

THE GHOST OF JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY

"I am thy father's spirit;
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night..."

Hamlet, Act I, sc. 5, 9

The reader of the letters section of any daily newspaper will, sooner or later, come across a contribution quoting Voltaire's saying, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."¹ Authors both factual and fictional appeal to the claim as if to an ultimate truth: John Mortimer has his barrister hero, Horace Rumpole, invoke it repeatedly. A moment's thought exposes its contradictions. Would Churchill have defended Hitler's advocacy of Aryan superiority, or conceded he had a right to promote it? Would Kennedy have defended Khrushchev's advocacy of Communism? Would the modern advocate of political correctness defend the views of those who deny that millions of Jews died in Nazi concentration camps? Would any man defend 'to the death' the views of the homicidal maniac who is threatening him with an axe?²

Certainly, everyone should be free to express himself, even to express himself wrongly, but no one has the right to advocate error as right thinking, or to proclaim falsity as truth. The cure for the error he may utter lies in the rightful criticism of his fellows: it provides him, too, with an opportunity to exercise the virtue of humility.

The saying attributed to Voltaire is nonsense but it has a certain resonance in an age capable of holding two contradictory positions at once as, for example, that entailed in another of Voltaire's claims, a right to 'religious freedom'. For 'religious freedom' means two quite contradictory things. It means *my* freedom to embrace (my) religion, and *your* freedom to reject that religion, and all religion. Elevate these 'freedoms' to the level of rights and you have a recipe for chaos—literally. It was pursuant to religious freedom's more extreme perception that the French Revolutionaries justified their slaughter of those who persisted in belief in God. One hundred and forty years later Republicans used the same mindless appeal to 'freedom' to justify their murder of Catholic clergy and religious in the Spanish Civil War.

But 'religious freedom' entails another, and more fundamental, contradiction. Proponents of each of the thousands of different religions assert that their religion alone is true. Truth is the identity between what is asserted and what is; between assertion and reality. But just as reality is one, so truth is one. It follows that one only of all these thousands—the religion that conforms precisely to reality's demands—is the true religion. *This religion* cannot be reduced to the level of the multitude that are false. It cannot be said about *this religion* that anyone is free to ignore it. But the claim of 'religious freedom' says precisely that.

¹ The words are actually those of S G Tallentyre commenting on the burning of a tract of the heretic, Helvetius, but they accord with Voltaire's masonic philosophy.

² The 'defend to the death...' is, of course, hyperbole.

There is another issue. The proponents of the thousand or so *false* religions have no entitlement to claim for themselves the rights of the one *true* religion. American theologian, Msgr John A Ryan, put it this way –

“The fact that an individual may in good faith think that his false religion is true gives no more right to propagate it than the sincerity of the alien anarchist entitles him to advocate his abominable political theories in the United States, or the perverted ethical notions of the dealer in obscene literature confers upon him the right to corrupt the morals of a community.”³

Voltaire’s wit and faux profundity masked his support for a movement which was to cause untold harm to the human family, a movement whose device is “error has rights” –Freemasonry. The Devil devised Freemasonry’s simplistic claims from the Protestant ukase and honed them into a tool with which to attack the Church God had founded and established, and the civilisation the Church had produced. The popes resisted it valiantly for more than 150 years⁴, but the day arrived when its facile tenets infiltrated the minds of certain of the clergy and episcopacy, and penetrated even the Vatican. In the absence of leadership ruthlessly extirpating its influence,⁵ many subordinated Catholic teaching and practice to the masonic agenda.

It is hardly surprising then that with John XXIII’s assertion of a need “to bring the Church up to date” many of the bishops who gathered at the Vatican in 1962 should have looked with favour upon the masonic *zeitgeist*; hardly surprising that their ruminations should have been characterised by a preoccupation with the secular. But the business did not come to a head until the Archbishop of New York, Francis Cardinal Spellman, procured the admission to the Council’s *periti* of Fr John Courtney Murray SJ, prophet of Americanism, the theological disorder which subordinates the Church to the demands of the secular state.⁶ The Council bishops’ submission to the ideas of this formerly orthodox theologian culminated in their wholesale acceptance of the masonic agenda in the Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*.⁷

The permission of access of the secular to the realm of the sacred left the faithful confused and disordered and precipitated the devastation of the vineyard of the Church that followed. It precipitated, too, a schizophrenia among the Church’s bishops that continues today. Its effects may be seen in the address on 29th March 2011 of Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, retired Archbishop of Washington, in the name of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops to the US Senate Committee on the Constitution, Civil and Human Rights defending the right of Muslims to practise their religion.

³ *Catholic Principles of Politics*, New York, 1940, pp. 317-8; quoted in Michael Davies, *The Second Vatican Council and Religious Liberty*, Long Prairie, Minnesota (The Neumann Press), 1992, at p. 51.

⁴ From the Bull of Clement XII *In eminenti* (28.4.1738) to the encyclicals of Leo XIII, especially *Humanum Genus* (20.4.1884).

⁵ Through suspension *a divinis*; by removal from all positions of influence or authority.

⁶ Cf. Leo XIII *Longinqua oceani* (6.1.1895), n. 6; and *Testem benevolentiae* (22.1.1899).

