

The *Eminence Grise* Of The Boston Archdiocese

By C. JOSEPH DOYLE & PAUL LIKODIS

Thirty-four years ago, on March 16, 1978, *The Wanderer* published an editorial by its editor, A.J. Matt Jr., calling on the United States Catholic Conference/National Conference of Catholic Bishops to fire Fr. Bryan Hehir, associate secretary for international justice and peace, for his relentless advocacy of left-wing politics, especially his role in steering the U.S. bishops away from a principled and forthright opposition to abortion, contraception, and national and international "family planning" programs.

During his 20-year tenure at the USCC/NCCB, from 1972 to 1992, Fr. Hehir was a coordinator and facilitator for the 1976 Call to Action conference in Detroit; he advised the U.S. bishops, and the Holy See, to "regard contraceptive practice as an issue of private morality" — the poisonous fruit of which was episcopal and clerical silence when the purity of children and the rights of parents were assaulted by condom distribution programs in public schools; he advised the bishops, as the presumed originator of the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin's "seamless garment" theory, that pushing the abortion issue would cause the Church to lose allies on other social justice issues; and he was instrumental in formulating New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's infamous 1984 address at Notre Dame, where he articulated the "personally opposed, but" con game on abortion that Catholic politicians could subscribe to Church teaching, but ignore it and oppose it in public policy.

After leaving the USCC/NCCB, Hehir's influence continued. He was, for example, cited by the *Playboy*-funded Catholics for a Free Choice for his position that Catholic hospitals should not be exempt from providing contraceptive services to their clients and employees.

Fast-forward: Fr. Bryan Hehir, after leaving the USCC/NCCB, went to Harvard University to teach, and then, after Sean Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap., was appointed archbishop of Boston, was brought into the inner circle of archdiocesan leadership, as the head of Catholic Charities and as Cardinal O'Malley's informal but influential adviser on a host of public policy questions.

Hehir would subsequently join the archdiocesan cabinet as secretary for Health and Social Services. But his portfolio is much broader than that. He was the decisive influence in selecting a new executive director for the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, the lobbying arm for the state's four Catholic bishops, and has become, effectively, the episcopal moderator for the conference.

Many people believe that most public expressions of Catholic teaching in the archdiocese bear the influence of Fr. Bryan Hehir.

Prior to Cardinal O'Malley's arrival in Boston, the former archbishop, Bernard Cardinal Law, kept Hehir at arm's length from the central administration of the archdiocese, and even objected to his hiring by Harvard Divinity School. As *The Boston Globe* reported, September 27, 2003, after O'Malley announced he had hired Hehir as president of Catholic Charities, "Cardinal Bernard F. Law, then archbishop of Boston, made it clear he was unhappy with Hehir being stationed at Harvard, a historically Unitarian school with a reputation for progressive theology."

During his tenure as president of Catholic Charities in Boston, and then as secretary for Health and Social Services, Hehir has presided over a number of fiascos, including the notorious 2005 "Man of the Year" award to Boston's fanatically pro-homosexual, pro-abortion, pro-contraception Mayor Thomas M. Menino. After a memorandum by the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts to Cardinal O'Malley detailing and documenting Menino's decades-long opposition to Catholic

teaching was leaked to the press, O'Malley withdrew from the dinner. Hehir persisted in presenting the award to Menino, which resulted in the annual banquet of Catholic Charities being picketed by the Catholic Action League, Operation Rescue Boston, and numerous pro-life groups.

The archdiocese and Catholic Charities were further embarrassed when an aggravated Menino decided to unburden himself to the media on Catholic teaching. Menino explained that abortion, after all, was just "choice," that pro-lifers were filled with "hate," and most memorably, "Jesus, you know, didn't go around all the time talking up God."

In April 2005, Hehir also criticized the U.S. bishops for threatening to withhold Communion from pro-abortion Catholic politicians, such as Massachusetts' Sen. John Kerry. At the same time, according to *The Boston Globe* (April 30, 2005), he expressed his fears of the "conservative" papacy of newly elected Pope Benedict XVI.

Other fiascos include Catholic Charities advertising in the viciously anti-Catholic, homosexual newspaper *Bay Windows*, the decision of the Holy See to order Catholic Charities to cease placing children in homosexual households, the subsequent end to adoption services by the Archdiocese of Boston — viewed by some as Hehir putting a thumb in the eye of the Vatican, and, finally, the infamous Commonwealth Care contract of 2009 in which Caritas Christi Healthcare (the chain of six Catholic hospitals affiliated with the Archdiocese of Boston) was to implement health-care programs for low-income residents which included abortion, sterilization, and contraception.

The Boston Globe gleefully broke the story of Catholic complicity in abortion in February 2009, igniting a firestorm in the pro-life community. Instead of immediately pulling the plug on the contract, which was scheduled to go into effect in July 2009, the archdiocese, under Hehir's influence, needlessly protracted the controversy, resorting to every trick to preserve Caritas Christi involvement in the program.

Using Clintonian language, the archdiocese claimed Caritas Christi would not be involved in abortion referrals despite the testimony of officials of the Caritas subsidiary. Because of Hehir's decision to go through with the contract, it was the end of June 2009 before Cardinal O'Malley ordered Caritas to withdraw, vindicating the very pro-life critics whom the cardinal had castigated a few months earlier as doing "a grave disservice to the Church" with their charges.

There is no question in Boston that Fr. Hehir is the *eminence grise* of the archdiocese; his fingerprints are on everything.

