

Unmasking Dissent: The Demand for an American Catholic Church

-by Mary Jo Anderson
Contributing Editor, *Crisis*

At the close of the Second Vatican Council modernist theologians, priests and scholars began building a future church based on neotheology. The American democratic ideal of civic government was seen as the inspiration for *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Vatican II document on religious liberty. Under the banner of John Courtney Murray's "American Proposition," dissident Catholics spent three decades laying the foundation for an American Catholic Church. Today the post-Christian American geography has scant tolerance for authority or hierarchy. The tenets and methodologies of the American church point to the future of Catholicism in America unless faithful Catholics defend orthodoxy.

Overview

Which is the primary identity: American Catholic or Catholic American? The Church in America is conflicted within as Archbishop Rembert Weakland observed in *Time* magazine. He confided that his final *ad limina* discussion with Pope John Paul II would include his fear that sixty million American Catholics, who feel "they are second-class citizens in a Church they love," were in danger of schism.¹ Should Weakland's "second-class citizens" fulfill his fears, they will form what progressive Catholics have labored to build since the close of the Second Vatican Council: The American Catholic Church.

The liberal Catholic coup at the close of the Second Vatican Council has implemented that Council's documents with the mind of modernism rather than the "mind of the Church."² The past three decades have seen the alignment of the dissident Catholic establishment in America with that of the liberal, secular humanist agenda which has replaced, via judicial activism, the predominately Judeo-Christian self-understanding operative at the founding of America. Catholic Americans have suffered a double loss: their Constitution was hijacked to serve a secular humanism, and the Second Vatican Council was pirated in order to serve the modernist agenda. We enter the third Christian millennium, but we stand on a precipice; we may lose *both* the America we loved as a "City on a Hill" and Roman Catholicism in America.

This reflection is a brief examination of the dissident Catholic demand for an American Catholic Church. Dissidents seek to impose a democratic political

structure on the Catholic Church, replacing the hierarchical structure divinely instituted by Christ. The examination traces the dissident proposal, methodology and tactics by which dissident American Catholics hope to achieve their goal.

The heterodox vision for an American church is formed by the Americanist principles of democratic equality and personal autonomy. This vision cannot be fully implemented until the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church is replaced with a constitutional structure drawn from the American Constitution *as reinterpreted via judicial activism* since 1947.³

The dissident inspiration for reconfiguring the Church springs from observing the success liberals have effected in reconfiguring the U.S. Constitution by reading into the text liberties not intended by the framers. These are those new liberties that are severed from the objective moral order and the Source of all authority, the Creator, to whom the framers made primary reference. Such flexibility accepted in American political practice breeds hope of a similar flexibility in Catholic practice.

A fluid reinterpretation of the constitution redefines liberty, a definition that would not have been countenanced by the American Founders, who assumed a biblical understanding of liberty based on the acknowledgment, by government, of the sovereignty of God. Historian Donald J. D'Elia reinforces the point, ". . . for practically everyone in that generation it was still their Christian culture that endowed documents with meaning."⁴ The divorce of truth from freedom that is the essence of judicial activism carries the seeds of the culture of death. The Holy Father warned in *Centesimus Annus* (46), "If there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activity, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. . . . In a world without truth, freedom loses its foundation and man is exposed to the violence of passion and to manipulation, both open and hidden."

Clearly, if one wishes to reshape the Church in accord with modernist principles⁵ in order to secure a similarly dynamic (read "fluid") interpretation of doctrine, one must either find members of the hierarchy (as American political liberals found their judges) amenable to making those changes in the deposit of faith--an uncertain proposition at best--or one endeavors to change the very structure of the Church. This latter proposition was adopted by the dissident establishment that controls much of Catholic life in America.

The Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church (ARCC) distributes a proposed constitution for the Catholic Church which replaces the Vicar of Christ with a "general council" cochaired by an elected pope and an elected layperson. Following Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz's 1996 excommunication warning to dissidents, ARCC reformers held a national press conference in Washington, D.C., to announce the coalition's demand that the Pope permit members of the Church to choose their bishops. "The Pope has

failed to live up to his own best democratic instincts," charged Mary Louise Hartman, President of ARCC.

