

# DUMPING ON THE VATICAN

Some students and faculty at Harvard University think that the school underpays its lowest-paid employees. To show that they really care about the working class, they held a rally on campus and demanded that Harvard institute a \$10 “living wage.” They did not say why they didn’t divvy up the money themselves, nor did they explain why a wage of \$100 an hour wasn’t a more just figure. But they did invite a local Communist to speak at the rally, namely professor Howard Zinn of Boston University. Again though, no explanation was forthcoming as to why they had to import a Communist professor when they have so many to choose from at home.

In any event, what interests the Catholic League is the photo that appeared in the *Boston Herald*. Surrounding Comrade Zinn were the laughing students holding signs that read, “The World’s RICHEST Non-Profits: #1 The Vatican, #2 Harvard.

This is not exactly accurate. Though it will come as a surprise to the Harvard students, and most especially to Comrade Zinn, the Vatican is not a non-profit organization: it is a nation-state (hope these people never play Jeopardy). And quite unlike the protesting Marxists, the Vatican believes in redistribution, which is why it gives so much money to the poor.

Jane Kramer must have graduated from Harvard. If not, she must have studied under Comrade Zinn at BU. We say this because Jane recently wrote a remarkable piece in the august pages of the *New Yorker* slamming the Vatican for allegedly “spend[ing] its money and its craft on the institution of its own power.” Oh, yes, the Vatican also spends its money “paying to discipline its dissident priests or to keep Catholics in the Third World having babies....”

Readers might think that Jane has done research on the

Vatican's finances and has decided to share the results of her study. Actually, she is one of those literary types who has expertise in nothing but writes about everything; this explains why she writes for the *New Yorker*.

Jane's erudite remarks were made in an article she wrote about the folly of the Italian government spending too much money repairing earthquake-damaged pilgrimage sites. How she managed to stick it to the Vatican in such an article shows how creative Jane is. Then again, if the subject were a cross cultural analysis of the life span of hangnails, we trust that Jane would find a way to bash the Vatican; moreover, the *New Yorker* would find a way to publish it.

Both the *Boston Herald* (our criticism was not of the newspaper but of the students) and the *New Yorker* heard from us.