by E. Michael Jones

I was in the middle of a tune when I got the call. On Monday nights I play Irish music at a pub in South Bend. On Monday, February 11, I was planning an early departure on Tuesday morning to speak at the Catholic University School of Architecture, as part of a lecture series on Building Catholic Communities
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In November 2007, Tim Ehlen called to say that he wanted to organize a series of lectures on the topic of Building Catholic Communities. He had gotten my name from Milton Grenfell, a DC architect, who liked my review of Notre Dame Architecture Professor Philip Bess's book, Til We Have Built Jerusalem, which appeared in the July/August issue of Culture Wars. My critique was based largely on the research I had done for The Slaughter of Cities: Urban Renewal as Ethnic Cleansing , a book about the destruction of Catholic neighborhoods. In my review I faulted Bess for ignoring the effect that social engineering in housing had in traumatizing Catholic ethnics and driving them into the suburbs.

Tim Ehlen was now on the phone explaining that the entire lecture series was cancelled by the Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. The Architecture department was the host for this lecture series. I was scheduled to speak in less than 48 hours. This was Monday, February 11 and the series had begun with a talk by Dr. Alan C. Carlson of the Howard Center from Rockford, Illinois. After his presentation and the Question and Answer period was over, Ehlen was called into a meeting with Dean Randall Ott and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, George Martin. The meeting was short and to the point. Just as Dr. Carlson was beginning his presentation, an email was sent from the Southern Poverty Law Center to Ehlen, with copies to Victor Nakas, Associate Vice President of Public Affairs, and Katie Lee, Director or Public Affairs for Catholic University. The president and provost of Catholic University were then contacted by Nakas who in turn pulled Dean Ott, who is a Lutheran, out of the presentation by Dr. Carlson to inform him of a complaint by the Southern Poverty Law Center. “We were surprised that Catholic University was allowing two raging anti-Semites on their campus,” Mr. Mark Potok, of the Center told the Washington Times and presumably the dean. “A simple Google search will show you the frightening ideology of these men.”

“These are not the Latin Mass traditionalists,” Mr. Potok continued, referring to me and John Sharpe of IHS press. “These are the people who reject Vatican II reforms. They are out of [actor Mel Gibson’s father] Hutton Gibson’s world, in saying that the Jews are destroying the world.”

When confronted with the usual SPLC shtick, Dean Ott panicked and canceled the entire lecture series. Six months of effort on the part of Ehlen to put this series together were all over. I would be less than candid if I were to say that cancellations come as a surprise to me. The SPLC, the group which pressured CUA to cancel, employs people whose job it is to find out when I speak and get me canceled.

This time was different, however, because the entire lecture series, which is to say, 10 lectures involving at least 11 experts in their fields covering an entire semester of talks got canceled along with me. In the same issue announcing the cancellation of the lecture series, the Tower announced that Sandra Day O'Connor, the Supreme Court justice who reaffirmed the country's commitment to abortion in the Casey v. Planned Parenthood decision is to be honored by the CUA law school. The SPLC's action was akin to the Nazis lining everyone in the village up against the wall and shooting them all because they were suspected of harboring partisans. Tactics like this rarely generated good will and this instance was no exception to that rule.

If the SPLC had been smart, they should have persuaded the dean to dangle the funding for the lecture series in front of the organizers and say that they could have the money if they singled out me and John Sharpe. As it was, the SPLC applied its usual strong arm tactics; the dean at CUA panicked, and the whole exercise in thought control and character assassination began to go sideways. By the time it was all over, it was clear that the SPLC had won at best a pyrrhic victory, but that is to get ahead of my story.

As its first move, the university tried to issue a meaningless statement which seemed more intent on controlling the damage their panicky reaction had caused rather than illuminating the situation. As Tim was scrambling to find another venue, he called D.C. public relations consultant, Fran Griffin of the PR firm, Griffin Communications . Fran has been a political activist since her college days at the liberal Catholic institution, Rosary College (near Chicago), where she had run-ins with the campus's Black Student Union. (I mentioned her in an article
last year on the Sam Francis conference in D.C., organized by her other group, FGF Books.) Tim explained what happened and asked Fran if she could help find another venue, Fran said, "Tim, I can give you advice on the venue. But more urgently, can I contact the press? This is an outrage." As Tim was thinking about it, I called Fran on the other line to ask her about getting a new location. She said, "Mike, let someone else take care of the venue, Can I contact the media?" I told her to go ahead and for the next 12 hours she, at her own expense, got the word out to the press. The next thing I knew, Julia Duin, the religion writer for The Washington Times called me to read me the statement issued by Nakas, who opined that the lecturers, referring to the entire semester's group of speakers, "appear to espouse views that are contrary to the

mission and values of Catholic University. In light of this development, the dean of the school decided to cancel the lecture series." The damage control, it turns out was even more damaging than the original decision it was intended to defuse because it maligned a group of people who had no idea of why the series was canceled.

