), it would be tantamount to turning the high court over to the Catholic Church – making the federal judiciary an auxiliary of Rome.

This makes no sense. But then, when was anti-Catholic bigotry logical.

MoveOn.org's calumny is reminiscent of attacks on the Church by the Ku Klux Klan. In the 1920s, the cross-burners attempted to whip up anti-Catholic hysteria with visions of the Vatican taking over America. When Catholic Al Smith ran for president in 1928, the Klan instructed the great unwashed that a Democratic victory would signal the end of religious freedom in America. Congress would be replaced by a college of cardinals. Protestant marriages would be nullified. The Spanish Inquisition – and not the Monty Python version – would be just around the corner.

A libel invented by bigots in bed sheets now is routinely repeated by bigots in Gucci loafers. The thrust of the MoveOn. ad: If Bush has the same power as all of his predecessors (to appoint judges who share his values) it will be tantamount to turning the judiciary over to the Catholic Church. Abortion will be banned. There will be no gay marriage. Nuns will teach sex-education classes. Mel Gibson will be chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The seas will boil up. Michael Moore's head will explode. (HMMMM.)

It's not just the Rottweiler of leftist websites, funded by millions of dollars from (Imperial Grand Wizard?) George Soros that's saying this. MoveOn.org is a surrogate for the Democratic Party. Established in 1998, with an e-mail list of 2.2 million, the Soros-funded site has raised a ton of money for Democratic candidates over the past three election cycles.

To say the Democrats are tight with the leftist webmasters is an understatement of staggering proportions. To a large extent, MoveOn.org and allied organizations are the heart and soul – and guts, and checking account – of the Democratic Party.

- On April 28, 2005, former Vice President – and environmentalist screamer– Al Gore, speaking at a DC rally for MoveOn.org PAC, excoriated conservatives for “assaulting the integrity of our constitutional design.” Why, these miscreants “even claim that those of us who disagree with their point of view are *waging a war against ‘people of faith,’*” Fat Albert huffed. Presumably, Gore believes that ads suggesting a Vatican takeover of the federal judiciary are supportive of people of faith.
- On May 11, 2004, former President Bill Clinton joined New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and AFL-CIO President John Sweeney in addressing a MoveOn.org rally at Harlem’s Apollo Theater. (On this occasion, bed sheets were left on the clothesline.)
- The revolving door between the website and the Democratic establishment spins faster and faster. In 2002, MoveOn.org hired Internet wunderkind Zack Exley as its organizing director. He left in 2003 to run Howard Dean’s web operations. A year later, Exley again popped up as Director of Online Communications and Online Organizing for the Kerry-Edwards campaign.
- According to an August 23, 2004 article in the American Spectator, in the last presidential election, a very special relationship developed between the Kerry campaign and its Internet alter ego. “In fact,” the Spectator disclosed, “according to a Kerry campaign volunteer, staff members and volunteers of the Kerry campaign in New York, Washington and Los Angeles have been in almost constant contact with MoveOn.org staffers, including advanced viewings and reviews of MoveOn.org television commercials, online ads, and web content. As well, MoveOn.org staffers provide the Kerry campaign with opposition research... .”

So, where is the outrage from prominent Democrats over MoveOn’s anti-Catholic smear? Is Democratic National Chair Howard Dean denouncing the blatant bigotry? Is Gore screaming “how dare they!” (his favorite expression of indignation)? Is Bill Clinton -- who’s great at apologizing for everyone but himself -- issuing a formal mea culpa to the National Catholic Bishops Conference for his past association with these latter-day Know-Nothings?

There’s nothing but silence. The National Democratic Party, which views the Catholic Church as the enemy on issues that matter to it most, is silently cheering on this unabashed Catholic-bashing by its website surrogate.

The party is not above a little Catholic-baiting of its own. When then-Alabama Attorney General Bill Pryor's federal-appeals court nomination came before the Senate in 2003, Democrats darkly hinted at Pryor's "deeply held beliefs" which, it was said, should automatically preclude him from wearing a black robe. New York Sen. Charles Schumer intoned, "In Pryor's case his *beliefs* are so well known, so *deeply held* that it is very hard to believe ... that they are not going to deeply influence the way he comes about saying, 'I will follow the law...'"

Massachusetts Senator-for-life Ted Kennedy told Pryor, "I think the very legitimate issue in question with your nomination is whether you have *an agenda*, that many of the positions which you have taken reflect not just an advocacy but *very deeply held views* and a *philosophy*." And California Senator Dianne Feinstein told Pryor she was troubled his "*extraordinarily strong views* which continue and come out in a number of different ways."

Beliefs which are deeply held, an agenda, deeply held views, extraordinarily strong views -- to what could the Senators be alluding? It's no secret that Pryor is a practicing Catholic who's called Roe vs. Wade "the worst abomination in the history of constitutional law."

Are "deeply held beliefs" etc. code words for traditional Catholics? When challenged by Republicans, Democrats declared that the charge was a smear, noting that Kennedy, Patrick Leahy, Richard Durbin etc. are themselves "Catholic" -- meaning they were raised in Catholic families and attend mass for photo-ops. They also support abortion on demand (including partial birth abortion), homosexual marriage, etc. In other words, they're un-Catholics.

Whether or not the charge is valid, by their extremist position on judicial nominations, the Democrats have created an unconstitutional de facto religious test for public office.

A Catholic who is loyal to the teachings of his Church can't be a blonde cheerleader for the Sexual Revolution. (For that matter, neither can an observant Jew or an evangelical who's paying attention to his Bible). Democrats are saying that to adhere to traditional morality disqualifies a candidate for the federal bench (regardless of experience or other credentials). Thus, they insist that Catholics who take Catholicism seriously must automatically be rejected for judgeships.

If not intentionally anti-Catholic, this is -- at the very least -- anti-Catholicism in practice. Many Catholics who don't support their Church's teachings on social issues understand and resent this.

Catholics constitute 27% of the electorate nationwide. Though Bush lost the Catholic vote by 3 percentage points in 2000, he won by 5 points in 2004 (52% to 47%) -- running against the first major-party, Catholic nominee since 1960 -- albeit a Catholic

who's been to the cafeteria once too often. (So desperate was Kerry for the support of his fellow Catholics that last summer he conveniently recalled being an altar boy – memories of which were probably jogged by opinion polls.)

Of MoveOn.org's latest essay in tolerance and brotherhood, William Donohue of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights observed: "So this is the way George Soros operates. Of all the anti-Catholic canards ever expounded in American history, none is more infamous than the one that accuses the Vatican of steering U.S. public policy.... "

Hey, George, while you're at it, why don't you and your Internet klavern call Mother Teresa a dirty name and do a polka on the grave of John-Paul II? As long as the Democrats have decided to woo Catholics by alienating them, they might as well go all the way