

CULTURE WAR IGNITES OVER GORE'S PLAYBOY MANSION "GORGY"

The Democratic fund-raiser at the Playboy Mansion, scheduled for August 15, is expected to raise \$3 million for vice president Al Gore's presidential campaign. The Catholic League, which led the fight against George W. Bush for his appearance at Bob Jones University, is now pitted against Al Gore for refusing to cancel this event.

Catholic League president William Donohue explains the similarities and differences between George W. Bush's visit to Bob Jones University and Gore's Playboy Mansion event:

"Before George W. Bush spoke at Bob Jones University last February, few knew that the school still ascribed to the virulently anti-Catholic views of its founder. Calling Catholicism a 'satanic counterfeit' and the 'Mother of Harlots' is not a matter of legitimate theological dispute: it is Catholic bashing. Once it became known just how bigoted the institution was, the Catholic League demanded that Bush address our concerns squarely. Bush did just that in his letter of February 25 to John Cardinal O'Connor, sending a copy to me. On February 28, I accepted Bush's statement of regret on the 'Today Show.'

"Gore's Playboy Mansion 'Gorgy' now threatens to become the vice president's Bob Jones nightmare. Only worse. Bush took heat mostly from Catholics and had no way of knowing that his appearance at Bob Jones University would trigger such an outcry (most other presidential hopefuls had campaigned there in the past without a problem). Gore, on the other hand, is getting fair warning and is ticking off not only Catholics, but men and women of all religions: hustling money in this den

of iniquity sends a message to Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims that the vice president has decided to align himself with Hugh Hefner in the raging culture war. But because this 'Gorgy' Fest is most insulting to Catholics (the event occurs on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption, a holy day of obligation for Catholics), the Catholic League feels especially compelled to lead this fight. We will contact our friends in other faith communities to join with us."