ARCC hopes their demands "will trigger a constitutional convention for the Church." ARCC has drafted both a constitution and a bill of rights that they plan to see installed, in one form or another, in the Catholic Church. ARCC submitted their draft documents to various reform groups, including the 5,000 members of Call To Action (CTA) during CTA's national conference. ARCC believes the *American* church should offer its democratic heritage to the universal church. Their primary document, *Charter of Rights of Catholics in the Church*, has been translated into French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, and Spanish. ARCC works in close concert with the International We Are Church Movement, an organization most active in Germany and Austria, but with chapters throughout Europe. Believing that the documents of Vatican II "resonate with the dreams of our democratic culture," ARCC strives to implement structural reforms in the institutional church they describe as "repressive, inquisitional, and secretive."⁶

We might employ the architectural dictum, "form follows function," to illustrate that the dissident demand to "restructure" the Church presupposes a new *function* for the Church. And this is precisely the case. The dissident understanding of the purpose of the Church is not as a channel of grace and revelation concerning salvation, redemption, and resurrection to eternal life. It is, rather, understood as a communal support system (with a liturgical veneer) which aids one's attempt to become a fully integrated and affirmed member of an evolving, Teilhardian, self-divining humanity.

Democracy as Dissident Doctrine

Dissidents attempt to buttress their argument for an Americanized church by invoking John Courtney Murray, S.J.,--often credited as the architect of *Dignitatis Humanae*--who served as *peritus* during the Second Vatican Council. According to Joseph Varacalli, the reconstructionists used the Council documents for their own purposes: "In terms of a general theological worldview certain statements are taken out of their proper context . . . and used to transform radically what passes for the Faith. The Church 'as the People of God' is used to promote a false and disingenuous democratic attitude."⁷

Dissidents used this truncated version of the Council teachings as the springboard to a Church "renewed" in "the spirit of Vatican II," with elastic interpretations of the very meaning of Church. In like manner they have burdened Murray to serve as the bandwagon for unsuspecting Catholic Americans who are persuaded that Murray's American Proposition justifies a synthesis of American democracy and Catholicism. The radicals do not seek to Catholicize America but to Americanize Catholicism. The relentless dissident call for "dialogue" and "consensus"--Cardinal Bernadin's "Common

Ground," for instance--is justified as the American way; one that they demand the Church adopt.⁸ Yet, consensus did not mean for Fr. Murray what it means for today's heterodox Catholic vision of consensus. Fr. Avery Dulles, S. J., notes the crucial difference:

The concept of public consensus is not always rightly understood. According to a widely prevalent view, it is simply a majority opinion, which may be based on fashion or emotion, or an ideology, based on the self-interest of a class. John Courtney Murray, in his work *We Hold These Truths*, explains that according to the classical tradition of political thought, consensus is a very different thing: It is a doctrine or judgment that commands public agreement because of the merits of the arguments in its favor.

Public consensus, according to Murray, transcends sheer experience and expediency; it is basically a moral conception. . . . At the basis of the American experiment in ordered liberty, Murray explains, there are truths . . . In the atmosphere of contemporary pluralism, there is a tendency to overlook the inviolable connection between freedom and truth, as though freedom implied a right to construct one's own moral universe without accountability to any higher agency.⁹

This is a particularly acute distinction when juxtaposed to the aforementioned "Common Ground" initiative. While not identified publicly as such, the initiative (and the document on which it is predicated, *Called to Be Catholic: Church in a Time of Peril*) is little more than a dissident-defined agenda.¹⁰ The agenda calls for liberties that are not ordered to moral truth. Murray was concerned with the definition and application of consensus in the public square. His cautions are equally germane to his liberal champions, these dissidents who insist that the Church engage the disaffected in dialogue to search for consensus. The reasons given for seeking consensus (women's ordination, divorce and remarriage, reproductive issues) are examples of mere experience and expediency which Fr. Dulles points out that John Courtney Murray did not consider sufficient for decision making. It is not unwarranted to assume that Murray himself would never have considered consensus among the faithful as an appropriate model for Church governance.

