

IAN PAISLEY TALK CONTINUES TO DRAW FIRE

The last issue of *Catalyst* detailed a story on the controversy surrounding the appearance of noted anti-Catholic bigot Rev. Ian Paisley at Regent University on October 26. As reported in that issue, Paisley was invited by the student chapter of the Rutherford Institute to speak at the campus which was founded by Pat Robertson. The president of Regent, Dr. Terry Lindvall, acted honorably by denouncing the event when he learned of it (he was out of town that day), but the officials at the Rutherford Institute steadfastly refused to apologize, choosing instead to frame the issue as a free speech matter.

Upon learning of Paisley's appearance at Regent University, Congressman Peter T. King of New York wrote to Pat Robertson expressing his concerns. The text of the letter appears below:

[Note: put letter by King in this space]

Rita R. Woltz of the Rutherford Institute wrote a blistering letter to Dr. Donohue commenting on his complaint. Dr. Donohue responded in kind.

[Note: put letter by Woltz to Bill, followed by his response. Then add this final statement at the end, but be sure to separate it from the bottom of the letter so it stands out]

November 13, 1995

Rita R. Woltz, Esq.
The Rutherford Institute
P.O. Box 7482
Charlottesville, VA 22906-7482

Dear Ms. Woltz:

Thank you for your "some of my best friends are Catholic"

letter of November 10.

It is possible that African-American students might invite Louis Farrakhan to speak on the subject of black pride, but I think you would nonetheless have a hard time convincing Jews of the propriety of such an invitation. The same is true regarding the Paisley invite that the Rutherford student chapter extended: Catholics aren't persuaded, not, especially, when you still refuse to condemn such an outright bigot as Paisley.

You are wrong about Paisley's speech not addressing Catholicism or anti-Catholicism. I have a copy of the tape and the question and answer period allowed for Paisley to be Paisley. He didn't disappoint.

I have received no invitation to speak at Regent by the Rutherford student chapter. But I will do so providing one thing: you agree to debate me on the meaning of free speech.

It is amazing that you charge the Catholic League with intolerance for objecting to the intolerance of your student chapter at Regent. That you feel quite at home with defending Paisley's presence at Regent speaks volumes about your own commitment to "religious and civil liberties."

Please spare me your little lecture about the "division and bloodshed in Northern Ireland" and how the Catholic League's objections to Paisley are somehow responsible for the problem. Your argument is on a par with those who blamed Martin Luther King for the "division and bloodshed" in the South simply because King objected to Bull Connor.

But more on this when our debate occurs. Now you will agree to debate me, won't you?

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue

President

Attorney Woltz never responded to Dr. Donohue's challenge. However, she did have the gall to misrepresent herself when asked about this incident.

In a letter she wrote to Catholic League members, Mr. and Mrs. T.F. Muenzen of Branford, Connecticut, Woltz wrote on December 20 that upon learning of the Catholic League's anger of the Paisley visit, "we extended an offer to Dr. Donohue or another member of the Catholic League to speak there as well. So far, neither Dr. Donohue nor anyone else from that organization has responded to the Institute's offer."

Woltz's letter to Mr. and Mrs. Muenzen is simply dishonest. Donohue's letter challenging Woltz to a debate at Regent University was dated November 13, more than a month before Woltz wrote her letter saying that Donohue has yet to respond to an invitation to speak. All Woltz has to do is agree to debate Donohue, but she won't. We can only guess why.