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NYTimes is Wrong Again

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 22, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

The editors of the New York Times this morning [1]editorialized on what they deem President Obama's failure to revamp the Office of Faith-Based and Community Neighborhoods in a manner to their liking. Specifically, the editors at the Times think the Obama administration should require that any faith-based groups receiving federal funds not discriminate in hiring based on religious principles or affiliation.

To be clear, I do think it would be wrong to provide federal funds to organizations that disciminate regarding whom they help. Catholic Charities, for example, cannot only help Catholics. But, failing to see the need for a religiously based organization to hire from within its own flock in order to maintain its religious identity, is a big failure of imagination on the Times' part. You can't have a Methodist organization without Methodists, at least not for very long. Over time, the institution's religious inspiration will fade if it is not replenished by the religious commitment of its workers.

If this represents a chink in the "wall of separation" so be it. It represents a brick, actually many bricks, in the architecture of solidarity with the poor and the marginalized about whom so many in our culture don't give a damn. If the Times is going to put its concern for creeping secularism ahead of concern for the poor, that is their right. But they are wrong.

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[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/22/opinion/22mon3.html?_r=1&ref=opinion