Radical Catholics champion Murray's influence on *Dignitatis Humanae*, which dissidents understand as baptizing a pluralism of religious practice, a startling revision of Church teaching. They mistake civic tolerance for dogmatic plurality. Their interpretation is a determined misreading of Murray at best.¹¹ Other readings of *Dignitatis Humanae* see it as both the development of Pope Leo XIII's move toward healing a fractured Europe and the intent of the Second Vatican Council to include all the world in a unified understanding of human dignity. What is paramount for the Church is "the establishment of a Christian order in the whole of society. The orderly relationship between the two powers [church and state] was simply a subordinate aspect of this larger

goal. The issue of the dyarchy as such had begun to lose its ancient primacy."¹²

Dissidents reverse the hope of *Dignitatis Humanae*. They do not work to establish a Christian order for the world, for such would smack of "triumphalism." They work instead for the establishment of democracy within the whole of Christianity. For them the influence of Murray and the American bishops on the conciliar document was the "vindication of Murray's argument that the American political experiment differed from the European and could be shown to be compatible with Catholic doctrine on church and state because it was not based on or justified by the secularist ideology. . . ."¹³

Perhaps that can be shown to have been the case as the schema on *Dignitatis Humanae* was being prepared. Such was not the case shortly thereafter, as Cardinal Ratzinger observed in 1984 when he decried the dissolution in the Church following the Council. The Prefect for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith observed:

What the Popes and the Council Fathers were expecting was a new Catholic unity, and instead one has encountered a dissension. . . . I am convinced that the damage that we have incurred in these twenty years is due . . . [to] the confrontation with a cultural revolution in the West . . . with its liberal-radical ideology of individualistic, rationalistic and hedonistic stamp.¹⁴

In other words, the American political experiment, as part of "the West," was not untainted by the secularist ideology identified by Cardinal Ratzinger.

New post-war American politics were, in fact, and are ever more so today, thoroughly driven by individualistic ideology. Therefore, what the dissident Catholic liaison with the "spirit of Vatican II" and American revisionist judicial activism spawned was a conciliar activism. It is this conciliar activism that has glibly justified the decimation of orthodoxy in the Roman Catholic Church in America.

***AmChurch Goal: Horizontalism, the
"Radically Equal" Eradication of Authority***

The use of "American" as a qualifier in heterodox parlance has three meanings: First, it means a democratic mode of communal (church and civic) governance, the consent of the governed and popular elections. Philosophically it indicates power comes from below and decisions cannot be imposed from above. ("No trickle down holiness," quipped one radical.) Secondly, "American" stands for equality of social position: there is no caste system, no royalty, and anybody can grow up to be president (or pope in the AmChurch). Each person has come to expect not only equal opportunity but equal outcome, one premise behind affirmative action. Functionally, this version of equality repudiates merit. Thirdly, "American" carries the connotation of self-sufficiency and self-determination, the individualism about which Pope Leo

XIII warned in his prophetic encyclical, *Testem Benevolentiae*. Leo XIII cautioned against "Americanism" as a growing mood of individualism that was migrating from democratic discourse to religious faith. That is, that a synthesis might be forged between the democratic ideal and Catholicism, creating a new (some would say more "mature") form of spirituality. This new form of spirituality is a religious tolerance for plurality of belief systems patterned after a democratic acceptance of the pluralities of social preferences and experiences. Thus, in effect, the melting pot process is applied not only in the public square, but is applied by AmChurch advocates to doctrinal truths within the very heart and structure of the Church.

The first interpretation of "American" in the AmChurch application means repudiation of Revelation and of the principle of authority in favor of shared power and consensus or collective wisdom to determine validity of doctrine. Dissent insists that until a doctrine is received by the faithful it remains invalid. The second meaning as applied by the Americanizers (Greeley's term) is a twisted appropriation of the "priesthood of all believers" which contradicts the vocation of the ordained priesthood as a calling from God ("from above")--any person (male or female) who feels drawn to any ministry is free to act upon the desire. The institutional Church, they claim, ought not to determine your vocation any more than the U.S. Government ought to determine your profession. The third meaning, American self-sufficiency, frees the AmChurch to design liturgies that "meet the needs of the gathered," to engineer any personally rewarding spiritual practice which serves the group or individual. Church, thus reconfigured, becomes a place where one is served, where one expresses oneself as one chooses rather than where one worships God Almighty as Supreme Being. To insure the rights of the pluriform groups forming within the Church, an American constitutional format must be imposed upon the Church. Such constituted rights would be beyond the reach of any infallible statements of the "patriarchal," "dominating," magisterial Church.

