WHO'S AFRAID OF THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT? by Don Feder

Reviewed by Susan Fani

In his latest work, conservative columnist Don Feder of the *Boston Herald* examines the role of the so-called "religious right," in which he claims membership as an Orthodox Jew. In this volume, which is a combination of recent columns and new pertinent essays, Feder makes the case for the importance and legitimacy of religious voices in the national debate of issues.

In examining the religious right, Feder explains the mostly Christian movement and its goals for America, which are nothing but the restoration of old-fashioned values and morality. As a Jewish man who is conservative and in agreement with conservative Christians on morality, he sets out what is wrong with the nation's institutions and what needs to be done to make things right. In doing so, he explores all the key moral issues of the day: abortion, gay "rights," the culture war, family values, and the like.

After establishing what the religious right is—moral people who would like to see the triumph of their values—Feder disabuses liberal ideologues of any misconceptions they have about the movement being monolithic. He sarcastically points out, "We're all white evangelical Protestants like Roy Innis of the Congress for Racial Equality, Olga Gomez, Rabbi Shea Hecht, Howard Hurwitz of the Family Defense Council, and Cardinal John O'Connor, leaders of the successful effort to defeat the Children of the Rainbow Curriculum in New York City."

He also brings in his religious and cultural heritage to make a point about religion. Contradicting the stereotype that Jews

are liberal in light of voting patterns and causes the majority support, Feder explains that his is a conservative religion with Biblical admonitions as to right and wrong. The feel-good philosophy is one that cannot be espoused by a practicing Jew and neither can abortion, cultural decay, and gay rights. He answers his question as to what a Jewish conservative is with the answer, “A Jew who is a conservative in the name of Heaven.”

He details the differences between the sacred and secular viewpoints. Each has an accompanying philosophical system which affects how people live and act. The secular (which he also designates “neopagan”) is built on the premise that God does not exist or that, if He does, He is set apart from His creation. As a result, man is not holy, but another life form, inseparable from the rest of creatures. This makes morality relative; since law and right do not come from God, they are subject to majority rule or transient considerations. This in turn leads to situation ethics, which is usually shaped by “popularity and convenience.” Life is the end and pleasure the goal. Two ideals are set up for the world without God—radical individualism and socialistic collectivism, the latter becoming the new “god.” The religious viewpoint is in direct opposition to this paradigm.

In this collection are essays ranging in topic from school prayer, domestic violence, and gay marriage to Hollywood’s outrages, the National Endowment for the Arts, and political correctness. Of special interest to league members are columns on the movie *Priest*which Feder condemns for the bigotry and hate it promotes against Catholicism. Also, he writes about how the media champions dissident Catholics while neglecting the opinions of practicing Catholics, especially when it comes to surveys.

There is a column about the yearly problem of displaying crèches and menorahs on public property. Although the legal obstacles are no longer a problem, secular opposition creates

headaches. Further, Feder opines on the Oregon initiative called the “Death with Dignity Act” by supporters; he sees their attacks on Catholicism as part of their strategy to disarm the moral opposition to assisted suicide. “If patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel, Catholic-bashing is the first resort of the secular left.”

This book contains the brilliance and wit that makes Don Feder a delight to read and a man to ponder. He writes plainly and with much common sense. He is open about his values; he has an agenda which he would like to see become dominant in American life. His embrace of the religious right provides a defense of what he considers to be a prominent, if controversial, movement. By clarifying what the movement really is all about, he has helped to make it that much easier for religious people to take their places in the public square.

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A REVIEW ESSAY OF PHILIP JENKINS’ PEDOPHILES AND PRIESTS

William A. Donohue

The issue of pedophile priests has been the source of much discussion both in and out of the Catholic community. Like all incendiary issues, it has been the subject of heated analysis, much of it irrationally based. The good news is that there is

finally a book that examines the issue in a scholarly and sober manner. The book is *Pedophiles and Priests*, published this year by Oxford University Press, and written by a veteran Penn State historian, Philip Jenkins. Jenkins is a first rate academic and, given that he is also an ex-Catholic, his book merits special attention.

The first problem with conventional thinking on this subject is that almost all of those priests who have been charged with pedophilia have been charged with the wrong offense: the term pedophile refers to adult sex with youngsters who haven't reached puberty. Because the vast majority of alleged so-called pedophile priest cases involve teenagers, it is inaccurate to slap the term pedophilia on them. This is not to suggest for one moment that priest sex with anyone is somehow acceptable, it is simply to say that when charges are being bandied about, it is useful to speak truthfully about the nature of the charges.

