

BUCKLEY: DEATH TO POPE

William F. Buckley Jr., the founder of National Review, wrote a column on February 9 for Universal Press Syndicate titled, "Death for the Pope." He began his piece as follows: "At church on Sunday the congregation was asked to pray for the recovery of the pope. I have abstained from doing so. I hope that he will not recover."

Here is what William Donohue told the press:

"The kindest thing that can be said of Bill Buckley's vile column is that he's gone off the deep end. It matters not a whit that he calls the pope 'a major historical figure,' because even the most inveterate anti-Catholic must acknowledge as much. Indeed, even the biggest Catholic basher in the world is not likely to write, 'So, what is wrong with praying for his death?' If you have to ask, sir, then you are beyond hope.

"This is so tragic. Having lived a life of distinction, Bill Buckley will now be remembered as the guy who had a death wish for the pope."

Had Buckley simply said that it was time for the pope to retire, there would have been no hullabaloo. But that wasn't enough for the conservative stalwart. He had to take the extra step of wishing—indeed praying—for the speedy death of the pope.

We recognize the great good that Bill Buckley has done in his lifetime, and we wish him many good years to come. We just wish he'd never written this piece.