The purpose of this Americanization of the Roman Catholic Church is to level the hierarchical structure of the Church and usher in a radical, militant horizontalism. The target is authority. Dismantling authority removes those troublesome requirements of Christian morality, particularly sexual morality, which is so at odds with the contemporary culture. At this juncture it becomes clear that there is confusion on part of Catholic dissidents about the temporal order and the transcendent order of grace. For many, of course, there is no order of grace. The deconstructors, launched by Fr. Raymond Brown, S.S., no longer believe in the virgin birth, or the divinity of Christ, or the real presence, or bodily resurrection or apostolic succession. Indeed, Fr. Brown's model of the early Church included this provision, so attractive to the Americanizers: "Sacramental powers were given to the *Christian community* in the persons of the Twelve" (Brown's italics). This reading negates any necessity for a lineal

succession.¹⁵ The pesky scriptural narratives are thus dispatched and transcendence and hierarchy are vanquished. If there is no supernatural order, no eternal life, no final judgment, then *this* life and this *natural* order become supreme. The natural world may be bent to our will via science, economics, sociology, and psychology. In short, we may refuse the given, the created order --and *recreate* the world and the Church in the world according to man's design. The human attempt to eradicate authority requires an eventual confrontation with the Author of *what is*.

AmChurch Goal: Restructuring Reality

Examples of attempts to recreate reality abound, but the most visible and ongoing clash with Catholic teaching is the redefining of human life: abortion, euthanasia, and cloning. A second example is the insistence that gender is not biological but a patriarchal, societal construct concocted to oppress women and preserve male dominance; a corollary of this redesigned gender neutral reality is that homosexuality is an equally valid lifestyle. The trappings of ecclesiastic acceptance are sought in order to validate the new realities. ARCC promotes a Charter of Rights which includes this guarantee, "All Catholics regardless of race, age, nationality, sex, or sexual orientation, have the right to receive all the sacraments. . . ." ¹⁶

Dissidents, then, view the sacraments as signature badges of belonging and therefore access to the sacraments cannot be denied. Sacraments become rights that confer status and power, rather than gifts of God's grace that enable the believers to live in Christian holiness. Ultimately, for AmChurch proponents, sacraments are not oriented toward salvation, but toward authentication of the choices made by the recipient. The temporal order, then, trumps the order of grace.

When the only "eternity" that one will know is this present life, that conviction refocuses all hope and ambition on the things of this world. To that end the most progressive of the dissident organizations have set about building an alternate reality based on their heterodox beliefs. Roaming the concourses at the CTA conference and similar gatherings of heterodox Catholics, one is confronted with art, music, bumper stickers, literature, and even cookbooks extolling a radical liberal (often occult) subculture that is alien to mainstream America. Their threat of a militant progressive philosophy of man is no less grave than that of Marxism at the turn of the century. Their vision calls for a total restructuring of society, radically equal in every construct or association. This vision calls for a horizontal, degendered culture with all the barrenness which inevitably follows, and the transfer of cultural and political power to its adherents.

Dissident insistence on gender neutrality is the most familiar illustration of verbal engineering since liberal liturgists have succeeded in rewriting liturgical

texts to reflect the New World they are constructing. "Verbal engineering proceeds social engineering," warns Msgr. William Smith. Androgynous language excises Christian anthropology and fosters a revolt against God as the Supreme Male Being who bestows gender. Modern man/woman rejects this intrusion of God, demanding instead to be free to choose. Not inconsequentially, "god" is also freed from gender bias. Feminist theologian Elisabeth Johnson frets that men become "theomorphic" (and therefore more god-like than women) if God is male.¹⁷ Androgyny is the logical consequence of self-divination; if I am my own god, I can create myself as I choose; I can reject the limitation of the either/or gender pattern of creation and adopt both in androgyny. The most radical feminists understand themselves as both/and, flowing freely among male, female, or unisex models, refusing to be defined by biology, that is, refusing to be defined by biological reality. Progressive de-constructors of orthodoxy advance gender adjusted language as a justice issue, and employ the rights based language now adopted by the United Nations in its various treaties and conventions. But the language reshapes the belief, and if God is not called "Father," then the gender of the priest becomes a non-issue.