Though Jenkins is an historian, he is well versed in sociology, especially the field of social problems. Social problems, he writes, are often the product of "social constructions," which is to say that prevailing ideologies help determine which objective conditions are regarded as socially problematic. What this means is that under new lens, what was once considered mundane or merely troublesome, now appears as a crisis that demands immediate attention.

To provide my own example, take poverty. It has always existed, but only in the 1960s (when there was less of it than ever before), did it become dubbed a social problem. The same is true of women's rights. The very same people who once resisted an Equal Rights Amendment, e.g., Eleanor Roosevelt, Judge Dorothy Kenyon, the ACLU and the League of Women's Voters, found themselves swept away by the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s and began pressing earnestly for an amendment they previously worked to defeat. It is not that the objective condition of women had seriously deteriorated from

previous decades, rather it was that a new construction of reality had emerged.

Sexual misconduct has always existed among the Catholic clergy, the non-Catholic clergy and in the general populace as a whole. What is new is the way many elites in American society began to socially construct the problem of priest sexual abuse, beginning in the mid-1980s. Again, this is not said to exculpate the guilty, but it is to say that a "moral panic," as Jenkins terms it, did begin to evidence itself by 1985.

By the mid-1980s, several social currents that had begun in the 1960s had become institutionalized in American society. The civil rights movement of the 1960s, properly associated with the efforts of Martin Luther King, was the trigger for demands that went far beyond the goal of racial equality. In short time, virtually every segment of American society, from women to migrant farm workers, began to assert its rights and make claims against institutions and society in general. And they did so by using the weapon of the law. So, too, did those who pressed charges against priests, except it took two decades for them to do so.

Feminism took root in the 1960s, and with it came a concern for a newly discovered problem (it had always been there), namely child abuse. In the decades that followed, a whole host of abuse problems would surface, complete with victim and victimizer status. In due course, attention would focus on clergy sexual abuse.

Factionalism within the Church, as well as an adversarial media, also helped to define the contours of the problem. The disputes among politically divergent elements in the Church antedated the construction of the priest "pedophilia" problem, and when the time came for the problem to surface, both sides were ideologically prepared to weigh in with their own critiques. The media of the 1980s, which had by then become

accustomed to drawing blood, also seized the moment.

Jenkins asks us to consider why there is no such term as "pastor pedophilia"? It is not for lack of pastors involved in sexual abuse, rather it has much to do with the way the issue of pedophilia has been "framed" by our social constructionists. For example, who ever heard of Tony Leyva?

In the 1980s, Leyva had abused perhaps one hundred boys in several southern states, but few of us ever learned of it. Leyva had the distinction of being a Pentecostal minister and was, therefore, not within the "frame" of those who were busy constructing reality. The same is true of the three brothers, all Baptist ministers, who were charged with child molestation in the 1990s: the public learned little about this highly unusual series of cases because it was not deemed worthy of dissemination by those fixated on Catholic scandals.

Were it not for the way the problem of clergy sexual abuse has been socially defined, the public would know that the problem is hardly confined to the Catholic community. Indeed, as Jenkins has written, "In reality, Catholic clergy are not necessarily represented in the sexual abuse phenomenon at a rate higher than or even equal to their numbers in the clerical profession as a whole." The biggest difference between the Catholic and Protestant clergy in relation to this problem is due mostly to reporting procedures: there is no counterpart among Protestants to the highly centralized data keeping done by the Catholic Church, hence it is often difficult to make comparisons between the clergy of the two religions.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that such data comparisons hold, the available information on clergy sexual misconduct shows that the problem is bigger among Protestant clergy. For example, the most cited survey of sexual problems among the Protestant clergy shows that 10 percent have been involved in sexual misconduct and "about two or three percent" are

“pedophiles.” With regard to the “pedophile” problem, the figure for the Catholic clergy, drawn from the most authoritative studies, ranges between .2 percent to 1.7 percent. Yet we hear precious little about these comparative statistics.

The reaction of the media to clergy problems has had something to do with the underreporting of this issue among Protestant clergy. Once the media elites focused their attention on framing the issue in terms of the “celibacy” problem, it became difficult for them to assert that the problem was larger among the non-celibate Protestant clergy. Moreover, the prurient interest appeal of the day time television talk shows found better fodder conjuring up images of sexually deprived Catholic priests rather than in reporting the truth.

