

# AP SHOWS CLASS

It really rubs us the wrong way whenever we experience anti-Catholic bias of a gratuitous nature. And we see a lot of this kind of needless and care-free expressions of Catholic bashing. A story we recently read is a case in point.

The story revolved around a series of strip joints down south called Sammy's strip clubs. It provided all sorts of detail about the multi-million dollar enterprise, including one piece of information that hardly seemed to fit: the identification of the strip club owner's religion.

"The naked truth is surprising: A chain of Deep South strip joints is run by a one-time Catholic schoolgirl from Alabama." That's the way reporter Leigh Anne Monitor began her story in the *Birmingham Post-Herald*, a prominent Alabama newspaper. This little nugget of info had absolutely nothing to do with the story, yet it was gratuitously cited anyway.

What bothered the Catholic League most of all was the fact that the Associated Press (AP) picked up the story and ran it on the Alabama state wire for use in other newspapers in the state. William Donohue promptly registered a complaint with an AP official, Mike Silverman, asking him to explain why it was necessary for AP to report that the woman went to a Catholic school. Donohue asked, "How is this fact relevant to an article about a strip club?"

We are happy to say that Mr. Silverman acted responsibly by agreeing that the reference to Catholic school was gratuitous. He regretted that AP let this get by and explained that it was actually in violation of AP policy to do this. Donohue then commended Silverman for his response by saying this decision proves that "AP is a class organization."