

ANTI-WAR CROWD EXPLOITS THE POPE

The Catholic League has taken no position on the Iraqi conflict, but it has taken a position on the way the pope's words on the war have been exploited by anti-war activists.

□ □It should come as no surprise that the pope is viscerally anti-war. But it is a grave error to label him a pacifist. Pope John Paul II has said repeatedly that war cannot be decided upon "except as the very last option." What he has not said, though such words have been attributed to him, is that there is no legal or moral justification for the war (some Vatican officials have said as much, but not the Holy Father). In any event, it is striking how many new friends the Pontiff has these days.

□□Jessica Lange is anti-war and pro-abortion. The NARAL enthusiast found it useful to praise the pope for his position on the war. What she failed to mention was that when the pope told a gathering of world leaders to say "No To War" on January 13, he began by admonishing them to say "No To Death"; he specifically cited "the incomparable dignity of every human being, beginning with that of unborn children." But Jessica chose not to hear that.

□Actor Michael Moore was quoted as saying, "The pope even came right out and said it: This war in Iraq is not a just war and, thus, it is a sin." But the pope never said this is not a just war, never mind a sinful exercise. Susan Sarandon, another fair-weather Catholic, invoked the pope's name in making her pitch against the war. And even the notoriously anti-Catholic magazine, the *Nation*, cited the authority of the bishops in making their case against the war.

The reaction of Catholic dissidents and those who claim

Catholic status was even more comical. The *National Catholic Reporter* never tires of railing against papal authority; ditto for Call to Action, an organization of Catholic malcontents. Yet both lauded the pope for his leadership on the war. Even that inveterate Catholic basher Frances Kissling spoke of the “humanitarian” vision of the Vatican and the “religious authority of the pope.” This makes us wonder—will she now convert to Catholicism?

We’ll call these people sincere when they stop exploiting the pope’s words on the war and start showing real and consistent respect for his teachings on all subjects.