

October 3, 1996

C-Span
Booknotes
400 North Capitol St., NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

I watched a re-broadcast of you interviewing Donald Warren, author of "Radio Priest: Charles Coughlin The Father of Hate Radio" on Booknotes Sunday September 8th.

Why is it that it is fine to talk about a Catholic priest as the father of hate speech (Or criticizing the "Christian right" as "extremists" on other shows) but it is not all right to talk about Jews in a negative sense?

This show is an example of your bias on the matter. On previous shows, you have challenged callers when they attempt to bring up how Jews influence legislation and public opinion in the attempt to further their own and/or Israel's agenda. You have dismissed callers with "How is the fact that they are Jews relevant?" Or, "What does being Jewish have to do with the issue?"

You treat the critical reporting of what Catholics do as "individual" incidents, therefore, making them fair game. While the reporting of what Jews do as an indictment of the whole religion and/or race, which, obviously, makes it the work of bigots.

When Jews do something suspect, you do not say, what they are doing is in contradiction to their religious tenets. However, when Christians do something questionable, you say how is that consistent with your religious teachings? (Either you or your guests.)

When Jews produce movies that disparage Catholics and/or Christians, the work is labeled that of "Hollywood" or the product of the "entertainment" industry or, more specifically, these individuals have the "right" to exercise "artistic freedom" rather than that of Jews and labeling it "anti-Catholic" or "anti-Christian."

If one were to say it was the work of Jews, one would be labeled "anti-Semitic." It appears that Jews can produce movies that are, essentially, anti-Catholic or which focus upon the worst aspects of some priests' behavior and/or the negative aspects of the church. They can show Nuns having

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babies and killing them in a monastery. (Sally Field) They can portray a priest having affairs with parishioners. (Christopher Reeves) They can write or publish books that are unflattering, if not outright anti-Catholic. Still one cannot label this the work of Jews. Why, if in fact it is the work of Jews?

These efforts are defended as being an exercise in First Amendment rights. They are never labeled as being anti-Catholic by the press, other media or even C-Span. Why? And if criticism of Jews is hate speech. Why isn't criticism of Catholics hate speech? Another example of the double standards that exist in the minds of liberals, liberal sympathizers and so-called "moderates."

You and your program are supposed to be non-partisan and/or non-biased. When you report or repeat something critical of conservatives, you defend this by saying, "We are only reporting what others have said. This is not our opinion." At the same time, you will not tolerate the criticism of Jews by others. Why don't you allow them free expression and defend it by saying, "This is not our opinion, we are only reporting what others are saying." Why is criticism of Jews and other liberals "hate speech?" While criticism of Christians, especially conservative Christians, "reasonable" and permissible?

You are very quick to point out and label criticism of Jews as being anti-Semitic. You did it on the Warren show. Brian, you asked Warren if Father Coughlin was anti-Semitic. Warren responded, "of course." On other shows, I have heard you answer a caller by challenging the caller's comments about Jews as being irrelevant and cutting the caller off.

Why can people write movie scripts, plays and books criticizing Catholics (And then having them dissected on shows like C-Span or Charlie Rose's show on PBS.) and then having them treated as if they were like any other work of "artistic expression?" However, people cannot criticize Jews without being called anti-Semitic and censured? Are Jews beyond criticism.

I guess if one is to criticize others on the basis of their race or religion, one has to do it in a book, play or movie. But for heavens sake, do not do it in a speech or article. The first is a work of art or free speech. The second is "hate speech" and should be censored.

Your bias is not exhibited, primarily, by what you say. It is exhibited in the selection of your guests and what they are allowed to say without interruption or challenge by other guests who are supposed to have a diametrically opposite opinion. Very often, you have guests who, ostensibly, have opposing points of view but, in fact, are not that different in their opinions. It is also exhibited by the books you choose to examine in depth and the manner in which you pose your questions. How many books critical of the Clinton's or "their" (not "his") administration have you examined in depth? Very few. How many books or articles critical of Israel have you examined critically? Very few, if any.