⁷ The elements of that agenda are summarised in the appendix to the article *Islam and the Catholic Church* at [http://www.superflumina.org/PDF files/islam and the catholic church.pdf](http://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/islam_and_the_catholic_church.pdf)

No Catholic could ever endorse the religion of Mohammed: it opposes root and branch all that God's Church teaches. Mohammedanism can only flourish through its followers. How then could a prince of the Catholic Church defend the thing, or the right of its adherents to practise it unrestrainedly? Only by tacitly endorsing the claim in the Voltairean catchphrase—

“I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

If, Dear Reader, we agree that this claim is nonsense, it follows that the Cardinal's address is nonsense, as nonsensical as the ground on which he relies, the declaration of his predecessors in support of 'religious freedom'.

Cardinal McCarrick sought to distinguish 'good' Muslims from 'bad', but any bishop in a Mohammedan country could tell him his assessment is naïve. The problem is with the religion itself.

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Americans have had their two tallest buildings destroyed by the Muslim, the very centre of their executive power subjected to his murderous attack. They have lost great numbers of their young men and women fighting Muslim wars—*for* Muslims *against* Muslims. Try though they might to do what they think is the right thing by the Muslim, he continues to hate them. Yet against every reasonable expectation, against common sense, Americans continue to assist him; continue to think he will embrace democracy; continue to allow him entry to their country. Surely they can see that Mohammedanism is intransigent, its values utterly destructive of the values to which Americans adhere? Surely they can read history and see that Mohammedanism has not changed its character in 1,300 years? Surely they remember Santayana's maxim?⁸

Americans have a problem. The view of right and wrong to which they give obeisance is *not* grounded in common sense; it is *not* grounded in the principle that truth is to be revered and error condemned universally, but in the principle that error has rights. For the American Constitution is grounded not, as many think,⁹ in Christian, but in masonic, principle. Power does not come from 'We the people', but from God: the supreme principle of social, as of personal, life is not 'Liberty', but charity, the love of God first above all things, and of one's neighbour. The prohibition *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...* not only excludes the right of the religion founded by God Himself to influence America for its good, but is an invitation to anarchy in that it precludes Americans from preventing the flourishing of a religion of hate.

The bishops of the Catholic Church have a somewhat similar problem. Constrained on the one hand by the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Son of God—truth is

⁸ “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, 1905, I, ch. 12.

⁹ For example Archbishop Charles J Chaput in an address to the members of Houston Baptist University on March 1st, 2010. Cf. the author's *Archbishop Chaput on the American Bishops*, John F Kennedy and Religious Liberty at http://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/chaput_kennedy.pdf

to be revered, error condemned universally—they feel bound on the other, by their predecessors' acceptance of the protocols of Freemasonry.

There is, then, a sort of wrong headed symmetry in Cardinal McCarrick's address to the US Senate Committee: a wall eyed Catholic bishop is preaching to wall eyed politicians, a masonic convert preaching to the masonically constrained. With the blind urging the blind in this way, who can be in any doubt as to the issue?

Where are Americans to find the answer to the dilemma which bids fair to bring their country to perdition? Where, for that matter, is the rest of the derivatively Christian world to find an answer to the masonic evils which afflict them? Only in the one institution on earth which has supreme moral authority, the Catholic Church.

There is an obvious dilemma: the Church's bishops currently aid and abet the masonic imperative. *But the bishops of the Church are not the Church.* The Church is infallible and indefectible: her bishops, on the other hand, absent they conform themselves rigorously to the teaching of Christ and of His Church, are fallible.¹⁰ The Church remains what she has ever been, the spotless Bride of Christ: her teaching condemning the aberrations of Freemasonry and Mohammedanism abides: it is not sullied or diminished by the follies of this bishop or that, let alone by the collective folly of 2,308 bishops gathered in the Vatican in 1965. Her teaching requires only a great pope for its resurrection, and its re-enforcement.

All authority comes from above; comes ultimately from Almighty God.¹¹ This is the reason why the solution to the problems that afflict America, and the rest of western civilisation, will not begin to operate until the Head of the Church on earth, the Vicar of Christ, publicly acknowledges that the Church's episcopacy erred in submitting themselves to the masonic agenda at the Second Vatican Council. Until the Pope exposes the falsity of the reasonings—if one could dignify them with that title—of John Courtney Murray¹² on which the bishops relied, the ghost of that theologian manqué will continue to haunt the Catholic Church, and the rest of civilisation.

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17th April 2011—*Palm Sunday*

¹⁰ This raises the issue precisely: is the teaching of the bishops of the Second Vatican Council the teaching of the Church? As we have argued elsewhere, it is not, save where it conformed to the Church's constant teaching. Cf. http://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/vatican_ii_www.pdf *et alibi* on the same website

¹¹ *Romans* 13: 1

¹² Set forth in the *relatio* to the Council Fathers delivered by Bishop Emil de Smedt on 19th November, 1963. For a critical assessment of its content see the author's '*Religious Liberty*' and the *Development of Doctrine* at http://www.superflumina.org/relig_liberty_doctrine.html