ACLU LAWSUIT IN SEX ED CASE MASKS ITS REAL GOAL

On May 9, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed suit challenging the way the state of Louisiana has used taxpayers' money to promote sexual abstinence. The ACLU contends that Louisiana is allowing government funds to promote religion; it cites examples where a religious theme has been evident in some instances where the program has been used. Funding comes from the 1996 welfare reform law: states may receive block grants teaching abstinence in sex education programs.

The Catholic League released the following comment to the press on this issue:

"The ACLU's lawsuit against the state of Louisiana is bogus because it masks the real objective of the organization: to promote a libertine understanding of sexuality. The ACLU's passion for an open-ended, no-holds-barred conception of sexuality explains why it even went so far as to resort to book banning in 1991. That was the year the ACLU went into court in Wisconsin trying to ban the book, Sex Respect, from use in the classroom. The book, according to the ACLU, promoted one religious perspective regarding the 'spiritual dimension' of sexuality, namely, abstinence. Abstinence, of course, is not an idea peculiar to religion. Even atheists have been known to abstain. In any event, that the ACLU would seek to censor speech it dislikes is proof that even its much-vaunted interest in free speech is suspect.

"The ACLU has also said that schools should not be allowed to teach that monogamous, heterosexual relations in marriage is a traditional value. It

said so in 1988. Whether the issue is partial-birth abortion, same-sex marriage or child pornography, the ACLU has long advocated the most libertine vision of sexuality. And it never hesitates to attack religious institutions, most especially the Roman Catholic Church, in the process. That is why its latest foray against the state of Louisiana is so transparent.

"If abuses in this program have taken place, they can be remedied without junking abstinence education altogether."