Warren's work not only portrayed this particular priest in a very unflattering manner but also reflected poorly upon the Catholic Church as a religious organization. Warren appeared to justify his criticism by stating that Father Coughlin was operating in a political sphere, which made him fair game.

During the anti-war protests, there was a Catholic priest named Father Drinan. He led anti-war and anti-nuclear demonstrations and destroyed private property at Seabrook, a nuclear power plant in New Hampshire and government property where nuclear submarines were being built at Groton, Connecticut. One cannot get more political than that. Yet, he was never criticized by the media, in any sense, let alone as a Catholic priest.

Father Coughlin had no right to express his moral outrage. However, Father Drinan had every right to act upon his moral convictions. Another example when, in the minds of liberals, actions are less threatening than ideas. Liberals tend to reverse these positions so as to accommodate their various positions over time. Same old double standard that exists in the, so called, minds of liberals. However, there is no bias that exists in the media. So called, professionals in the media are chagrined that there are those who would challenge their objectivity. It would appear that liberals have rights that are denied conservatives.

Also, you asked Warren certain leading questions that further tended to portray Priests in a negative manner. Brian, you asked Warren, "Were there other priests who agreed with Father Coughlin?" As if it were incredulous to think one could possibly agree with Father Coughlin and still be a religious person.

Brian, you are supposed to be non-partisan or non-judgemental. Yet, you reflect the "politically correct" points of view as being more desirable. This is fairly obvious. I guess this is a free society, which allows for free expression without harassment or criticism, if one agrees with the politically correct crowd.

Why are only conservatives who express strong opinions about how they think our society should be structured and what liberties and freedoms they want to protect considered as dispensing "hate speech?" Is it because they point out which groups are the most threatening? Apparently, it is all right to disparage white, Anglo-Saxon, males and conservative Christians but not Jews and/or other minorities.

Liberal Democrats charge Republicans with wanting to "starve" children, prevent elders from having "medical care" and "kicking them out of their homes", as well as "poisoning our air and water." Why isn't this considered hate speech? It is never labeled as such. It is never challenged by the media, or C-Span for that matter.

Not that the Catholic Church and/or priests are beyond criticism. But when was the last show you people have done criticizing Jews, either individually or collectively and/or reflecting critically upon their philosophy, religion, behavior or morality? If Jews get upset at criticism aimed at them as a group, why shouldn't Catholics or white males, for that matter?

While you do a much better job than most attempting to control your biases, you still have lapses when it is evident that you are biased as well. I don't mean for this to be a devastating criticism of you. I really do appreciate your show. As good as you are, you can be better. We can all improve.

How can C-Span be unbiased if it is sponsored by the various cable networks, most of which are owned and/or operated by Jews (A&E, Discovery, Learning, Travel, ESPN, Food, etc.) and other liberals like Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch. (Murdoch is always labeled a conservative. He is an economic conservative. He is not a social conservative.)

Which brings me to a final thought. You frequently have, so-called, conservatives on your show attempting to balance the perspective of a liberal guest. The so-called

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conservatives, like the frequent guests from Kristol's magazine, "The Weekly Standard", as well as Kristol himself, are generally economic conservatives but social liberals or social moderates. They are not social conservatives.

Doing this may be fair insofar as representing the moderate Republican point of view is concerned. However, it is hardly a good or fair representation of the conservative point of view. You are giving a disproportionately large voice to the moderates as opposed to the conservatives. This is especially apparent when it is Republicans you are giving voice to.

Maybe you do not want to give voice to the two extremes of the two major parties as a consequence of not wanting to contribute to divisiveness. This sounds reasonable. However, it is much easier to align with one party or the other when their positions are "exaggerated" rather than if they are minimized. It is the moderates or the centrists who have contributed to the feeling that there is "not a dimes worth of difference between the two parties."

In answer to the moderates compromising posture; "If one compromises on everything, or most things, then one believes in nothing."

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