Catholics authors contributed to the hysteria. Jenkins names Father Jason Berry, the author of Lead Us Not into Temptation, and Father Andrew Greeley, the sociologist turned sex novelist, as two principal actors in this melodrama. Berry’s book, as the title implies, is bent on showing how natural the temptation to “pedophilia” is among celibate clergy. Chapter titles in his book, “The Sacred Secret” and “Clergy Sexual Abuse: Dirty Secrets Come to Light,” offer just the kind of hype that is attractive to the likes of Geraldo Rivera, on whose program Berry appeared. Uninterested in the problem of clergy abuse across the board, Berry focuses exclusively on Catholic clergy misconduct.

Father Greeley, though not sympathetic to the celibacy-causes-pedophilia argument, nonetheless has done much to profile the problem of sexual abuse. For Greeley, it is the structure of the Catholic Church that gives rise to the problem. Closed in secrecy, Greeley charges that the Catholic Church is similar to the Mafia, except that the Mafia does not tolerate deviancy the way the Church does. There is hardly a media outlet that Greeley hasn’t used to vent his deep-seated anger at the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, which explains why he

receives a receptive audience from those not otherwise disposed to treating Catholicism fairly.

Jenkins finds that there were Catholics on the right who also made hay with this issue (the reforms of Vatican II were to blame), but he concludes that it was the dissenters on the "Left/liberal" side of the political spectrum "who did most to shape and define the issue during the 1960s." In particular, Jenkins fingers the *National Catholic Reporter* for its reporting. Not only did this weekly newspaper provide gist for the larger media, it pioneered the term "pedophile priest" in the first place.

Then there is the book, *A Gospel of Shame*, written by Elinor Burkett and Frank Bruni. This diatribe attacks the Catholic Church broadside, contending that oppression has always been a staple of Catholicism. The book is loaded with chapter titles such as "While God Wasn't Watching" and "Revelations." Catholic misdeeds are stigmatized in similar language, e.g., "False Idols," "Casting Out Lepers" and "Cardinal Sins." Abusive acts are termed "The Crucifixion of Innocence" or "Suffer the Children," and the phrase, "The Silencing of the Lambs," is used to convey the polarities of good and evil. Unlike Berry, who is capable of doing some objective analysis, these authors are preoccupied with sensationalism, accounting for their popularity with those who want to demonize Catholicism.

The visuals used in television programs on this subject are, of course, laden with Catholic religious symbols, suggesting once again that there is some real nexus between religion and the problem. When liturgical music is added to the setting, the stigmatizing effect is complete. In the print medium, cartoonists have also had a field day, making the kind of sweeping generalizations that would never be tolerated if the subject were black crime, gay promiscuity, etc.

Jenkins does not neglect the important role that those in law

have played in feeding off of charges of clergy abuse. The litigious nature of our society, promoted largely by changes in law that have made it easier to soak those with alleged "deep pockets," has made the issue of clergy sex abuse a mini-industry for some attorneys. It has gotten to such absurd lengths that attempts to name the Pope as codefendant have been tried.

In many instances, the alleged abuse occurred so long ago that the statute of limitations has expired, the result being that civil litigation is pursued instead. But civil cases need only to establish guilt on the basis of the preponderance of evidence, a much lower standard than the reasonable doubt criterion used in criminal cases. In addition, civil cases do not require substantial evidence to begin litigation, and that makes it quite easy—and relatively inexpensive—to set a case in motion. Add to this the media attention that such charges garner, and the process of indictment is well under way.

Cardinal O'Connor of New York has been criticized by some for saying that although harassing countersuits should be avoided, the archdiocese would still fight "excessively punitive measures" or strategies designed "to teach the church a lesson." Jenkins deals with O'Connor fairly by saying that "The extraordinary inflation of damage claims virtually demands a vigorous defense." Indeed it does: only the naive or malevolent would claim otherwise.

"For purposes of litigation," writes Jenkins, "there is a natural commonality of interest between therapists and child-abuse experts on the one hand and the lawyers who are seeking to prove the extent and harm of clergy abuse on the other." Recall the incredible charges made by the late Steven Cook against Cardinal Bernardin and the attention it received from those in law and in the media. "Recovered memory," surely one of the most contentious and least scientific methods of psychological insight, was used to establish that Cook had had "a seeing and feeling memory" about an incident seventeen

years earlier. But Cook later recanted, saying he wasn't sure about his memory. Yet there are many in the therapeutic profession who continue to entertain such discredited concepts.

In the 1960s and 1970s, therapists generally understood that sexual abuse was treatable, itself a condition of some prior malady. Jenkins is right in asserting that officials in the Catholic Church embraced the reigning orthodoxy, and is he also right in maintaining that when the tide turned in the 1980s—when a more litigious approach gained favor—those same officials were now seen as culprits, men who sought to treat a problem that demanded a more punitive approach. In this instance, when reality was socially reconstructed, it had unfortunate consequences for the Church.

