

Government

2/24/94



Marlboro, NJ – The League protested a restraining order placed on a newsletter published by Karen and Vincent Bove detailing the alleged apparitions taking place on a monthly basis in Marlboro, New Jersey. The decision was made in conjunction with a ban on the vigil itself, wherein the judge banned attendance at the vigils due to safety concerns. In its objection, the League passed no judgment on the veracity of claims made by Joseph Januszkiewicz, the one reported to be receiving the apparitions, but confined its argument to the prior restraint imposed by the judge.

2/28/94

New York, NY – The league testified before the Committee on Public Safety of the City of New York against a FACE-type bill which significantly abridges the free-speech rights of pro-lifers. The bill, which was subsequently passed, called for a year in jail and a fine of \$5000 for anyone convicted of blocking passage to an abortion clinic or who “communicates” with or “harasses” a woman seeking an abortion “in a manner likely to seriously alarm or annoy a reasonable person.” The league also sought to have included in the bill protection for the religious freedom rights in houses of worship. The bill passed without the house of worship rider.

2/28/94

Boston, MA – The Massachusetts Court of Appeals overturned the conviction of Rev. Thomas Carleton, a member of Operation Rescue, because of improper jury selection. The court found that the Massachusetts Attorney General’s office, which prosecuted the case, had excluded jurors based on the Irish ethnicity of their surnames. It was seen as an attempt to exclude Catholics who might show sympathy toward Fr. Carleton.

The Attorney General's office also sought to prevent Fr. Carleton from wearing clerical garb in court, and to have him addressed as something other than "Father." The Attorney General's office appealed; but on November 11, 1994 the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court upheld the decision of the lower court.

3/16/94

New York, NY – Thirty-one elected officials, including three U.S. Congressmen from the New York area, pledged not to march in the St. Patrick's Day Parade due to the exclusion of the homosexual contingent ILGO. But many of these same politicians had already marched in the Salute to Israel parade despite its prohibition against allowing gays to march as a separate contingency.

April

During the Preparatory Conference for the International Conference on Population and Development held in New York City, Timothy Wirth, the U.S. Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs, scolded Archbishop Renato Martino, the head of the Holy See's Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations: "We've been very patient with you!"

4/13/94

Albany, NY – According to published news reports, senior officials in the New York Republican party determined that the Republican party gubernatorial nominee must be Catholic, pro-choice and fiscally conservative. This effectively excluded not only Catholics who are faithful to Church teachings and thus pro-life, it also excluded any pro-life candidate of any faith.

4/27/94

Washington, DC – The National Museum of American History

opened the "Science and American Life" exhibit. In one section, where the advent of birth control and "The Pill" were discussed, a crude caricature of the Catholic position on birth control was shown. The relevance of Catholic teaching to an exhibit on science was not explored. Rather, it seemed a gratuitous inclusion designed to minimize and insult. The exhibit had a positive presentation of Margaret Sanger but neglected to include her eugenic or racist theories. On this date, we also learned of another exhibit, "The American Encounters," which, among other things, included the message that Catholicism was "forced" down the throats of the Native Americans by the Spanish who were given the option of conversion or death. Both exhibits are part of the Museum's permanent collection.

5/10/94

New York, NY – In a letter sent to Catholic V.I.P.'s, U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican Raymond L. Flynn addressed the "ugly, anti-Catholic bias...shown by the prominent member of Congress and the administration." Flynn was primarily referring to the treatment of the Holy See's envoy at the Preparatory Conference on Population and Development held at the U.N. in April. He said it was "downright deceitful... when Catholic Church officials were criticized and ridiculed." Flynn criticized administration representatives saying, "they do the President and Congress a disservice with their invective and unreasoned comments."

5/31/94

Rockland County, NY – Tony Guzman and his family sought assistance from a social worker in Rockland County, New York. During the course of the social workers contact with the family, Mr. Guzman claimed she (the social worker) attempted to "destroy my family," urged his wife to seek a divorce, and said she wanted the family to become "born-again Christians." The social worker also discarded the family's Bible and

Catholic devotional material, claiming they were being used to practice Santeria, a religion originating in Cuba in which deities are identified with Catholic saints.

