

FACEBOOK'S DUPLICITY

The Catholic League has filed a complaint with Facebook about an entry that shows an edgy picture of the Virgin Mary with the inscription, "Virgin Mary Should've Aborted." Facebook said it did not constitute hate speech. When others continued to protest, the page was taken down, but then other pages, similar in content, appeared; they are still posted.

Alison Schumer, who works at Facebook, said in June that "hate speech" is defined as "direct and serious attacks on any protected category of people," but that "distasteful humor" does not qualify. That is an eminently defensible definition. But if that policy was violated when a cartoon of a naked Muhammad was posted—this happened last year when a French magazine took liberties with the prophet—then why does Facebook currently allow the Virgin Mary to be assaulted? It censored the French page.

The policy Schumer defended speaks to categories of people, not individuals. But if it was good enough to take down the anti-Muhammad post, why does it not apply to the Virgin Mary? Also, the cartoon was a depiction of Muhammad lying on his stomach, with his butt exposed. If the reason for taking down this page is nudity, then how does Facebook explain doctored photos of Sarah Palin sitting on a chair in a vulgar position? It's still up.

We contacted Facebook seven times for an explanation, but to no avail. All we want is for Mary to be treated the way it treats Muhammad.