It would be impossible to appreciate the magnification of this issue into a "moral panic" without addressing anti-Catholicism. Jenkins pulls no punches here, stating that "much of the analysis of the `pedophile crisis' from 1985 onward can legitimately be described as anti-Catholic." In his concluding notes, Jenkins argues that "the pedophile issue has legitimized patterns of rhetoric and prejudice that would have been quite familiar in the era of the Know-Nothings." Jenkins, of course, has no problem with those who report on clergy sexual abuse. But there is a difference between a story that focuses on the alleged wrongdoing of a priest and one that seeks to indict Roman Catholicism. There is a difference between analyzing clergy abuse in the Protestant community by dealing solely with the abuser, and attempting a cause and effect relationship between a wayward priest and the structural and psychodynamic conditions of the Catholic Church. Root causes, it seems, are of selective interest to many who cover this issue.

The idea of priest as sexual deviant, Jenkins notes, is nothing new, having been a characteristic of medieval Europe, Tudor England, Revolutionary France, Nazi Germany and

Republican Spain. Especially Nazi Germany. “The enduring power of the pedophile theme,” Jenkins says, “is suggested by the fact that this was the propaganda device utilized by the Nazis in their attempt to break the power of the German Catholic church, especially in the realm of education and social services.” Himmler charged that “not one crime is lacking from perjury through incest to sexual murder,” offering the sinister comment that no one really knows what is going on “behind the walls of monasteries and in the ranks of the Roman brotherhood.”

There has been quite an evolution in the way Church officials have responded to this problem. Before the mid-1980s, that is before the “moral panic” surfaced, individual cases of clergy sexual abuse were dealt with by the dioceses in varying ways. But in 1992 and 1993, following the lead of the Chicago Archdiocese, dioceses around the country began instituting tight measures, and the National Catholic Conference of Bishops set forth stringent guidelines that also addressed the problem.

Unfortunately, we now have the predictable problem of overkill. It is not uncommon anymore to hear priests admit that they do not want to take kids in vans, be with altar boys alone, hug schoolchildren (forbidden by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles) or even horse around in a school playground. The stigmas and taboos that exist are, quite naturally, the outgrowth of a determined effort to “get the Church.” It would have been sociologically incoherent had some other outcome been realized.

This book by Philip Jenkins deserves a wide audience, but given the way the issue of clergy sexual abuse has been framed, it will not be easy for Jenkins to get a fair hearing. Don’t look for the Sally Jesses of this world to invite him to appear on their show. They have made up their minds, and what they have concluded is that there is something terribly awry with the Catholic Church. All the evidence in the world won’t

convince them that sexual abuse of youths is found in many segments of society, from married men to ministers, and that Catholic priests actually have a lower rate of offense than their non-celibate counterparts.

To those still interested in the pursuit of truth—and not ideology—the Jenkins volume offers much to digest. It is a tribute to him that he has been able to wade through this politicized forest and emerge with a clear vision. His book is no whitewash, rather it is the product of a scholarly exercise, the kind which used to be the rule, and not the exception, in academia.

HATING MOTHER TERESA

By William A. Donohue

Mother Teresa has "deceived" us. Her work with the poor is done not for its own sake, but to "propagandize one highly subjective view of human nature." She is "a religious fundamentalist, a political operative, a primitive sermonizer and accomplice of worldly secular powers." Furthermore, the Albanian nun is "a demagogue, an obscurantist and a servant of earthly powers." She keeps company with "frauds, crooks and exploiters," and takes in millions of unaccounted for dollars.

If this sounds like nonsense, well, it is. But it is also the way Christopher Hitchens looks at Mother Teresa. His book, *The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice*, is a sequel to his British television "documentary" entitled "Hell's Angel." The sexual message implied in the book's title demonstrates that Hitchens never escaped adolescence, and both the book and the film are designed to get the public to hate Mother Teresa the way he does. That he hasn't fooled even the

Village Voice, which took note of Hitchens' hidden agenda "to prove all religion equally false," must be disconcerting for the author. After all, if the alienated can't be fooled, it's time for Hitchens to pack it in.

Christopher Hitchens is a British transplant, a political pundit who has written a column for the *Nation* magazine for decades. The Nation, for the unacquainted, is a magazine that would put a smile on the face of Joseph Stalin. (Speaking of Stalin, it is not unimportant that Hitchens' father was a gunrunner for Old Joe, proving once again the maxim "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.") Hitchens has also written many books, none of them of any consequence, and has now found a new home writing for *Vanity Fair*. Having spent his entire adult life on the wrong side of history, he has become a very bitter and angry man.

