

## THE DEATH OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

By Robert L. Phillips

The election of Donald Trump has profound significance for Catholics even before he takes office. At least three years ago Trump stated that “We are drowning in Political Correctness”. This is accurate and important. It may not be apparent to many, but PC has had a devastating effect upon efforts to promulgate Catholic teachings on life, human sexuality, and the autonomy of the Church to teach the nations. Especially at America’s universities, genuine debate about these critical issues was effectively shelved by lazy Liberal sloganeering. The mantra “Racism, Sexism, Homophobia, Islamophobia” was a ploy to shut down any kind of rational dialogue between partisans of differing perspectives.

In the last decade of teaching hundreds of students in courses on ethics and on political philosophy I noted a drastic decline in allegiance to traditional canons of reasonableness. Typically, textbooks in such courses would have a set of readings on, for example, homosexuality, which would consist of arguments by professional philosophers pro and con. My practice was to present these views as clearly as I could and then add my own perspective, all the while getting the student’s varied takes. This has been standard practice in philosophy courses forever. But latterly I began to encounter push back in the form of an unwillingness to discuss this topic. The readings, I was repeatedly told, were “homophobic”.

What happens when someone is labeled a “Homophobe”? Essentially, the charge is that such a person has lost his reason, that he is unable to provide an explanation of his actions and of his point of view. Any arguments he might present are at best mere rationalizations. This is obviously the death of reason. One only has to look at the madness that has gripped college campuses in the wake of Trump’s election to see that rationality has largely been abandoned. This did not happen overnight. The extreme agitation of so many students and faculty around the nation, their highly emotional and theatrical reactions, attest to a world of fantasy which is a necessary consequence of the abandonment of reason. Additionally, and of much greater seriousness, is the relegation of some sixty million voters to the realm of the pathological. This describes America as a giant asylum whose inmates are all conservatives.

When FDR in 1941 propounded his Four Freedoms he divided them into two pairs: Freedom of Speech and Religion, and Freedom from Want and Fear. Any possibility of attaining truth presupposes that citizens are of sufficient rationality to

engage their fellow citizens in a mutual encounter of ideas; religion is the mutually assumed guarantee that there IS an objective order of truth. But since 1941 both of these freedoms have eroded beyond recognition. Freedom of speech is under attack as “the rationalization of white privilege” and religion in America would be unrecognizable to a denizen of the 1940’s.

Trump’s declaration of war against PC means that the liberal mantra mentioned above is now just noise—we no longer have to listen to it and we no longer have to fear it. This a tremendous start as a good part of the terrorism of PC was its enforcement by the courts and the Obama Department of Justice. One especially telling example of totalitarian over-reach is the Obama DOJ transgender rulings. In the North Carolina case the DOJ ruled that requiring students to use facilities corresponding to their bodily nature was a violation of Title IX which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. What is really pernicious about this is not the fear that male predators claiming to be women would invade private spaces reserved for females (although that is a worry). What was never mentioned was the outrageous draconian fiat that gender theory is true and that its truth is the law. In fact, gender theory is extremely controversial in philosophy and in the mental and physical disciplines of medical science. Certainly, the Church has many times explicitly rejected it. A man who thinks he is a woman is suffering a severe alienation from his body that no amount of hormone therapy and re-constructive surgery can overcome. Such a person needs help, not encouragement from the DOJ. Currently some dozen states are suing the DOJ over this matter. We can now be quite certain that the Trump DOJ will most definitely not enforce transgender regulations forced upon the states by Obama.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration will be no help on the same sex marriage front as the President elect has described the Supreme Court decision as “settled law”. However, with the demise of PC it is now possible to publicly state that the preponderance of Classical and Christian Natural Law arguments may once again be a robust contribution to the public debate. As with so-called transgender persons, those struggling with same sex attraction need help—their bodily nature ordains them in one direction and their psyches in the opposite direction. This disjunction is deeply disordered and cannot be papered over with cheerleading mantras like “Love makes a family”. The full range of Catholic thought, philosophical and scriptural, needs to bear upon this problem as well as those sacramental balms of mercy available to all who are afflicted. Once again, the key point is that we are now freed from the great silence imposed upon us through fear of PC.

We may also expect the Trump regime to restore freedom of religion. Freedom of religion for the Obama/Clinton regime meant simply freedom of worship. As long as we remained within the four walls of our church building, we were free to

believe what we liked. But there was no place for us in the public square except to affirm the evils of “Racism, Sexism, Homophobia, etc”, which many groups calling themselves Christian were eager to do. We are all familiar with the cases of bakers, florists, hoteliers, landlords and many others who were heavily fined and lost their businesses over a refusal to compromise their Christian principles. This will no longer happen. Nor will Catholic agencies be required to furnish funding for the sexual perversion called contraception.

The news is especially encouraging with respect to pro-life issues. During the debates, Trump denounced partial birth abortion and has elsewhere described himself as pro-life, although this was not always his position. Overturning Roe v Wade is a long shot and will depend upon Scalia-like choices for the Supreme Court, but state legislatures are already nibbling away at permissive abortion laws as just yesterday in Ohio with the “heart beat” statute.

Certain throw away lines such as Trump’s comment that he would have preferred to be Time magazine’s “Man of the Year” as opposed to “Person”, and his remark last year that it’s OK to say “Merry Christmas”, continue to hearten enemies of PC.

With the power of sixty million votes behind us, we should feel a great sense of liberation from the oppressive totalitarian linguistic prohibitions of the left which with the backing of the whole legal system exiled conservative Christian thought to the realm of the irrational for so many years.

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