

# CONSERVATIVE SCHOLAR SLAMS CATHOLICS

Irwin Stelzer, director of regulatory policy studies at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, contributed an essay to a symposium in the publication *Commentary* wherein he took some cheap shots at Catholics.

Published in the February edition of the magazine, Stelzer, along with 14 other writers, was asked to comment on a previously published symposium in *First Things*, the interdenominational monthly edited by Father Richard John Neuhaus. Unlike the other contributors, Stelzer found it necessary to buttress his argument by making anti-Catholic remarks.

Stelzer's statement that Jewish neoconservatives should have known better than to "pitch an intellectual tent broad enough" to include "many Catholics brought up in a tradition that does not welcome dissent from its revealed truths" smacked of an animus against Catholics. Stelzer was right, of course, to suggest that certain teachings of the Catholic Church are not dependent on a referendum for validation, but he was wrong to phrase his words in a manner that was downright disparaging of Catholicism.

In a letter to *Commentary*, William Donohue also stated that on many occasions he has joined with "Jewish men and women in fighting anti-Semitism," concluding that it is "only just that reciprocal support be given by Jews when anti-Catholicism rears its ugly head."

Even worse was Stelzer's comment that Jewish intellectuals "should not expect to be partners in a governing theocracy" with Catholics. Stelzer never identified whom he was speaking about; there is little doubt he could not name even one

Catholic who has proposed a governing theocracy. In his letter, Donohue protested Stelzer's essay as "pure, unadulterated bigotry." He noted that when Catholics like Pat Buchanan and Joe Sobran have offended Jews, *Commentary*, which is published by the American Jewish Committee, has not hesitated to strongly criticize them. Donohue said "The wonder is why *Commentary* found it acceptable to publish Stelzer's bigoted essay in the first place."