Why does Hitchens hate Mother Teresa? Like Mother Teresa, Hitchens is troubled by poverty. Unlike her, he does nothing about it. What upsets him most is that the world's greatest champion of the dispossessed is an unassuming nun. Hitchens would prefer to grant the award to ideology, namely to the politics of socialism. And because he is a determined atheist, he cannot come to terms with Mother Teresa's spirituality and the millions who adore her. More than this, it is her Catholicism that drives him mad.

Even some of Hitchens' fellow leftists have noticed his deep-seated hatred of Catholicism. In the 1980s, Robert Orsi accused Hitchens of continuing "a shameful Nation tradition of anti-Catholicism," adding that "Hitchens's straightforward hatred of Catholics is offensive and ugly prejudice." It is to be expected, then, that anyone as well received as Mother Teresa would be too much for Hitchens to bear.

As expected, Mother Teresa has won scores of awards from all over the world. This bothers Hitchens. What has she done with the money earned from the awards? He doesn't know, but that

doesn’t stop him from saying “nobody has ever asked what became of the funds.” Not true. He has asked, so why doesn’t he tell us what he found? Because that would take work. Worse than that, he would then have to confront the truth. This is why he would rather imply that Mother Teresa is sticking the loot in her pocket. It’s easier this way.

His book, by the way, is a 98 page essay printed on eight-and-a-half by five-and-a-half inch paper, one that is so small it could easily fit into the opening of a sewer. It contains no footnotes, no citations of any kind. There is a role for this genre, but it is not associated with serious scholarship, and it certainly isn’t associated with works that make strong allegations against public persons. Rather, it is associated with the gossip pages of, say, a *Vanity Fair*.

Hitchens doesn’t like rich people (save for those obsessed with guilt and who give to “progressive” causes) and that explains why he doesn’t like it when Mother Teresa takes money from the wealthy. But it wouldn’t bother Hitchens if she took money from the government, because that would make her a real redistributionist. From this perspective, Robin Hood is a game that only collectivists can play.

In the promotion flyer accompanying the book, the publisher delights in saying that Hitchens outlines Mother Teresa’s relationship with “Paul Keating, the man now serving a ten-year sentence for his central role in the United States Savings and Loan scandal.” Wrong, the man’s name is Charles Keating, but what difference does that make to a publisher unconcerned with verifying the sources of its authors?

Keating gave Mother Teresa one and a quarter million dollars. It does not matter to Hitchens that all of the money was spent before anyone ever knew of his shenanigans. What matters is that Mother Teresa gave to the poor a lot of money taken from a rich guy who later went to jail. But her biggest crime, according to Hitchens, was writing a letter to Judge Lance Ito

(yeah, the same one) “seeking clemency for Mr. Keating.”

It would be rather audacious of Mother Teresa if she were to intervene in a trial “seeking clemency” for the accused, unless, of course, she had evidence that the accused was innocent. But she did nothing of the kind: what she wrote to Judge Ito was a reference letter, not a missive “seeking clemency.”

“I do not know anything about Mr. Charles Keating’s work,” Mother Teresa said, “or his business or the matters you are dealing with.” She then explains her letter by saying “Mr. Keating has done much to help the poor, which is why I am writing to you on his behalf.”

Now why this character reference, written of someone who was presumed innocent at the time, should be grounds for condemnation is truly remarkable. It reveals more about Hitchens than his subject that he brands her letter an appeal for “clemency.” It was nothing of the sort, but this matters little to someone filled with rage.

Here’s another example of how Hitchens proceeds. He begins one chapter quoting Mother Teresa on why her congregation has taken a special vow to work for the poor. “This vow,” she exclaimed, “means that we cannot work for the rich; neither can we accept money for the work we do. Ours has to be a free service, and to the poor.” A few pages later, after citing numerous cash awards that her order has received, Hitchens writes “if she is claiming that the order does not solicit money from the rich and powerful, or accept it from them, this is easily shown to be false.”

Hitchens isn’t being sloppy here, just dishonest. He knows full well that there is a world of difference between soliciting money from the rich and working for them. Furthermore, he knows full well that Mother Teresa never even implied that she wouldn’t accept money from the rich. And

precisely whom should she—or anyone else—accept money from, if not the rich? Would it make Hitchens feel better if the middle class were tapped and the rich got off scot free? Would it make any sense to take from the poor and then give it back to them?

Who's left?

