

CARTOON UPSETS UNIV. OF ILLINOIS OFFICIALS

The February 9 edition of the *Daily Illini*, the student newspaper at the University of Illinois, republished cartoons that made fun of Muhammad. Those responsible for doing so, the editor in chief and the opinions page editor, have now been suspended.

The response of school officials to this incident is the subject of Catholic League president Bill Donohue's news release:

"Richard Herman, the chancellor of the University of Illinois, is critical of the decision to reprint the anti-Muhammad cartoons. He maintains that a discussion about the controversial Danish cartoons could have taken place without republishing them. He's right, but that is not the way the university treats anti-Catholic fare on campus.

"In March 1997, the same Urbana-Champaign campus displayed drawings by Michele Blondel that showed red glass vaginas hanging inside European Roman Catholic cathedrals; two of them had red glass holy water cruets with crosses on them. I wrote a letter to the president registering my objections, and received a reply from the chancellor, Michael Aiken.

"Aiken said he regretted that the art 'disappointed' me (flat beers disappoint me, not lousy art). He instructed, 'Most viewers find Blondel's art to be quite subtle as it invites the viewer to contemplate and reflect on topics as diverse as the body, the church, and architectural and religious symbolism.' Stupid me—I thought it was Catholic-bashing porn. His closer was precious: 'The University believes that true intellectual discourse extends not only to written communication but also to the visual.' Except when Muslims

get angry.

“So what’s changed? Do Catholics have to call for beheadings to get respect? How else to explain the condescending response I got, and the sympathetic response afforded Muslims? Similarly, nobody was disciplined for offending Catholics, but two kids have been suspended for offending Muslims!”