Catholic radicals care less for justice in the Church than for co-opting the vast power of the Church to shape minds and hearts. "We need the Church because it's the global power that it is; we need it across the world as a force for change,"¹⁸ explains Sr. Mary Luke Tobin, who was an observer at Vatican II. Feminist scripture scholar Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza remains in the Church, not because she believes its teachings, but because she recognizes that western culture is defined by Christianity; any hope to radically re-orient the culture depends first on re-orienting the Church.¹⁹

AmChurch Methodologies

A sober realization for defenders of Catholicism is that the strength of the AmChurch proponents comes not from the actual numbers of adherents but from the capacity of this minority to manipulate the vast uncatechized mid-ground of moderate Catholics. Their control of this middle ground is not accidental, but is, in fact, the result of a systematic, planned strategy. Space limits a full exploration of the methodologies employed, however, a short list suffices to demonstrate the well-orchestrated stratagems:

I. *Establish Small Faith Communities (SFC)*: Foster small faith communities as part of a worldwide decentralization process; horizontal and communal versus the hierarchical Church. This method transfers allegiance from the parish to the small group. SFC becomes the primary source of fellowship, social affirmation and even liturgy. SFCs promise empowerment via the group's pressure on the parish or diocese. Often the SFC attracts the disaffected; divorced, ex-clergy, homosexual, parent of a homosexual, or feminists. The SFCs become the mediating structure between the participant

and the "patriarchal dominating" Church. The SFC model is based on Saul Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation prototype of empowering communities, a cousin of the liberation theology "base communities." Msgr. Jack Egan, an Alinsky proponent, and Msgr. Philip Murnion brought the SFC concept to the first Call To Action meeting (1976).²⁰ This amounts to grass-roots cell churches that on signal will rise to follow the clarion call of the FutureChurch/NewChurch/AmChurch. "The Pope may have the generals but we will own the Army," boasted Charles Curran at a Call To Action conference.²¹ "Renew 2000" is an example of a SFC initiative.

II. *Liturgy*: Reconstructors believe in the efficacy of *lex orandi, lex credendi*. Liturgies are reconfigured, are wrested from the reality of the Word Made Flesh and forced to serve a political vision divorced from truth. Semiotician Umberto Eco, famous for his popular novel *The Name of the Rose*, wrote, "Not long ago, if you wanted to seize political power . . . you had merely to control the army. . . . Today, a country belongs to the person who controls the communications."²² Those who attempt a *coup d'état* within the Church adroitly apply that principle, recognizing the liturgy as the Church's primary daily communication with her faithful. Prayer and liturgy have become ideological tools: "We still don't know *we are the sacrament*. The Real Presence is ourselves. Bread and wine are only instruments of Eucharist," claims former priest, Bernard Cooke.²³

III. *Control of Universities, Seminaries and Catechetical Programs*: Progressives began at Land O'Lakes to establish control of the coming generations.²⁴ The "new Catholic knowledge (or gnostic) class" form a "dissident managerial class;"²⁵ they act as gatekeepers to the modernist ersatz hierarchy which vets prospective priests and professors.

IV. *Coalition Power*: A distinctive enabling feature of American Catholic dissent is the aggressive pursuit of coalitions. No group or association is too fringe, too leftist, or too marginal to be invited into the dissident fold in order to achieve political muscle. The indiscriminate couplings beef up the image of dissent as a stampede of the people who demand change within the Church. A singular illustration of this facile linking is that of theologian Hans Kung sharing the limelight with former Dominican priest, Matthew Fox, and his peculiar "Seven Chakras" spirituality at a recent gathering of dissident strategists. Their mutual admiration society has but one requirement: opposition to a distinctive Catholic teaching. Examples include: Women's Ordination Conference (WOC), Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC), Call To Action (CTA), Association of Rights of Catholics in the Church (ARCC) -- a CTA subsidiary, and Conference of Catholic Lesbians (CCL).²⁶

AmChurch: Instruments

A crucial tactic--raised to an art form--is the creation of alternate mediating associations that are interposed between the Pope and the faithful, the bishop and his flock, or the pastor and the parishioners. Associations are formed as heterodox weapons in one of two ways: new groups formed for a specific function or the take-over of an existing group by infiltration. Examples of the former include the National Pastoral Life Center (NPLC) which is an autonomous creation of Msgr. Philip Murnion, the primary author of *Called to Be Catholic: Church in a Time of Peril*, the primary document of the "Common Ground" initiative. Another is the National Center for Pastoral Leadership, a dissident speaker's bureau whose stable of heterodox speakers appear regularly as retreat masters, guest catechists, liturgical advisors, and pastoral team builders. An example of the latter category includes the Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA) which notoriously promotes "American church" theology--most recently, the study of women's ordination in defiance of *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*.