What did I think of the Nakas statement, Julia Duin wanted to know. The statement was so vague, however, that it left us both stumped as to how to proceed. After a long pause, Duin said that she remembered my book on Medjugorje, prompting me to wonder whether it was my views on apparitions that had gotten me canceled, and on that note we ended the conversation. Tim Ehlen called back shortly thereafter to say that he had found another venue for the talk; it was going to be held at the Catholic Information Center, in downtown Washington, D.C. And so my wife and I packed up the car we rented and were about to set off for Washington in the midst of a snowstorm when Julia Duin called again. "They're saying that you're an anti-Semite," she said over the phone. Duin's call allowed me to articulate my position for the first time in a public forum other than Culture Wars magazine. In setting in motion the chain of events that led up to this interview, Mark Potok committed a mortal sin against the first law of Jewish thought control, namely, "dynamic silence." Benjamin Ginsberg revealed the existence of this strategy in his book Fatal Embrace. During what has come to be known as the McCarthy Era, which is to say the early 1950s,

the American Jewish Committee developed a strategy it called "dynamic silence" to combat the activities of Gerald L. K. Smith. Working together, officials of the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and the ADL would approach the publishers of major newspapers and owners of radio stations in cities where Smith had scheduled appearances to ask that Smith be given no coverage whatsoever. If newspapers and radio stations failed to cooperate on a voluntary basis, Jewish organizations were usually able to secure their compliance by threatening boycotts by Jewish advertisers. This strategy of dynamic silence was extremely effective in suppressing Smith and other right-wing anti-Semites. (Benjamin Ginsberg, The Fatal Embrace: Jews and the State [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993], p. 124.)

Potok's intervention allowed me to tell The Washington Times that I rejected all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, etc. etc. It also allowed me to restate what I had said at the Sam Francis conference, when I spoke at the National Press Club in March 2007.
Heidi Beirich of the SPLC attended that talk, but both she and Mark Potok seem determined to make sure that no one ever got an accurate account of my position. Julia Duin's call foiled that

strategy. And her call never would have happened if Mark Potok hadn't gotten the lecture series canceled. This was the first of many times during the next few days when the statement of Joseph to his brothers would pop into my mind. "The evil you intended to do to me," Joseph said to the brothers who had betrayed him, "has been turned by God's power into good."

And so, because of Mr. Potok's intervention, I was allowed to say in a major DC newspaper that I found the cancellation "outrageous"; I was further allowed to say

"We were Catholics talking to other Catholics about community. The SPLC has veto power over what Catholics say to each other, all because of the cowards at Catholic University. Don't you think they owed me the courtesy of at least calling me up? Wasn't there any due process here?"

And I was allowed to say, "Everything I have said is totally consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church . . . . There is nothing anti-Semitic about anything that I have ever said. And I reject racism."

As I said, I would have had no forum to say any of this anywhere outside of Culture Wars magazine without the intervention of Mark Potok. So, thank you, Mr. Potok.

My statements in the Washington Times put Catholic University in a bind, because now both Victor Nakas and Dean Randall Ott had gone on record as banning a Catholic from speaking at the bishops' university for articulating the Catholic position in a book which did not figure into the conference at all as well as banning nine other speakers whose position had nothing whatsoever to do with Mark Potok's grievance. They had also gone on record in preventing me from articulating a position on Catholic community drawn from another book, The Slaughter of Cities, which had nothing whatsoever to do with Jews. All in all, it was a red letter day in the history of academic freedom in America.

Victor Nakas, it turns out, had already articulated Catholic University's speakers' policy in a way that supported my position and should have protected me from Mark Potok's attack. On September 21, 2007 Meg Jalsevac writing for LifeSiteNews.com reported that the College Democrats had received permission to invite pro-abortion Senator John Kerry to lecture at the university in what seemed like deliberate defiance of the US bishops' ban on allowing Catholic institutions to promote abortion. This seeming contradiction, however, was no match for the dialectical skills of Victor Nakas, who explained to Jalsevac that "a Kerry lecture at CUA would not be a contradiction to the USCCB policy" because

We verified with the bishops themselves that the intent of the statement was to refuse a platform to speakers who would be invited to speak on those specific issues for which they hold positions that are at variance with the fundamental moral teachings of the Catholic Church (emphasis in original email).