Hitchens lets the reader know that there aren't too many people that he likes. On this, he is bipartisan. He doesn't like Hillary Clinton (she "almost single-handedly destroyed a coalition on national health care that had taken a quarter century to build and nurture"), Marion Barry (responsible for corruption and the crime of "calling for mandatory prayer in the schools") or Ronald Reagan (his sins are too long to cite here). As such, he objects to Mother Teresa being photographed with them. Now if only she had posed with the characters who hangout at the Marxist Institute for Policy Studies (a favorite Hitchens cell), she would have escaped his wrath altogether.

Hitchens also hates Mother Teresa's itinerary, charging that there is a political motive to her travels. For example, in 1984 she went to comfort the suffering in Bhopal after a Union Carbide chemical explosion. While there, she asked that forgiveness be given to those responsible for the plant (the Indian government was mostly to blame, though Hitchens, the inveterate anti-capitalist, cannot admit to this). So what does Hitchens make of this?

He takes great umbrage at her right to ask for forgiveness, questioning who "authorized" her to dispense with such virtues in the first place. For Hitchens, her refusal to answer this question (never mind that she was never asked in the first place) is proof positive that her trip "read like a hasty exercise in damage control." Damage control for whom? Union Carbide? Does Hitchens even have a picture of Mother Teresa and a Union Carbide official to show?

Hitchens smells politics whenever Mother Teresa supports moral causes he objects to. For example, in 1988, while in London tending to the homeless, Mother Teresa was asked to meet with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. She did. She also met a pro-life legislator. So? For Hitchens, this shows the political side of Mother Teresa. Forget for a moment that Mother Teresa is perhaps the most noted pro-life advocate alive, and that abortion is first and foremost a moral issue. And does anyone doubt that had she met with a politician interested in socialized medicine, Hitchens would be citing her humanity, not her politics?

Mother Teresa has tended to the sick and poor all over the world. She doesn't pick and choose which countries to go to on the basis of internal politics, and this explains why she has visited both right-wing repressive nations like Haiti and left-wing repressive nations like Albania. Hitchens can't stomach this and indicts Mother Teresa for servicing dictatorships. Now if his logic is to be followed here, then most Peace Corps workers and Red Cross personnel are guilty of courting despots. This may make sense to those who write for the Nation, but no one else can be expected to believe it.

It would be a mistake to think that Hitchens is a principled opponent of dictatorships. What matters is whether he believes the regime is sufficiently utopian in its leftist politics to merit his approval (this is why Albania doesn't qualify—it was just an old fashioned tyranny). Allende's Chile, however, is a different story.

In 1983, Hitchens lamented the "tenth anniversary of the slaughter of Chilean democracy" under Salvador Allende. This is a strange way to characterize thuggery. Corrupt and despotic, Allende welcomed terrorists from all over Latin America, bankrupted the poor with runaway inflation, locked up dissidents, installed a censorial press and abused the court system in an unprecedented manner. But despite his record, Allende was the darling of Christopher Hitchens, and Western

socialists in general, in the early 1970s.

The Sandinistas were the favorites of the Nation crowd in the 1980s. These gangsters fleeced the country, punished the poor (in whose name they served) and instituted mass censorship. Hitchens acknowledges the latter outrage but cannot bring himself to condemn his friends. Censorship, which if practiced by a right-wing regime is called “fascism,” is understood by Hitchens as suggestive of “the crisis of the left in the twentieth century.” And what is this crisis? The resolution of the problem of “individual rights versus the common good.” But Hitchens must be joking, because in reality the left has never been faced with such a democratic dilemma, having long settled the problem squarely in favor of totalitarianism.

In exemplary Catholic fashion, Mother Teresa comes to the poor not out of sentimentality, but out of love. No matter how impoverished and debased the poor are, they are still God’s children, all of whom possess human dignity. This is not something Hitchens can accept. An unrelenting secularist, he cannot comprehend how Mother Teresa can console the terminally ill by saying, “You are suffering like Christ on the cross. So Jesus must be kissing you.”

Hitchens is so far gone that he cannot make sense of Christ’s admonition that “The poor will always be with you.” Not surprisingly, Hitchens says “I remember as a child finding this famous crack rather unsatisfactory. Either one eschews luxury and serves the poor or one does not.” But he just doesn’t get it: Mother Teresa eschews luxury and serves the poor, yet not for a moment does she believe that she is conquering poverty in the meantime. Only someone hopelessly wedded to a materialist vision of the world would think otherwise.