Under Cardinal Law, all those involved in the Massachusetts Catholic Conference and in the archdiocesan communications office — that is, anyone involved in articulating positions on Catholic issues — were known as conservative, orthodox, and pro-life. Now, under an O'Malley episcopate influenced by Bryan Hehir, Boston Catholics have Terry Donilon — a former aide to Rhode Island's pro-abortion Gov. Bruce Sundlun and the brother of President Obama's national security adviser — as the spokesman for the archdiocese; a major Obama-Biden fund raiser, Jack Connors, who serves on the archdiocesan Council of Finance, leads the Catholic schools foundation; and, under Hehir's leadership at the health secretariat, there was Barney Frank fund-raiser James Karam as chairman of Caritas Christi.

Bottom line: The Archdiocese of Boston has taken a sharp left turn since Cardinal Law's departure, and there is no indication that will change as long as Fr. Hehir, the ultimate liberal apparatchik, remains in power.

At a moment when the Church is striving to launch a "new evangelization" in this Year of Faith, the Archdiocese of Boston under Fr. Hehir's leadership is more concerned with conforming to the secular culture, appeasing a hostile liberal media, and protecting renegade pro-abortion Catholic politicians and their apologists in the Catholic community. Hehir calls this "rebuilding trust"

with civil society, but that is a ruse for enabling dissent, as Fr. Hehir's record over 40 years illustrates.

+ + +

(C. Joseph Doyle is the executive director of the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts; Paul Likoudis is news editor for *The Wanderer*.)

Democratic Doublethink

By DONALD DeMARCO

There is a scene in a *Seinfeld* episode in which Jerry is defending himself against the charge of sending damaged merchandise through the mail and claiming insurance compensation. Newman, representing the Post Office, insists that goods sent through the mail are "rarely" damaged. Seinfeld asks his prosecutor to define "rarely." Newman's immediate response is, "frequently."

The Democratic Party has, according to its platform, committed itself to being "inclusive." If, in a moment of candor, it defined its notion of "inclusive," it would be obliged to say, "exclusive."

The facts are both patent and indisputable. A party that promises to "open the doors [to] let people in" can hardly be reconciled with its eager acceptance of closing the door to millions of unborn babies. The Democratic Convention also made it clear, through live television, that many, if not most, of its delegates were eager to exclude God. "A fractured nation, without God, with liberty and justice for some" is not what I remember pledging when I was a schoolboy in America.

In opposing the Defense of Marriage Act, the party expresses its disdain for all those who support what people from time immemorial have regarded as both sacrosanct, as the basic unit of society, and as the procreative love par excellence that transpires between a man and a woman. If G.K. Chesterton's reference to the "democracy of the dead" means anything, then the party excluded the wisdom of all those apostles of democracy that, because of an existential technicality, are no longer able to vote.

While the convention promoted funding for embryonic stem-cell research "that would save lives," it did not mention the number of lives that such research would systematically destroy in the process.

Despite its commitment to "fight to end discrimination based on religion," the Democratic Party has launched a vigorous campaign to exclude people whose moral conscience does not conform with certain governmental policies. Dr. Robert George of Princeton University states that the Democratic Party has engaged in a "massive assault on religious liberty." Timothy Cardinal Dolan, archbishop of New York, states that the current "attack by the federal government on religious freedom in our country must not stand and will not stand."

Can the Democratic Party have it both ways, being both for and against what it preaches? This contradictory ideology has an illuminating literary precedent. George Orwell, in his celebrated novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, coined the term "doublethink" as the act of simultaneously accepting two mutually contradictory beliefs as correct. As the author described it in more detail, "Doublethink" is "To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies . . . to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it, to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy."

The irony of "doublethink" is that by attempting to include everything — both the pro and the con — it inevitably excludes

everything. Precisely because it does not affirm anything unequivocally, it fails to include anything categorically.

Someone once said, "I used to be indecisive, but now I am not so sure." This is not an example of moral progress, but merely assigning a new phrase to an old problem. To be indecisive, which is emblematic of doublethink, is to remain committed to nothing while trying to convince others that you are so broad that you embrace everything. It is mere unsophisticated sophistry.

Is the Democratic platform "inclusive" or "exclusive"? It cannot be both at the same time. The factual evidence indicates conclusively that it is truly exclusive while remaining politically inclusive. Here is an example of politics defecting from truth. The result is a politics that is only nominally inclusive, but really exclusive. It is the strange victory of verbal rhetoric over concrete reality.

When Aristotle spoke of man as a political being, he understood that the nature of man is perfectly suited for the nature of politics. In fact, he taught that the latter was perfective of the former. Today's political doublethink is a lie and an embarrassment. It does not perfect man, but confuses and fractures him. Moreover, it is an affront to thinking citizens, and presents an ominous image of society's future. The inability to see through doublethink, to unmask its duplicity, raises the question of whether having a mind or not having one amounts to the same thing.

+ + +

(Donald DeMarco, PhD is a Senior Fellow of HLI America, an Initiative of Human Life International. He is professor emeritus at St. Jerome's University in Waterloo, Ontario and an adjunct professor at Holy Apostles College & Seminary in Cromwell, CT. Some of his recent writings may be found at HLI America's Truth and Charity Forum.)

Internet Hoaxes

(Continued from 4A)

I am thinking of the influence on Obama of his Communist mentor Frank Marshall Davis, the former Weather Underground terrorist William Ayers, and the radical czars he has surrounded himself with in Washington. All these stories get thrown into the same box with the "birther" stories and the stories about Obama's days as a street hustler — and end up being ignored by the electorate. If I can think up a Machiavellian strategy such as this, surely people on the left can do the same.

The bottom line: There is a line that we must not cross in these matters. Serious-minded Catholics have a responsibility to be fair and judicious when they make charges against their opponents in the public arena. The guidelines for slander and calumny do not get lifted when the lies are told about left-wing lowlifes.