In his e-mail to Jalsevac, Nakas continued

This means, for example, that we would be violating the letter and the intent of the bishops' statement were we to invite Sen. Kerry to speak on abortion. However, we would not be violating the letter and the spirit of the bishops' statement were we to permit the College

Democrats to invite Sen. Kerry to speak on the environment or the Iraq war.

So according to the principles articulated by Nakas himself, I should have been allowed to speak because the topic which I had been invited to talk about—building Catholic communities—had nothing to do with the issues Mark Potok raised. Beyond that, my views on the Jews are totally consistent with the teaching of the Church in a way that Kerry's views on abortion are not, so they should not disqualified me from speaking. This is, of course a fortiori true for the ten other speakers who got canceled along with me who had never even heard of my views and had probably never even heard of me either.

But by now, it should be obvious that any sense of principle or due process goes out the window the moment that anyone raises the issue of anti-Semitism. This is the ultimate taboo in our culture, and the people at the SPLC are fully aware of this fact and exploit this situation as a way of silencing the people that they want silenced. Potok has learned from experience that he has maximal leverage at the places which proclaim their commitment to academic freedom the loudest, which is to say academe in general and Catholic academe in particular.

The incident also shows the parlous state of Catholic Higher education in America, 41 years after Land o' Lakes when Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, CSC, stole Notre Dame from the Catholic Church. Hesburgh was loud in proclaiming academic freedom as the justification of his theft of church property. "No institution outside of the university," he proclaimed, can dictate policy at an institution like the newly-liberated University of Notre Dame. Hesburgh, of course, had coupled his defiance of Rome and Catholic doctrine with a policy of opening the University of Notre Dame up to control by the highest bidder when it came to foundation and government money. Four years before he issued his Land o' Lakes manifesto, Hesburgh had arranged with John D. Rockefeller, 3rd's Population Council to sponsor a series of secret conferences whose purpose was to get Catholic theologians to undermine the Church's teaching on contraception. As part of the negotiations which led up to those conferences, paid for by Rockefeller money, Hesburgh agreed to subject the speakers' list, the topics' list and even the books that got put out onto the literature tables, to Population Council approval. As his reward for groveling for Rockefeller money, Hesburgh was given the AAUP's Meickeljohn award for promoting academic freedom one year later.

Hesburgh's betrayal of both Catholic principle and the principle of academic freedom has led to the current situation at Catholic colleges across the United States. According to this view, any attempt to undermine Catholic sexual morality is automatically defended as a courageous form of free speech which is protected by academic freedom. On the other hand, anytime someone like Mark Potok and the SPLC raises the spectre of anti-Semitism, all of the normal talk about academic freedom ceases, due process is suspended, and the speaker is banned within minutes of the charge being raised, even if the topic he is going to speak on has nothing to do with the Jews. The new wrinkle added by Catholic U is that now anyone in the same lecture series can be banned as well.

When CUA president Daniel M. O'Connell meets with Notre Dame professors in private, he likes to brag about how orthodox and Catholic his university is in comparison to theirs. However, the recent cancellation of the Building Catholic Communities lecture series at CUA shows that there is no essential difference between these universities when it comes to compromising both academic freedom and the Catholic character of the university when subjected to pressure by groups like the SPLC. Father O'Connell, in fact, espouses what might be called the Jenkins doctrine of academic freedom: Vagina Monologues, Si! Oberammergau, No!

The doctrine gets its name from the hapless president of Notre Dame University, Rev. John Jenkins, CSC, who as one of his first acts in office articulated a position on academic freedom which would allow the performance of the obscene Vagina Monologues but would ban a performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play. Which group thinks that obscenity is a protected form of expression but Passion Plays are not? If you're answer to that question was the Jews, you have come a long way toward understanding how commissars like Mark Potok can impose Jewish forms of political correctness on Catholic institutions like CUA and Notre Dame. In his book, The Jewish Century, Yuri Slezkine opined that in becoming moderns we had all become Jewish. The same verdict applies a fortiori to Catholic academe in America. Combine the internalization of Jewish values that Slezkine mentioned, as manifested in the

mind of John Jenkins, with the normal intellectual cowardice that one finds in Catholic academics and administrators, and you will find a situation where Catholics are eager to denounce other Catholics in a way that would make Stasi informers blush with shame.