Dissenting theologians, who may or may not be card-carrying members of dissident organizations, represent another major public influence on the vast moderate American Catholic population in the pews. The names are well known, and their theories (proportionalism, probablism) and books are pushed at colleges, seminaries, and diaconate programs. They are favored by the media to make American, democratic comments on the state of the Church as did Richard McBrien on *60 Minutes* where he confided to Morely Safer that the Pope should be limited to a ten-year term.²⁷ Here it is pertinent to note that a ten-year term limit is also the limit called for in the Constitution for the Catholic Church which ARCC has distributed. This is the same proposal that is promoted in a book called *Toward a Constitution for the Catholic Church*, by Leonard Swidler, professor of Catholic Thought at Temple University.

Clearly, these factions are coordinated in their battle to install, by incrementalism and stealth, an American-styled (that is, democratic, elected representation, pluralistic "values") church. That coordinated effort is illuminated by this sequence: The May 1996 launch of the We Are Church petition, the Quinn Proposals²⁸ (June 1996) which called for the same ten-year tenure for the Pope, shortly followed by Cardinal Bernadin's "Common Ground" imbroglio (August 1996), the publication one month later of Swidler's book which featured the same proposals as Quinn and Bernadin's very public--internationally public--maneuvers, and the same demands listed in the We Are Church petition.

Heterodox publications (*National Catholic Reporter*) and publishing houses (Paulist Press, purveyor of the sabotaging "Renew 2000" parish program, and Twenty-Third Publications) churn out reams of reorienting materials pointing readers toward the neotheology of the American church.

Conferences are a significant tool used to control parish DREs, school principals, and middle management segments of diocesan infrastructure. The temptation for torpid orthodox Catholics is to adopt a comforting assumption: that the worst of the heterodox conferences, such as Call To Action, are attended by the marginal dissenter--no one of creditable standing. Not so. Speakers, in addition to Paul Collins and Tissa Balasuriya (both Vatican censured theologians), bishops Tom Gumbleton and Raymond Lucker, include Thomas Reese, S.J., of Woodstock Theological Center who was recently appointed Editor of the Jesuit magazine, *America*. Reese, author of *Inside the Vatican*, would be considered mainstream by most Americans. What does it say about CTA if Fr. Reese is willing to contribute his name to their proceedings? What does it imply about Fr. Reese's position on Papal authority, an authority that CTA denies. What of Fr. Reese's implied approval of homosexuality and abortion, because these are billed by CTA as a "right" for Catholics.

Conclusion

Eloquent essays have been written which lament the loss of the majesty and momentum of the Roman Catholic Church in America. Any school child reflecting upon early America's Catholic heritage--from the oldest city, St. Augustine, Florida, to the California missions, the marvels of Marquette, and numerous Catholic settlements and universities across the continent--must wonder what became of that original energy and promise. Today, the predominant Catholic image in America is the dissident Americanized Catholic image promoted by the secular media. Dissidents labor tirelessly to impose the American template on the Church universal. Success, for them, is delivering the Church to the temporal powers. Where now is that earlier promise for Catholics in America?

The sober truth is found in the Holy Father's call for a new evangelization. That call reflects the only hope for the preservation of orthodoxy in America: either convert this nation, or the "culture of death" propagated by rising technopagans, with the collusion of ersatz Catholics, will drive us into third millennium catacombs. Christ promised us that the Church would survive, yet He made no promise that it would survive in any given country. That mission God entrusted to us.

Notes

1. David Van Biema, "A Firebrand's Valedictory," *Time*, May 25, 1998, p. 65.
2. This "hijacking" of the Council has been the subject of volumes and needs no documentation. However, for a succinct and incisive explication of the issue see Ralph M. McInerney, *What Went Wrong with Vatican II: The Catholic Crisis Explained* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Press Institute, 1998).

3. Emphasis is placed here to point out that even though democracy is not, in any conceivable perfection, suitable for the Church, the particular charm of the Constitution of the United States for the radical Catholic lies in the current revisionist interpretation, not in the version given us by the Founding Fathers which many argue has natural law foundations and is therefore conducive to a Catholic society.

4. Donald J. D'Elia, "We Hold these Truths and More," in Donald J. D'Elia and Stephen M. Krason (eds.), *We Hold These Truths and More* (Steubenville: Franciscan University Press, 1993), p. 65.

