

February 5, 2010

Dear Editor:

Richard A. Yanikoski, president of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, persists in the comfortable myth that the Notre Dame commencement brouhaha was mainly a partisan political reaction against President Obama. Apparently, Catholics, unlike other American citizens, had not had the opportunity to say anything about the President until he was honored by Notre Dame. "So, in a way," Yanikoski is quoted as saying, "the situation that arose at Notre Dame created the first national flash point for a whole lot of people who wanted to comment specifically on Barack Obama to do that at the expense of the commencement at Notre Dame" (*Today's Catholic*, Feb. 7, 2010).

What Yanikoski and his friends either fail or refuse to see is that the commencement protest was directed at Notre Dame and not at the President. It was not President Obama who was being tepid in his commitments or ambiguous about what he stood for or would fight for. It was not President Obama who was speaking out of both sides of his mouth regarding the protection of innocent unborn life. It was not President Obama who was sycophantically hankering after the respect of his secular peers.

The protest arose not from any partisan political agenda, but from the depths of the Catholic Faith as the expression of a genuine *sensus fidelium*. And it was aimed at the infidelity and hypocrisy of some powerful (in the worldly sense) Catholics who were expected to know better.

If Yanikoski's sentiments are any indication, it appears that this expectation is still awaiting fulfillment.

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