Notre Dame was embroiled in a controversy of its own at the same time the Building Catholic Communities conference was banned at CUA. In early February, a delegation of bishops refused to meet at ND because The Vagina Monologues was scheduled to be performed there. This brought about a two and a half hour meeting between Jenkins and the Most Rev. John M. Darcy, ordinary of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, during which Jenkins refused to budge, claiming that if the issue were anti-Semitism, he would have acted with alacrity. Jenkins' refusal has precipitated a crisis at Notre Dame. Bishop Daniel Jenky, CSC, is threatening to resign from the board, which would probably lead to the resignation of Jenkins less than a third of the way into his term as president.

When I mentioned The Vagina Monologues to the student reporter who was sent to cover my talk—which eventually got held at the originally scheduled time, but at the Catholic Information Center on K St.—he informed me that it had not been allowed to be performed on the CUA campus. Before President O'Connell, who is rumored to be Bishop Darcy's successor, uses this fact as an excuse to run to the front of the synagogue and proclaim that he is "not like the rest of men," it is worth noting that the CUA variant of the Vagina Monologues is Antonella Barba.

For the uninitiated, which is to say, for the few people out there who do not watch TV, Antonella Barba is a student in the CUA school of architecture, who competed on American Idol and can be seen (if you remove the safe search from you search engine) at various national monuments in various stages of undress, engaging in various forms of sexual activity. She also attempted to get other CUA coeds to pose naked for a CUA calendar. This caused a scandal among CUA students, many of whom felt her behavior contradicted the Catholic nature of the university and wanted the university to do something. Instead of reprimanding Barba, CUA responded on

February 16, 2007 by issuing a press release which encouraged “friends and fellow CUA students” to “gather in the Edward J. Pryzbyla University Center for viewings of the live episodes that feature Barba,” who was presumably wearing most of her clothes and not performing fellatio at the time. Barba, CUA students were told in the same press release

will next perform [that word again] Wednesday, Feb. 21 (8 p.m. E.T.), on FOX. The lowest male and female vote-getters will be eliminated from the competition during a live show on Thursday, Feb. 22 (8 p.m. E.T.), on FOX. For now, fantonellas can show their support for Barba on the Web site antonella-barba.org — one of three Internet sites that have already cropped up to keep tabs on Barba’s trek toward singer-stardom.

This is just one more instance of the Jenkins doctrine—Vagina Monologues, Si! Oberammergau, No!—in action on the CUA campus. By acquiescing to the SPLC’s demands, Catholic University was also acquiescing to the speech code it is the SPLC’s mission to enforce.

At this point it is worth pondering the speech code to which Victor Nakas and Randall Ott have committed all of us, Catholics in particular. According to that code, anyone who has ever said anything that Mark Potok of the SPLC or Abe Foxman of the ADL finds offensive will never be allowed to speak on any topic whatsoever ever again. In addition to that, anyone associated with that person will also be prohibited from speaking as well, even if they have never met or heard of the speaker who incurred the wrath of the SPLC or the ADL in the first place. What Nakas and Ott failed to explain is how this draconian code is compatible with American principle, church teaching, or academic freedom. The cancellation of the lecture series on Building Catholic Community exposed the speech code under which all of us now live in all of its totalitarian malignity. It is not enforced by any law or government agency. Its force depends on the cowardice and lack of solidarity of those who capitulate to it.

The reaction which followed the cancellation was a tacit admission that Catholic U. had not only reneged on its commitment to academic freedom; it had, out of cowardice, acquiesced to a speech code so draconian that it inspired outrage in virtually everyone who commented on it.

Shortly after the news of the cancellation appeared on the SPLC website, Carl Gethman wrote to President O'Connell. "I am amazed," Gethman wrote,

that your university would cancel a lecture series by Dr. E. Michael Jones and by Mr. John Sharpe on the mere say-so of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). SPLC is a virulently anti-Catholic organization who, while presenting themselves as defenders of Negroes, has done little or nothing for them. In point of fact, if you examine the activities of the SPLC you find that they spend most of their funds and energies in defending the state of Israel. SPLC has made it a major thrust of their policy to destroy the careers and lives of anyone who criticizes the policies of the state of Israel and the war in Iraq.

Why your university caved into the SPLC's totally unsupported charge of anti-semitism against these two outstanding gentlemen is beyond my comprehension and absolute disgrace especially since you gave neither of them a chance to defend themselves against these spurious charges.

It appears that in this country all anyone has to say to silence someone whose opinions they do not agree with is to accuse them of being an anti-semite or a racist. No one bothers to look into whether or not these accusations are accurate.

