

Text of Alan Keyes' Press Conference Presentation in front of Notre Dame's Main Entrance, Friday, April 17, 2009

I have come to South Bend today at the request of Randall Terry who is working with folks in the community here to try to help people express here their deep feelings about the invitation that Notre Dame, an ostensibly Catholic university, has extended to the man who has now set himself up as the most preeminent advocate of the most extreme form of commitment to abortion that there is on the face of the earth. And who *has followed through* on that commitment over the course of his entire political life, *including* a willingness to countenance *infanticide*, that is the killing of fully born children *after* they are born, *viable babies*, who were being *allowed to die* in Illinois hospitals. And when an effort was made there to end this practice so that this infanticide would stop, Barack Obama *stood up* and said that if you kept alive these children who have survived a failed abortion, you would somehow be damaging abortion rights and therefore *they must be sacrificed* on the altar of his extremist pro-abortion views. That is the most egregious stand taken by any politician in America. Even committed pro-abortion people like Barbara Mikulski and folks like this who are supportive of the Born Alive Infant Protection Act that ended this heinous practice...

And when you look at the record and if you then have an ostensibly Catholic university extending an invitation and an honorary degree which basically is a way of saying we hold this man up as an example to our community, to our students, there is no way this can be made compatible with Catholic conscience or decency.

And I happen to be in the unique position of being both Roman Catholic and a Black American. And the notion that somehow or another because Barack Obama has a black skin one must honor his departure from the very principle of justice that was fought for that was held up, that was most important in making sure that slavery would end and that civil rights would be advanced, the principle that we are *all* created equal, not equal by our mother's choice, the government's choice, the slave master's choice, but equal *by the choice of God*. Barack Obama *rejects* that principle and in doing so I don't care what color his skin is. He rejects *my* heritage and the heritage of every Black American who has *depended* on that principle, not only to vindicate our *own* claim to rights but in order to assert that claim, as Martin Luther King did, on behalf of all human beings.

This invitation is a travesty. It violates Catholic conscience, human conscience and the very principles that *supposedly* Notre Dame is honoring when it says there's been some breakthrough because Barack Obama is black. **If you honor what is evil just because it has a black skin, then you are committing the worst kind of racism.**

[Regarding Father Jenkin's statement that the Catholic bishops' document *Catholics in Political Life*--that states that Catholic institutions should not honor those who oppose our fundamental values--applies only to fellow Catholics and not to non-Catholics]:

Well, the question that's on the table is not about a bureaucratic rigmarole. I believe we all understand in the course, of say, American history, evil was able to use legalism in order to advance itself right and left. Indeed all of the things that were done to my ancestors were done on the basis of legality, on the basis of allowing evil things to take place in the name of technically stickin' with the laws and the regulations. The truth of the matter is that if a Catholic university holds up in honor an individual who violates the premises of decency, they are violating not only the tenets of the Catholic Church but they're violating the very spirit of the Faith. Does Father Jenkins forget that the world "catholic" actually means that which is done according to the whole, that it is not a word that separates us from other Christian people and denominations? It is a word that in fact *announces* that we stand on the common ground of our allegiance to *God and to Jesus Christ*.

And to stand against this egregiously he abandons what is Catholic. He abandons what is Christian. He abandons what is right by any standard of human decency and conscience. And as he does so he leads the young folks in the Notre Dame community down a path of *scandalous betrayal* because he confuses their minds, he darkens their understanding. And in doing so he does exactly what the Lord said should be punished by having a millstone tied around your neck and he should be thrown in the river.

People try to pretend that the Lord always spoke in such nice ways about folks. But he didn't speak nicely of evil. And of those who scandalize believers, who lead them down the path of darkness by putting a label of honor on that which is not only dishonorable but an abomination in the eyes of God, he said that *they* should be harshly punished. And I remind people as I did last night when Jesus said you should have a millstone tied around your neck and thrown into the river, there are some folks who try to pretend that there's no mention of capital punishment in the Bible, in the New Testament. But in point of fact, last time I looked if you take a millstone, heavy stone, and you tie it around somebody's neck and throw them in the river, they're going to drown. Jesus was very clear, very definitive, about what should be done in the face of such scandal.

Now, I am not, of course, recommending *that*. But I *am* saying that if Christ was willing to be that extreme in his understanding of what the punishment was that was deserved for this sin, I think the folks who are tempted to commit it here at Notre Dame ought to be thinking *really hard* about what they are doing not only to the community but as a Christian brother I would say they need to be thinking about what they are doing to themselves and to their own salvation.

[Whether if Notre Dame were not to award an honorary degree that would be acceptable]

No. It seems to me that the bishops are right when they say that no platform of legitimization should be extended to those who are standing for a principle that guts the very premise of all human dignity. I know that there are a lot of people in this country including Obama who want us to turn away from this, but if all human beings are not created equal then *the whole way of life* we have in this country *collapses*. It has no foundation. And the word creation doesn't mean human choice. Last time I looked we don't create ourselves. That word was meant to point out that our dignity, our worth is

not subject to human choice, not subject to human law. It has been determined by the higher choice and power of the Creator God. That's not Alan Keyes speaking. That's the Declaration of Independence which Obama rejects. And in rejecting that Declaration he joins the slave holders and the slave masters of the past who rejected it so they could pursue their greed even as he has rejected it to pursue his political ends.

[His opinion of the little children standing behind him dressed in black plastic garbage bags to represent children thrown away by abortion]

Well, I think that it is very important that we understand that they are precisely the ones who are most damaged spiritually and morally by what this society is doing. It is also true, however, that they remind us exactly of what we are about. Right now we are involved supposedly in a great fiscal crisis and financial crisis. We have people that are pushing this country down the road that looks like we'll be indebted for the next umpteen generations as far as the eye can see. What do you think leads a generation to be willing thus sacrifice its future, thus to lay on its children the burden of *irresponsible debt* and actions that *supposedly* is done for our sake? Why would we be willing to kill the future for our children and our grandchildren? Are you absolutely sure it has nothing to do with the fact that a generation willing to reach into the womb and snuff out the life of the children living there apparently has no regard for its future generations? It cares *only* about *itself* and therefore is willing selfishly to destroy their lives. I think everything we do for the sake of life we do for the sake of our children and *reminding* people that they are in fact what's at stake here is vitally important.

Alan Lee Keyes (born August 7, 1950) is an American conservative political activist, author and former diplomat, and perennial candidate for public office. He ran for President of the United States in 1996, 2000, and 2008, and was a Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate in 1988, 1992, and 2004. Keyes served in the U.S. Foreign Service, was appointed Ambassador to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations under President Ronald Reagan, and served as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs from 1985 to 1987 [Wikipedia]

