

Gary Bauer: A Double-Standard Warning Against America

In the early hours of Monday morning, a woman got out of her vehicle and set fire to a gay pride flag hanging outside a restaurant in Manhattan's SoHo neighborhood. The flag was inscribed with the words, "Make America Gay Again."

The woman has since been arrested and charged with a hate crime. No one was hurt and there was no significant damage to the restaurant.

Now, let me be absolutely clear: At the James Dobson Family Institute, we believe it is inappropriate to burn someone else's property, including flags, even if we have serious disagreements about the message the flag conveys or what the banner represents.

The reason we are taking note of this single act is that it was immediately treated as a "cause celebre" by the Left. The story was picked up by every major media outlet, including ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, the New York Times and New York's local Fox News affiliate.

New York City politicians rushed to microphones to condemn the hate. I wouldn't be surprised if teachers in New York City used the incident to remind their students about the "LGBTQ movement's struggle for acceptance in America."

But this incident begs comparison to how more serious events are treated, such as the rash of attacks on churches and pregnancy resource centers.

After "Jane's Revenge" declared a "night of rage" that saw scores of churches and pregnancy resource centers burned and vandalized, Big Media barely covered the attacks. There was no rush to the microphones by big-city politicians to condemn the

Left's hate and the pro-abortion violence.

The narrative tells you everything. Our cultural elites and leaders actually believe this is a "teachable moment" for America. It should cause every Christian great concern.

Attacks on houses of worship and faith-based ministries, which are fundamental to America's founding, resulted in a collective yawn from the politicians and pundits. But one burned flag sent them into a frenzy. That tells you how far we've strayed from Judeo-Christian principles that gave birth to this nation.

Here's something else to think about: Last month, students wearing pro-life hats were kicked out of Washington, D.C., museums. This outrageous discrimination against religious views was picked up by conservative media, but largely ignored by the "mainstream media." But just imagine the outcry if the museum staff had kicked out a group of students wearing LGBTQ-themed hats.

One final note: Because incidents like the pride flag burning get so much attention, there has been an epidemic of fake "hate crimes" in recent years committed by attention-seeking people hoping to gain sympathy as an "oppressed victim."

☒ A terrible event occurs and it is later discovered that the perpetrator of the alleged hate crime is in fact a member of the "victim class." The Jussie Smollett case is perhaps the most high-profile example of this phenomenon.

Again, no one should burn flags they find objectionable. Free speech is a fundamental right, too. But the unbalanced treatment between attacks on churches and the burning of this one flag is a big "red flag" for our culture. And it is one more example of why it is so vital for Christians to engage in the public square.

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