I have read most of the writings of both of these gentlemen. I can assure that they both are honorable and truthful men who thoroughly and accurately document everything they write. Unfortunately for them, they both oppose Israeli policies and the unjust war in Iraq, which by any measure, has been probably the biggest foreign policy blunder in our history.

I protest most vigorously your university's cancellation of their lecture series. It seems that you have a problem with the political views of people who defend the Church and its magisterial teachings, but do not seem to have a problem inviting speakers to your university who belittle, denigrate, and oppose the tenets and dogmas of the Roman Catholic faith. I strongly suggest that your have your priorities backwards.

I will pray for you and the administrators of your university that when the next moment of decision occurs that you will make the proper decision and stand up for what is right and not for what is expedient.

By Friday, February 15, the tide had turned, and by this point all of the publicity was running in favor of the banned speakers and against the SPLC and the CUA administration. Tim Ehlen's determination to find another venue, plus the speakers' willingness to go on in spite of the cancellation, plus Fran Griffin's press release, plus the willingness of the Catholic Information Center to accommodate the lecture on short notice, plus Julian Duin's article in the Washington Times had turned a lecture series that would most probably been ignored into a news story, which had taken on a life of its own.

On Friday afternoon, the Barbara Hollingsworth, local opinion editor of the Examiner ran an article on the cancellation on her blog "Sharp Sticks," which meant more bad news for the SPLC. In response to the SPLC claim that I was a "raging anti-Semite," Hollingsworth "googled Jones" and came up with an October 2006 article, "The Conversion of the Revolutionary Jew," about which she wrote

Jones believes in converting Jews to Christianity, a highly politically-incorrect view also held by Pope Benedict XVI. But in the same article he says: "The Church is not and cannot possibly be anti-Semitic, because the term refers primarily to race and racial hatred. The Church cannot promote racial hatred of any group, certainly not of the Jews because its founder was a member of that racial group.... Anti-Semitism, if by that term we mean hatred of the Jews because of immutable and ineradicable racial characteristics, is wrong."

Hollingsworth's claim raises an interesting point. If "a simple Google search," to use Mark Potok's phrase, made my views clear to Barbara Hollingsworth, why didn't Nakas and Ott make that minimal attempt at research before they cancelled the lecture series? Do the administrators at Catholic University know how to do Google searches on their computers? Do they know how to read?

Hollingsworth's article continued in the same vein:

Jones categorically denies being anti-Semitic. "That's not true. I wrote a theological book on the Jews ("The Jewish Revolutionary Spirit") that Mr. Potok doesn't like," he told me. "The dean (at CUA) didn't bother to call anybody before pulling the rug totally out from under us."

Hollingsworth then got to the double standard which lies at the heart of anti-Semitism as a form of thought control practiced by groups like the SPLC. The goyim are punished for quoting Jews, or as Hollingsworth put it:

To make things even more confusing, an article published in the 2004 Jewish Quarterly entitled "Triple Exthnics: Jews in the American porn industry" by author Nathan Abrams raises one of the same points Beirich accuses Jones of making. Does that mean that Abrams is a "raging anti-Semite" too?

Hollingsworth failed to mention that the Abrams article presents a new wrinkle in the anti-Semitism as political control story. Abrams lifted essentially his entire article from my piece on Jewish involvement in pornography, "Rabbi Dresner's Dilemma." Perhaps more than anything else my article and Abrams' rewriting of it exposes the intellectual absurdity of the current use of the term anti-Semitism. In "Dresner," I quoted Al Goldstein, who said that Jews were involved in pornography because "Christ sucks," and was termed an anti-Semite for quoting him. But then Abrams quotes me and presumably uses his article, which makes essentially the same points as mine, as reason for raise and tenure for his academic sinecure, whereas my article, the source of Abrams' ideas, gets me banned from Catholic University.

It gets even more complicated. Hollingsworth then brings up the fact that "In David Horowitz' Frontpage Magazine, former Boston Herald writer Don Feder [a Jew himself] says he was 'slimed' by the SPLC, and that the radical group makes 'the Anti-Defamation League and the ACLU seem nuanced, objective and calm by comparison.'"

“A simple Google search”

This brings up another interesting point. “A simple Google search,” as Mark Potok puts it, would have revealed not only my views; it would have also revealed the unsavory history of the Southern Poverty Law Center and its history of exploiting black misery for financial gain, as revealed in Ken Silverstein’s November 2000 article in Harper’s magazine, “The Church of Morris Dees: How the Southern Poverty Law Center profits from intolerance.”
Again, the same questions arise: Do the administrators at Catholic University know what a search engine is? Have they heard about Google? Do they know how to read?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, and if Nakas and Ott had spent another five minutes of their valuable time on the computer before canceling the entire Building Catholic Communities lecture series, they might have learned that

The SPLC’s “other important work justice” consists mainly in spying on private citizens who belong to “hate groups,” sharing its files with law-enforcement agencies, and suing the most prominent of these groups for crimes committed independently by their members-a practice that, however seemingly justified, should give civil libertarians pause.

