

CONFERENCE ON PREJUDICE EXHIBITS ANTI-CATHOLICISM

The 1997 Bi-County Conference for Educators, an organization that represents educators in Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, is holding a conference on May 21 on "Reducing Prejudice: A Matter of Education." The conference is being held at the Touro Law Center in Huntington, Long Island, and is sponsored by the Suffolk Association for Jewish Educational Services and the American Jewish Congress Center for Prejudice Reduction. In addition, there are many other co-sponsors—organizations drawn from many religions. One of these co-sponsors is the Catholic League.

On May 19, the Catholic League was notified that much of the material that it had sent to be displayed at the conference was rejected for being "too strident." Four women who stuff envelopes complained to Deborah Friedman of the Suffolk Association for Jewish Educational Services and it was her decision to withdraw the league's literature; Amy Levine of AJC was notified of this ruling as well.

The material in question is the league's monthly journal, *Catalyst*, and its Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism; only its brochure passed muster. A comment was made about how offensive some of the anti-Catholic cartoons were and this was then used as a basis to deny the presentation of the report.

Catholic League president William Donohue expressed the league's thoughts on this matter today:

"The decision to remove Catholic League material—literature that proves the prevalence of anti-Catholicism—from a conference on prejudice, is surely one of the most incredibly ironic and demonstrably anti-Catholic statements that has been made in recent times. After accepting the league's money to

join as a co-sponsor, we are now told that our journal and annual report are too much for the teachers to take. This act of censorship shows the depth of anti-Catholicism that affects even those educators who purport to be concerned about prejudice and discrimination.

"The league will make a formal complaint to the Nassau and Suffolk County Executive Directors asking them to suspend all relationships with the American Jewish Congress and the Suffolk Association for Educational Services. Not until the Catholic League receives a satisfactory response will it allow this issue to die."