5. For the purposes of this article I have adopted the definition of modernism given by Henri de Lubac, in James V. Schall, *Does Catholicism Still Exist?* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1994), p. 21. "... refusal to see in man any sort of transcendent aspiration ... Modernity would therefore be the triumph of finitude ... the refusal of any sort of faith. It follows on the rejection of mystery." In short, neognosticism.

6. Mary Jo Anderson, "Catholic Dissenters," *Crisis Magazine*, September, 1996, p. 34.

7. Joseph A. Varacalli, *Bright Promise, Failed Community: Catholics and the American Public Order*, manuscript, Nassau Community College Printing and Publications, Garden City, NY: 1998, p. 53. (Editor's Note: This manuscript was subsequently published by Lexington Books of Lanham, Maryland.)

8. See Charter of the Rights of Catholics in the Church, No. 2. Association of Rights of Catholics in the Church, Delran, NJ. See also Leonard Swidler, *Toward a Catholic Constitution: The Copernican Turn* (<http://astro.temple.edu/~arcc/copern.htm>.) ("For centuries the Catholic Church has been . . . talking only to itself, and shaking its finger at the rest of the world . . . forbidding Catholic participation in dialogue. . . .")

9. Avery Dulles, S. J., "John Paul II and the Truth about Freedom," *First Things*, August/September 1995, pp. 36-41.

10. See Avery Dulles, "Travails of Dialogue," *Crisis Magazine*, February, 1997, p. 16, and Mary Jo Anderson, "Shaky Ground," *Crisis Magazine*, February, 1997, p. 22.

11. For a greater exploration of Murray's contribution to and interpretation of *Dignitatis Humanae*, see Brian W. Harrison, O.S., "John Courtney Murray: A Reliable Interpreter of *Dignitatis Humanae*?" in Donald J. D'Elia and Stephen M. Krason (eds.), *We Hold These Truths and More*, Franciscan University Press, Steubenville, 1993, pp. 134-165.

12. John Courtney Murray, *Religious Liberty: Catholic Struggles with Pluralism*, J. Leon Hooper, S.J., ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), Chapter 3, "The Issue of Church and State at Vatican Council II," text at <http://adminweb.georgetown.edu/woodstck/murray/rel-liberty/rl-chap3.htm>.

13. Joseph A. Komonchak, "Interpreting the Council," in Mary Jo Weaver and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), *Being Right: Conservative Catholics in America*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995, p. 25. For a brief review of Murray's own work in this direction see James Hitchcock, "Murray Before Vatican II," in Donald J. D'Elia and Stephen M. Krason (eds.), *We Hold These Truths and More*, Franciscan University Press, Steubenville, 1993, p. 9.

14. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), p. 28-30.

15. Raymond Brown, *Priest and Bishop*, as quoted in George A. Kelly, *The Battle for the American Church*, (Image Books, Garden City, 1981.), p.122-124. See also note 4. (Brown's italics.)
16. Charter of the Rights of Catholics in the Church, op. cit. Right No. 15.
17. Elisabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1993), p. 153.
18. Donna Steichen, *Ungodly Rage* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), p. 173.
19. Manfred Hauke, *God or Goddess?* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), p. 206.
20. See Mary Jo Anderson, "Inside Call To Action," *Crisis Magazine*, February, 1996, p. 33.
21. Comment was made by Charles Curran at an open mike session of the 1995 Call To Action conference, Chicago, November 4, 1995.
22. Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyper-Reality* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), p. 135.
23. Comment of ex-priest Bernard Cooke at the Call To Action Conference, Chicago, November 4, 1995.
24. See Msgr. George A. Kelly, "Being Catholic: Whole and Entire," *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter*, March, 1996, pp. 6-7.
25. These terms are coined by Joseph A. Varacalli. See Joseph A. Varacalli, "The Catholic Religious and Cultural Center: A Contemporary Call on Behalf of the Faith," *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter*, July, 1995, p. 21.
26. For a comprehensive list see Brian Clowes, *Call To Action or Call to Apostasy* (Front Royal: Human Life International, 1997), p. 109.
27. *60 Minutes*, September 23, 1998.
28. See George Weigel, "The Quinn Proposals," *Crisis Magazine*, November, 1996, pp. 16-19.