They might also have learned that

The American Institute of Philanthropy gives the Center one of the worst ratings of any group it

monitors, estimating that the SPLC could operate for 4.6 years without making another tax-exempt nickel from its investments or raising another tax-deductible cent from well-meaning "people like you."

They might also have learned that, Attorney Gloria Browne resigned from the SPLC after concluding that "the Center's programs were calculated to cash in on 'black pain and white guilt.'" A good example of that occurred in 1987, when the SPLC

won a $7 million judgment against the United Klans of America on behalf of Beulah Mae Donald, whose son was lynched by two Klansmen. The UKA's total assets amounted to a warehouse whose sale netted Mrs. Donald $51,875. According to a groundbreaking series of newspaper stories in the Montgomery Advertiser, the SPLC, meanwhile, made $9 million from fund-raising solicitations featuring the case, including one containing a photo of Michael Donald's corpse.

Nelson Algren once said that every movement begins as a cause, becomes a business and ends up as a racket. The SPLC is the civil rights movement as racket. It is notorious among legitimate civil rights groups, like

the Atlanta-based Southern Center for Human Rights, which handles several dozen death-penalty cases a year. "You are a fraud and a conman," the Southern Center's director, Stephen Bright, wrote in a 1996 letter to [SPLC director Morris] Dees, and proceeded to list his many reasons for thinking so, which included "your failure to respond to the most desperate needs of the poor and powerless despite your millions upon millions, your fund-raising techniques, the fact that you spend so much, accomplish so little, and promote yourself so shamelessly."

The Left, as well as the heirs of the civil rights movement, all consider Morris Dees and the SPLC a fraud. Apparently the only people who don't know this about the SPLC are the deans and professors at Catholic universities, who are so busy denouncing other Catholics that they can't find the time to find out what everyone else already knows with the benefit of what Mark Potok calls "a simple Google search." Writing in the New York Press in 2007, the British

Left-wing journalist Alexander Cockburn wrote:

I've long regarded Morris Dees and his Southern Poverty Law Center as collectively one of the greatest frauds in American life. The reasons: a relentless fundraising machine devoted to terrifying its mostly low-income contributors into unbelting ill-spared dollars year after year to an organization that now has an endowment of more than $100 million, with very little to show for it beyond hysterical bulletins designed to raise money on the proposition that only the SPLC can stop Nazism and the KKK from seizing power.

Given this much evidence so easily available, Dean Ott's snap decision to cancel the lecture series amounts to actionable negligence.

That "simple Google search" led Reporter Barbara Hollingsworth to formulate the questions which Professors Nakas and Ott should have raised before they acted so precipitously, namely,

Are Jones and Sharpe "raging anti-Semites" who should not be allowed to speak on any Catholic campus, even on a topic that has nothing whatsoever to do with Jews? If they are, the SPLC hasn't proved it beyond a reasonable doubt. All of the citations the group provided were SPLC's interpretation of what the two men supposedly espouse, not their own words.

Accusing somebody of being a "raging anti-Semite" is a very serious charge; those who make it should be required to provide irrefutable proof. So far, SPLC hasn't, so it's impossible for an objective observer to tell whether the accusations against the two are true or whether SPLC is just using them as fodder for its next direct mail broadside.

That being the case, shouldn't the benefit of the doubt be in favor of free speech? I tried to ask

CUA officials this question, but they didn't return my call.

University administrators are supposed to be defenders of academic freedom, which by definition is the right to pursue even highly unpopular topics, because if everybody agreed with everybody else, protecting speech would not be necessary. By kicking the lecture series on Catholic communities off campus without irrefutable proof these two panelists are guilty as charged, CUA officials betrayed not only them, but their own educational mission as well.

