

HATE CRIME BIAS

Yesterday, the *New York Times* ran a story about two 20-year-olds, and an 18-year-old, who were arrested for stealing statues of baby Jesus from nativity scenes over the past two years. They hit the New York-suburban communities of Suffern and Haverstraw several times in 2005 and 2006. The police said they will not charge them with committing hate crimes; each is being charged with 14 counts of petty larceny.

Yesterday, WNBC.com reported that a 20-year-old was arrested for kicking a menorah in the New York suburban community of St. James. He is being charged with a hate crime and could face seven years in prison. He is being charged with a felony.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

“This is so interesting. The reason the menorah is allowed in New York City public schools is because the authorities have branded it a secular symbol, and the reason the crèche is barred is because the same authorities have branded it a religious symbol. Yet when a 20-year-old man vandalizes a menorah outside New York he is charged with a hate crime and may spend seven years behind bars for his felony, while three others of the same age who vandalize several crèches outside New York—over a two-year period—are given a slap on the wrist.

“We have long maintained that hate-crime laws evince a bias of their own. This proves it.”