Hitchens also objects to Mother Teresa’s asceticism (if she lived the Life of Riley he would condemn her for that). He charges that her operation in Bengal is “a haphazard and

cranky institution which would expose itself to litigation and protest were it run by any branch of the medical profession." Hitchens would prefer that the Bengalis force Mother Teresa to follow regulations established by the Department of Health and Human Services before attending to her work. It does not matter to him that Mother Teresa and her loyal sisters have managed to do what his saintly bureaucrats have never done—namely to comfort the ill and indigent.

It is a telling commentary on any author when he twists the facts to suit his ends. Hitchens is a master of this and his book is chock full of examples. To cite one, he chastises Mother Teresa for not working cooperatively with the City of New York when she refused to install an elevator in a building she was acquiring to service the homeless. What he doesn't mention is that the Missionaries of Charity pledged to carry the handicapped up the stairs, making moot the need for an elevator. But for Hitchens to mention this fact would have gotten in the way of his agenda.

It is jealously, not ideology, that propels Hitchens to criticize Mother Teresa for receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. He wonders "what she had ever done, or even claimed to do, for the cause of peace." (His accent.) This is a strange comment coming as it does from one of those "If You Want Peace, Work For Justice" types. And it apparently never occurred to Hitchens that it is precisely Mother Teresa's humility that disallows her to grandstand before the world trumpeting her own work. A true crusader for the underclass, Mother Teresa is not in the habit of claiming to do anything. She is too busy practicing what others are content to preach.

If receiving the Nobel Peace Prize angered Hitchens, it is safe to say he suffered from apoplexy when he read Mother Teresa's acceptance speech. In it, she took the occasion to say that "Today, abortion is the worst evil, and the greatest enemy of peace." Hitchens labels her speech a "diatribe" that is riddled with "fallacies and distortions," none of which he

identifies, preferring instead to say that there “is not much necessity for identifying” them. Not, it should be added, if your goal is a smear campaign.

It is a staple of secularist thought that contraception and abortion are the best means to ending poverty and population growth. This may explain why people like Mother Teresa are not popular with this crowd, but it is no excuse for cheap *ad hominem* attacks. Someone who is confident about the logic of his argument doesn’t need to stoop to the gutter to make his point. But Hitchens does just that when he charges that Mother Teresa’s opposition to contraception and abortion “sounds grotesque when uttered by an elderly virgin.” That it is his own utterance about her that is grotesque seems to have escaped him.

What is perhaps most flabbergasting about Hitchens is that he has no idea about the very nature of the problem Mother Teresa is addressing. On one page he writes that “it is difficult to spend any time at all in Calcutta and conclude that what it most needs is a campaign against population control.” Yet on the previous page he notes, with admiration, that in Calcutta “secular-leftist politics predominate.” It is a safe bet that Hitchens will go to grave not understanding that it is the predominance of secular-leftist politics that promotes high levels of population growth and ultimately accounts for the misery of Calcutta.

It is ironic that after hurling one unsubstantiated charge after another that Hitchens ends his little book by saying, “It is past time she [Mother Teresa] was subjected to the rational critique that she has evaded so arrogantly and for so long.” It would be more accurate to say that it is one more source of her greatness that Mother Teresa never evades anything, including irrational tracts written by vindicative authors. The arrogance is all his, because in the end, Hitchens hasn’t even laid a glove on her.

Mere Creatures of the State

Mere Creatures of the State
Education, Religion and the Courts
by William Bentley Ball
Preface by Richard John Neuhaus
Crisis Books, 1994. Paperback, 132 pp.

Reviewed by Karen Lynn Krugh

Are we, or are our children, mere creatures of the state? Has the right to instruct our children in the richness of our faith, and the right to publicly profess and practice that faith, been usurped by the state? Perhaps not entirely, and perhaps not explicitly. But to the extent that the prayer of a young school child is considered unconstitutional, yes, they have. William Bentley Ball knows this, having argued ten cases before the Supreme Court and twenty-two cases before state courts. It is from this background that *Mere Creatures o fthe State?* emanates.

When the nation was founded, the founding fathers recognized the importance of protecting the citizens of the state from a religion imposed by the state. With this in mind, they set down the following words in the First Amendment to the Constitution: *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof… "* And for the first century-and-a-half after those words were penned, less than a dozen cases involving religion were brought before the Supreme Court. Yet in the 1993 term alone, 36 cases involving religion were brought before the court.

In the past fifty-or-so years, we have witnessed a gradual

reversal of the use of that”first freedom.” This same right has come to be used as the basis for the removal of practices previously taken for granted: the offering of a blessing at commencement, a moment of silence for prayer or meditation before the beginning of a school day, public assistance money for the education, transportation or supplies of school children enrolled in private or parochial schools, the display of a creche or menorah during the holidays. Fr. Richard John Neuhaus explains in the preface that “no establishment is now taken to mean that any cooperative relationship between government and religion is suspect as a forbidden establishment of religion.”

