

# Education



**2/16/94**

**Kalamazoo, MI** – Stephen Hilker, a Ph.D. candidate at Western Michigan University, walked into his public administration class with the ashes he'd received earlier that day (it was Ash Wednesday). In short order, his teacher, Dr. Ralph Chandler, began an extensive diatribe against Catholics, including an effort to debunk several "myths" which happen to be central teachings of the Catholic Church. The league protested and Hilker quit the program.

**4/11/94**

**Pittsburgh, PA** – At Carnegie Mellon University CMU in Pittsburgh, posters featuring a defaced image of Cardinal O'Connor, with the words "know your scumbags" flanking the picture, were put up around campus by the militant homosexual group, cmuOUT. When CMU senior Patrick Mooney removed one of the posters to bring it to the attention of school authorities, he was placed on probation for removing the poster. No mention was made of the fact that cmuOUT violated school policy by neglecting to identify itself on the face of the poster. Mooney was also charged with harassment for merely noting his criticisms of the poster to a visiting professor. The harassment charges were later dropped and Mooney's record was wiped clean of any mention of probation upon his graduation that spring. However, at no time was Mooney permitted to speak publicly about the case, thus making resolution that much more difficult. The league intervened on behalf of Mooney.

**4/20/94**

**Denver, CO** – The Metro Activities Council (M.A.C.) of the Metropolitan State College of Denver denied funds to a

Catholic student organization due to the religious content of its intended program, despite having previously funded a group which presented a program with specifically anti-Catholic perspectives. After the league pointed out that M.A.C. had, in July of 1993, funded "Searching for a Place Within the Catholic Community," an explicitly anti-Catholic program, and had previously funded programs which focused on the religious beliefs of Native Americans, the M.A.C. agreed to fund the Auraria Catholics' presentation.

**5/4/94**

**Plainview, NY** – At the Mattlin Middle School in Plainview, New York, a sketch was presented concerning "Women in History." The subject, Rosa Parks, made mention of the Ku Klux Klan. A sixth grade child who was Jewish then described the Klan as "a Catholic organization that hates Jews and Blacks." When asked to make a correction, the teacher who was responsible declined.

**5/16/94**

**Beaver Falls, PA** – Bob Razzano reported being a victim of bias in employment because of his Catholicism. In applying for a full-time coaching position at Geneva College of Beaver Falls, PA, Razzano was "shot down" by the Board of Directors for religious reasons.

**7/5/94**

**Paterson, NJ** – Vernon McClean, a professor at William Paterson College (WPC) in Paterson, New Jersey, required all students in his "Racism and Sexism in Changing America" class to identify their religion on a piece of paper. When the lecture began, Dr. McClean then said that Farrakhan had once called Pope John Paul II a "racist cock-sucker." Dr. McClean then said that Farrakhan was right. When the mother of one of the students learned of the incident, she wrote a letter of protest to college President Arnold Speert. Copies of the

private correspondence were then distributed by Dr. McClean to his students. The college conducted an investigation and released a statement saying the matter was closed. Dr. McClean, in an interview the day after the complaint went public, called the accusations "a pack of lies." In the college's official statement on the incident, however, McClean said only that he disassociated himself from the remarks made in class. And even that explanation stands in contradiction to accounts given by several students. The official statement from WPC also left out any mention of the students having to record their religion on paper, or of the distribution of private correspondence in class.

**9/23/94**

**La Jara, CO** – Mike Cyrus, whose daughter is enrolled in Centauri High School, called to alert the league of an anti-Catholic book being used in the school. Mr. Cyrus was also extremely concerned about a teacher, Mr. Gary Benson, who was using classroom time to vent his bigotry against the Catholic Church and teaching factually incorrect information. Among the things he taught students: "Catholicism is a business, not a Church"; "The Catholic Church only survives because it keeps throwing out Bibles..."; "The Catholic Church survives because it changes its doctrine"; "The Catholic Church used superstition to control people"; "There is no record of Jesus having ever existed"; "The Catholic Church invented Tarot cards to control people"; etc.. One classroom assignment had the students rewriting scripture. After Mr. Cyrus, another parent, and the league filed complaints, the book was removed from the classroom pending further investigation. Mr. Benson was also under investigation.

**10/5/94**

**Lawrence, KS** – When Patricia Trausch, a student at the University of Kansas, met to discuss her schedule with her advisor, Dr. Albert Cook, she first apologized for missing a

previous engagement. She explained that she missed her earlier appointment due to a meeting with the local Archbishop. Ms. Trausch, who was wearing a pro-life T-shirt at the time, was then informed by Dr. Cook that “you ought to tell the church that the Catholic Church needs to join the 20<sup>th</sup> century on birth control.” He then expanded on his remarks, offering more unsolicited “advice.” After Ms. Trausch contacted the league, it sent a letter to Dr. James Muyskens, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, with a copy to Dr. Cook and Ms. Trausch. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Cook sent Ms. Trausch an “apology” saying “it was not my intention to blatantly offend you.”

**11/21/94**

**Scarsdale, NY** – The Board of Education of Scarsdale passed a resolution that no religious celebrations could be held in public schools. Displays or exhibits, such as wreaths, garlands, caroling and menorahs that appear to promote or give approval to religious matters were banned. A “Nutcracker” mural, candy canes, bells, holiday music, and Hannukkah or Christmas parties and concerts were among other things also banned. Children were permitted to hang non-religious items on trees made of twigs, hold parties with non-holiday themes and decorate with winter motifs (i.e.: snowflakes, bears, etc.).

**12/15/94**

**Barrington, RI** – Moments before a Christmas concert was to take place at Primrose Hill School in Barrington, Principal Elizabeth Durfee announced that because of a parent’s complaint and a School Committee rule, the name “Christ” would be omitted from all of the concert’s songs. The parent, whose name was not released, felt so strongly about the matter that the Superintendent of Schools, Ralph Malafronte, was asked to intervene. Songs which made reference to other religions were not changed.