

THE APPLE DOESNT FALL FAR FROM THE McARTHAY

On November 13, 2015, Paris, France once again fell victim to heinous attacks by political-religious fanatics bent on creating fear and chaos for the purpose of sending the world farther into a state of perpetual paranoia. These attacks, committed by the so-called group "the Islamic State In Syria" (ISIS), were specifically designed to result in more than just deaths of innocents.

For some time the ISIS hierarchy has openly stated it intended to commit these types of crimes for the purpose of causing persecution of Muslims in Western nations. They believe by causing the non-Muslim populations to fear Muslims in general it will result in discrimination and persecution. This would, in ISIS's view, force those Muslims to live in persecution or run to ISIS, who see themselves as Muslim freedom fighters.

A sick and twisted logic, but it isnt anything new. This has been a tactic used for centuries by one nation or anothers military in one form or another. The idea is by bombing a civilian population you cause them a hardship and through that hardship they turn their anger to their government, who is seen as the ultimate cause. ISIS is getting what it wants. Everyone

From political pundits to Presidential hopefuls are openly advocating for everything from concentration camps to Muslim "watch lists". Republican Governors refuse to allow Syrian refugees to enter their states, Presidential hopefuls want "Muslim registry", religious tests to enter the U.S., or as Sen. Ted Cruz hopes, only allow Christians into the U.S.

Not only have the lunatics of ISIS taken over the air waves but the right-wing crack-pots have come out of their gopher holes frothing and snarling in a way I have to wonder who's next. As Republicans see all non-Christians, liberals, "socialists", gays and other "undesirables" as a threat to their Republican Utopian fantasy their next target could be you. It is our era's neo-McCarthyism.

For those of you unfamiliar with McCarthyism, it took sprout in the early 1950's during the so-called "Cold War" when America was in a pathological fear of "communists". Joseph McCarthy, a Republican senator from Wisconsin, began campaigning to rid the U.S. of alleged "communist spies". McCarthy, in his own brand of Christianity fanaticism, alleged there were hundreds of "godless" communists infiltrating the federal government, entertainment industry, the Pentagon, the Army and colleges with their "screwy ideas". Much like Republicans today rant about "liberal Hollywood", colleges and, as they put it, the "mainstream media". Of course, now, with

the tragedies in France and Bernie Sanders running for President the Republicans are in a fear mongering lather over gays, Socialists and Muslims.

McCarthy, like Republicans today, tapped into the christianism communities to gain support for his crusade. One group McCarthy attempted to use were Irish Catholics. The Irish Catholic community was extremely conservative and due to their "cultural isolation and the residual resentment against past discrimination convinced many Irish that they had a special mission to save America for religion in the struggle against communism."<sup>1</sup>

Today, we see this same fanaticism with Republicans who assert that christianism and Muslims are "at war" and in a "clash of cultures". Playing on this theme they have invented a false idea that somehow christians are "under attack" by atheists, liberals, gays and Muslims.

This is especially evident in the actions of Presidential hopeful Sen. Ted Cruz who has gone so far as to equate gays with terrorists, saying the gay community is waging a "jihad" against christianism religious freedom<sup>2</sup> and that there is an "Atheist Taliban" attacking christian freedom.

Cruz supports Kevin Swanson, a christianism radio pastor, who is known for preaching that (1) girl scout cookies turn girls into lesbians; (2) the movie Frozen turns girls into lesbians; (3) Colorado forest fires were likely caused by women wearing pants; (4) "There are these little tiny fetuses — these little babies — embedded into the womb [of women who take birth control]. They're just, like, dead babies!"; and (5) wonders why the Rose Bowl parade

doesn't have a float where a gay person gets stoned to death.<sup>3</sup>

Cruz also joined with radio talk show host Jan Mickelson two days after Mickelson suggested the U.S. enslave illegal immigrants.<sup>4</sup>

These aren't accidental political gaffes, these are how Republicans think and feel about the world around them. It is the heart beat of McCarthysm. It is the Republican world view.

From 1950 to 1954 McCarthy made the same relentless claims on anyone he suspected as a communist. And what defined a communist was fairly (or unfairly) broad. Communist watch lists were produced, religious tests promoted and thousands of lives destroyed based on little more than innuendo, false accusation and hysteria.

Eventually McCarthy's paranoia got too much for people to handle. He lost his support against "godless communists" and in 1954 the U.S. Senate condemned his reckless behavior and censured him. With his circus show over McCarthy fell into alcoholism and was dead within three years. But his legacy in the Republican party lived on.

Republicans since then have kicked around McCarthy's paranoia from one generation to the next for the last 65 years. Today it isn't the godless communists, it is atheists, liberals, gays, Socialists, Muslims and any other group Republicans see as infidels to the Evangelical cause.

It is important that we do not give ISIS and the McCarthys of our era what they want: A state of perpetual social paranoia that

will lead to an even more divided society.

FOOTNOTES

(1) Shannon, William. The American Irish. New York: MacMillan (1963). Print. p. 382

(2) <http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content-cruz-gay-community-waging-jihad-against-religious-freedom#sthash.QwgYYnXw.dpuf> (last checked Nov. 1, 2015)

(3) <http://www.rightwingwatch.org> (generally)

(4) <http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/ted-cruz-jan-mickelson-atheist-taliban-attacking-religious-liberty#sthash.UBsSt5tq.dpuf> (last checked Nov. 1, 2015)