Rejection of Logos

On the same day that Barbara Hollingsworth's piece appeared in the Examiner, Ryan J. Reilly's piece on the cancellation of the lecture series appeared in The Tower , the CUA student newspaper. Reilly was the student reporter who had interviewed me the night of my talk at the Catholic Information Center. His article could not have made Mark Potok happy either. Tim Ehlen got to label the SPLC as an "anti-Catholic, pro-Israel group" that is "extremely well-funded, and fights dirty." Reilly portrayed Dean Ott as hiding out in the tall grass: "Calls to Ott were transferred to the Office of Public Affairs, which had no further comment." And Jones got to address the anti-Semitism charges on his terms:

"Jesus Christ came to earth as the messiah. When he arrived on earth, the Jews had to make a choice. They could either accept Him, or they could reject Him," said Jones. "The further premise of the book is when Jews rejected Jesus Christ, they rejected logos. Christ is the logos, the order of the Universe, and when they rejected logos, they became revolutionaries." Jones, Reilly continued, "said his views are consistent with the Catholic faith and found it outrageous that he could not say it at Catholic University. 'It is outrageous that this dean will listen to this group of racketeers and not give me the courtesy of asking me, is this true?" said Jones. "It is total intellectual cowardice on this man's part. We are trying to articulate the basis for Catholic Community. Catholic U. should be ashamed at itself for turning its back on its own people.'"

“Jones said that Catholic academia is full of hypocrisy, and called for solidarity amongst Catholics.” A graduate student who attended the speech said it was a shame that the lecture was taken off campus, “because the issues discussed are very important to the issues that many majors deal with - architecture, law, theology and so on.” He said that the SPLC labels as an anti-Semite anyone who believes that Judaism, as a religion, is insufficient. ”The lies propagated by the SPLC should be rejected instead of the school caving in to them,” said the student, who wished to remain anonymous.

The responses to the article were even more hostile to the SPLC. “Where is the liberal outrage that we saw when Stanley Tucci was barred from campus,” wondered Jimmie.

Does the fact that the SPLC is labeling Dr. Jones an anti-Semite make him an anti-Semite,” Jimmie continued, “especially when he denies the charge? Shouldn’t he have been given the opportunity to defend himself? Or are bureaucrats like Randall Ott so afraid of being slandered with the SPLC’s brush that they can’t take the time to do their due diligence? Do we actually take the claims on the SPLC’s blog at face value or do we investigate them? They cite a number of headlines as “hateful” that I for the life of me don’t understand and couldn’t understand without the articles? Did they actually read the articles or take the information at face value? What’s next? Do we not allow Mel Gibson to speak because the Anti-Defamation League doesn’t like The Passion of the Christ? Do we ban the Pope because the ADL doesn’t like his revision of the Good Friday prayer? I find it very strange that we would allow an organization so affiliated with the extreme left to determine who is and is not in communion with the Holy See. Surely if the issue is one of Catholicity, it should be determined by competent ecclesiastical authorities such as the Archbishop of Washington or the Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, not PR flacks like Victor Nakas or bureaucrats like Randall Ott.

Jimmie made a crucial point here: who gets to determine policy and doctrine at the bishops’ university in America? Unlike Notre Dame, Catholic University is a pontificial institution run by the United States bishops. Can this nation’s bishops articulate their own position at their own university, or will they continue to cave into pressure by groups like the SPLC by accepting, at least tacitly if not explicitly, their definition of anti-Semitism and all of the political control that goes along with it. Is the Gospel of St. John anti-Semitic? Do the nation’s bishops have to accept the verdict of the SPLC or the ADL on that question too? If not, why do those groups get to determine the speakers’ policy at the bishops’ university?

This lack of an agreed upon definition of anti-Semitism plagued the blog discussions of the incident. The discussion on the blogs revolved for the most part around a semantic issue. No one took the time to define anti-Semitism, and so no one knew what the other side meant when it used the term. Bloggers like Mark seemed to be working from the SPLC's definition of the term, which meant someone who talks about Jews in a way that Jews like Mark Potok do not like. On the SPLC website, Mark Potok accused me of being a "raging anti-Semite." As evidence he cited "the magazines's cover stories [which] give a flavor of its message: "Judaizing: Then and Now," "The Converso Problem: Then and Now," "The Judaism of Hitler," "Shylock comes to Notre Dame," and so on.

Potok's Definition

This indicates Potok's definition of anti-Semitism as well as his bind. According to his definition, anyone who mentions Jews is ipso facto an anti-Semite. "Shylock comes to Notre Dame" is, therefore, prima facie evidence supporting his claim. This also indicates his bind. If he tells the truth he is spreading my message. If he lies, he is going to be found out. Both things happened as a result of the cancellation of the CUA lecture series. Hundreds of people who otherwise never would have heard of me went to the Culture Wars website and read what I had to say, as opposed to the words Potok was putting in my mouth. In doing so, they discovered that "Shylock comes to Notre Dame" was about a performance of The Merchant of Venice on that campus and the discussion which ensued.