6/27/94

New York, NY – A Christian group of New York City police officers was denied the right to exhibit its wares at Police headquarters, this despite the fact that Jewish, Asian and other groups—including gays—had been allotted space. The NYPD maintained that the exhibition would violate church and state grounds. After the threat of a lawsuit and national publicity put the Police Department on the spot, Police Officers for Christ was granted the right to exhibit a display at headquarters.

7/14/94

Boston, MA – The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial court vacated a lower court ruling in favor of Paul and Ronald Desilets, Catholic landlords who refused to rent an apartment to an unmarried couple because of religious convictions, and sent the case back to the lower court for trial. The claim was brought against the brothers by State Attorney General L. Scott Harshbarger who claimed that their refusal to rent to an unmarried couple violated state anti-discrimination law. The league filed an amicus brief in support of the Desiletses asserting that the free exercise of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution and Article II of the Massachusetts Constitution supersedes the so-called right to unmarried cohabitation. The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, the American Jewish Congress and the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders filed amici curiae briefs opposing the Desiletses. On December 2, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts dropped its case against the Desiletses.

8/19/94

Washington, DC – Faith Mitchell, the State Department

Coordinator for population, made anti-Catholic remarks during the final stages of preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development which was held just weeks later in Cairo. "We suspect," Mitchell said during a telephone interview, "that (the Pope's opposition) has to do with the fact that the conference is calling for a new role for women, calling for girls' education and improving the status of women." The league responded with a half-page ad in the *New York Times* addressed to President Clinton.

September

At the United Nations (UN) Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, members of the Holy See's delegation were interrupted and criticized as they spoke. Gail Quinn, a member of the delegation was interrupted so much and so rudely that a UN Ambassador stood up to say how "disgraceful" the behavior was, and that everyone has a right to speak and should not be deterred "not here, not ever."

9/26/94

Albany, NY – Thomas Neidl, head of the criminal investigations unit in the Attorney General's office, was suspended for remarking that he didn't think homosexuals should have children. Neidl, a Catholic, made the remark during a private phone conversation and was overheard when he neglected to turn his intercom off. Neidl was later reinstated.

10/19/94

Dallas, TX – The *Washington Times* "National Weekly Edition" ran a story explaining that "the Pope and the Queen of England were the butt of jokes Texas Governor Ann Richards told to 1200 Democratic supporters attending her Dallas fund-raiser."

10/30/94

New York, NY – WNYC-TV, New York City's public TV station,

aired the program "Inversion of Solitude." The show had been advertised as an irreverent video satire based on the life of St. Therese de Lisieux whose seemingly uneventful life became the subject of a global media campaign." (When the show aired, it had been edited due to complaints registered by the league.)

11/17/94

Washington, DC – The United States Postal Service announced that beginning in 1995, it would cease printing the Christmas stamps series reproducing paintings of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. The league immediately registered its complaint and shortly thereafter, President Clinton intervened and had the matter overturned.

11/30/94

New Berlin, NY – Robert Scone, a convicted sex offender had been denied the right to attend Mass by his parole officers based on the potential for Mr. Scone to come into contact with young children. To deny him attendance and participation in the Mass was very simply a violation of his constitutional rights. The league protested and provisions were made for Mr. Scone to attend Mass.

12/15/94

Hauppauge, NY – The league filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity office in support of a case filed by postal service employee George Cornwall regarding the displays of crèches and menorahs in post offices. The regulation (in Postal Operations Manual and Handbook PO-203 Revision, 221.528, section c) explicitly states that menorahs are permissible but crèches are not. This regulation contradicts the rulings in *Allegheny County v. ACLU, Greater Pittsburgh*(1989) and *Lynch v. Donnelly* (1984).

12/20/94

Boston, MA – The Massachusetts Legislature voted to retain the “Know-Nothing” Amendment to the state constitution. The amendment, a product of vicious 19th century anti-Catholicism, prohibits any form of state aid to Catholic students. Leading the fight for retention of the amendment were the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the American Jewish Congress and the ACLU.