William Bentley Ball knows this better than most, and is therefore one of the few people who could write this book, having been personally involved in several ofthe key cases which are now used as a basis for deciding cases dealing with religion and the establishment clause. For cases he himself argued *(Lemon, Yoder,* and *Zobrest,* to name a few), he builds them from the ground up, introducing the reader to the real people involved. From the Amish farm of Jonas Yoder in Wisconsin to the state capital building in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to the counsel table of the nation’s highest court, Ball’s account provides a rare glimpse inside some ofthe most well-known Supreme Court cases of the twentieth century.

How did he feel the arguments went in *Yoder?* What was the origin of the now-famous *Lemon* test? Upon completing his arguments, which way did he see the judgment going? Providing a perspective unique to only those most closely involved in such cases, Ball’s is a work rich, not just in scholarly information, but in American history. And Ball is deeply entrenched in that history.

If the aim is to find a book heavy with lawyerese and legalistic entanglements, explaining statutes, precedents and the like, this is *not* the book. lf the aim is to find an

immensely readable, thoroughly enjoyable mix of personal anecdotes and legal history, this *is* the book. Do not misunderstand – this book is not light reading. Combining the personal with the historical, *Mere Creatures of the State?* provides a tangible look over the past fifty years at the key decisions dealing with religion and education that affect the way all Americans profess and practice their faith today. And coming from Ball's own pen, this is the most informed book on the subject to have appeared in quite some time.

Did the Children Cry? Hitler's War Against Jewish and Polish Children, 1939-45

Did the Children Cry?
Hitler's War Against Jewish and Polish Children, 1939-45
Richard C. *Lukas*
Hippocrene Books, 1994

In this, Lukas' seventh book, he traces the devastating effects of the Nazi regime on Polish and Jewish children during the years 1939 to 1945. Creating a time-line of military tactics, he outlines seven categories, detailing the losses and effects of each. They are Invasion, Deportation, Concentration Camps, Germanization, Resistance, Hiding, and the War and Child Survivors. In each, we meet rescuers and informants, heroes and criminals, survivors and victims.

Of perhaps greatest interest to Catholic readers is the chapter on hiding in which Lukas emphasizes the role played by clergy, religious and the laity. In it he writes, "The Catholic Church played a critical role in aiding unfortunate

people, including Jews, during the war." Lukas related several instances where priests, monks and nuns hid children in the robes of their cassocks and habits to aid in their escape. Baptism and the hiding of children in convents and churches were also mentioned as methods of protection. Also noted are the tremendous losses suffered by clergy and religious, 50 percent in some places, 20 percent in others.

Those orders of women religious singled out for their heroic efforts include the Sisters of Charity (Grey Sisters), the Felician Sisters, the Ursulines, Little Servant Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary and the Order of St. Elizabeth. Lukas quotes a distinguished Jewish historian, Szymon Datner, on the efforts of Polish Catholic nuns, as such: "In my research I have found only one case of help being refused. No other sector was so ready to help those persecuted by the Germans, including the Jews….this attitude, unanimous and general, deserves recognition and respect."

Not to be forgotten were the efforts of individuals, no doubt with the support of many behind them. Ranking Polish clergymen, such as Archbishop Adam Sapieha of Krakow, Bishop Karol Niemira and canon Roman Archutowski, led the way by urging clergy to help the Jews. Others followed their lead, including Fr. Maximilian Kolbe, future Pope John Paul II, Karol Wojtyla, the Home of Father Boduen, and many other individuals and groups too numerous to name here but which are included in Lukas' account.

Trying to document how many children lost their lives has proven to be a very difficult task, and while no book will ever be able to tell the complete story, Lukas does a credible job. He intersperses the endless numbers, dates, locations and losses with personal accounts of tragedy and triumph. A well-researched book, Lukas carefully cites every name, number, organization and individual. His sources range from news accounts of the day to contemporary studies and research

efforts, both in Polish and English.

Lukas does not overdramatize the situation as reality was tragic enough. He alternates between the head counts and personal accounts, between figures and faces. In his chapter, “The War and Child Survivors,” and in the Epilogue, Lukas relates stories from some of the young survivors of the war. The lifelong effect is evident in one child who, after the war ended, was quoted as saying, “I would be able to see the whole world die and would go on playing.”

-Karen Lynn Krugh