The SPLC attack allowed me to make more forcefully the points I made in my review of Til We Have Built Jerusalem, points which I intended to make on the CUA campus as well. What Professor Bess calls the Tocqueville option—i.e., that an essentially benign American culture can bring about the assimilation and amalgamation of disparate ethnic groups— is no longer a viable option. The actions of the SPLC show that the war on Catholic community which began with the government orchestration of black migration into Catholic parishes like St. Louis the

King parish in Detroit and proceeded to include busing as a way of destroying Southie in Boston and culminated in the destruction of Poletown (all of which I have documented in The Slaughter of Cities) continues to this day. As I showed in that book, this campaign had always been delegated to certain nongovernmental groups which enjoyed government favor. The American Friends Service Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union sent spies into bars on the south side of Chicago in the '50s. Alexander Cockburn's account of the SPLC's recent attack on the anti-globalization movement lends credence to this suspicion. At some point in their relentless quest for "terrifying specters with which to coax the money out of the pockets of the suckers," as Cockburn puts it, the SPLC declared war on the environmentalists, claiming in their newsletter that they "They pine for nations of peasant-like folk tied closely to the land and to their neighbors." This leads Cockburn to "suspect that both the SPLC and the Anti-Defamation League (which helped fuel the FBI"s Y2K predictions) are hauling water for the [Federal] bureau [of Investigation], essentially acting as subcontractors performing tasks of defamation that in the old COINTELPRO days would have been performed by the bureau itself." The government now allows people who claim to be heirs of the civil rights movement to continue the disruption of Catholic communities which began under people like Louis Wirth at the OWI. That campaign would never have succeeded without the collaboration of Catholic quislings, people who were willing to denounce fellow Catholics to advance their careers. The more things change, the more they remain the same. Dennis Clark meet Victor Nakas and Randall Ott.

Diogenes, at cwnews.com/off the record raised the issue of who controls Catholic colleges and universities:

In San Antonio, devout Catholics complained to the archbishop when St. Mary's University hosted a campaign rally for Senator Hillary Clinton. Clinton's support for abortion, same-sex marriage, and embryonic stem-cell research are a matter of public record, they pointed out. The archbishop was sympathetic. The university was not. The rally went ahead on schedule. St. Louis University basketball coach Rick Majerus appeared at another Clinton rally and put his own support for abortion on the record. Devout Catholics were scandalized. The archbishop was appalled. But the Jesuit-run university said it was no big deal; Majerus was entitled to his own views.

So it's interesting that in Washington this week, Catholic University stepped in to squash an entire lecture series because some speakers "appear to espouse views that are contrary to the mission and values of Catholic University." What prompted such a decisive response? The speakers scheduled to appear at Catholic U. were E. Michael Jones, the editor of Culture Wars

magazine, and John Sharpe, founder of IHS Press. Both are Catholics— admittedly of a controversial stripe, but Catholics nonetheless. So what was the complaint against them? The Southern Poverty Law Center— a leftist group that has often criticized Catholics— charges that Jones and Sharpe are “raging anti-Semites.” A spokesman for the group claimed: “A simple Google search will show you the frightening ideology of these men.”

Go ahead. Try the Google search. Are you convinced? Do you see compelling evidence of anti-Semitism? Anything as clear as Hillary Clinton’s voting record? The question here is not whether you and I agree with Jones and Sharpe, but whether their views are demonstrably at odds with the teachings of the Catholic Church. When you’re finished with that question, ask yourself why it is that officials at Catholic universities will ignore the plaintive cries of the Catholic laity, but leap to respond to a left-wing pressure group.

Responding to Diogenes’ post, Gil wrote : “As you know perfectly well, Di, the answer to your final question lies in the adjective describing the pressure group. I did Google E. Michael Jones and in 20 or so minutes found nothing to support a charge of anti-Semitism. Though there was a letter from somebody who did sound a trifle anti-Semitic criticizing Jones for not getting into bed with him. (I paraphrase.) A search for Catholic on the SPLC’s Website does turn up numerous articles attacking conservative Catholics.”

To which Brian Kopp added : “No one who defends traditional Catholic theology is now safe from the spurious change of anti-semitism.”

One week after the lecture series was canceled at Catholic University, Tim Ehlen found a home for the series at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family, 4250 Harewood Road NE, not far from the original location, so maybe some CUA architecture students will get to attend the lecture series after all. Who knows, maybe Antonella Barba will show up too. If she does, maybe Tim Ehlen can persuade her to teach Professors Ott and Nakas how to run a search engine.

E. Michael Jones is editor of Culture Wars .

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