

# ATTACKS ON POPE GET UNRULY; HYPOCRISY ABOUNDS

The media, Catholic and Jewish critics, and a slew of sources from Germany, teamed up to attack Pope Benedict XVI in a most unruly way over the Holocaust-denying remarks of one bishop who belongs to the St. Pius X Society. The Catholic League responded quickly to the most outrageous remarks.

When it was announced that the pope was seeking reconciliation with the St. Pius X Society, it was immediately reported that the pope had welcomed back a Holocaust-denying bishop. This was nonsense.

We moved without delay to put the facts on the table. The pope lifted the excommunication that had been imposed in 1988 on four bishops from the St. Pius X Society. One of them, Richard Williamson, entertains loopy and wholly discredited views on the Holocaust. It is important to note, we said, that none has been fully reinstated in the Catholic Church, and they may never be. What the pope did was the *first step* toward full communion. As the *New York Times* correctly reported, this was “a step toward the men’s full restoration to the church, *but their status has yet to be determined.*” (Our emphasis.)

The pope spoke clearly about the issue: “I hope my gesture is followed by the hoped-for commitment on their part to take the further steps necessary to realize full communion with the Church, thus witnessing true fidelity, and true recognition of the magisterium and the authority of the pope and of the Second Vatican Council.”

None of the media distortions of this issue excuses those in the Jewish community who lashed out at the pope. They should know better. As we said to the media, “Is their commitment to good relations with Catholics so thin that it can wither

because of something like this? We certainly hope not.”

Nearly 50 Catholic Democratic congressmen implored the pope to “publicly state your unequivocal position on this matter so that it is clear where the Church stands.” How ironic that most of these very same Catholics fail to speak with clarity about what the Church teaches on abortion. Most are pro-abortion.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the D.A. from Regensburg, Germany, Catholic theologians and the German media took the occasion to lecture the pope about the Holocaust. Talk about hubris. The pope was forcibly conscripted at a young age to join a Nazi group and saw his family suffer economically because he refused to attend Hitler Youth meetings.

All in all, the grandstanding that took place was over the top.