

# IRS TO INVESTIGATE CHURCH-STATE ABUSES

The Internal Revenue Service has agreed to investigate whether the campaigns of Hillary Clinton and John Corzine occasioned an infraction of IRS rules regarding church and state matters. The Catholic League also registered a complaint against Vice President Al Gore but was told that there was nothing the IRS could do about his recent bid to win the support of black ministers.

On October 15, Hillary Clinton made a tour of black churches seeking to win the favor of the congregations she addressed. In one particular instance, Rev. Darlene McGuire of Emmanuel Baptist Church in the Bronx, actually compared Clinton opponent Rick Lazio to Satan: she urged the crowd to sing, "I told Lazio, get thee behind, victory today is mine" (Lazio's name was substituted for Satan's).

On April 18, the leaders of the Black Ministers Council of New Jersey endorsed John Corzine in his Senate bid. Through his charitable organization, Corzine had previously given \$25,000 to the group.

On October 14, Al Gore called black ministers from Air Force Two saying, "I'm asking you in your sermons to do the work of the Lord here on earth. I ask for your help in getting the message out urgently tomorrow." The IRS noted that only if the ministers acted on the vice president's request by endorsing him would there be any possible violation of IRS rules.

We explained to the media why we contacted the IRS:

"Whether any law has been violated by those ministers who have been asked to do the bidding of Hillary Clinton, John Corzine or Al Gore is not for the Catholic League to decide. But it

is our business to make certain that an equal playing field is achieved for the Catholic clergy. That is why we are pressing these issues—all of them involve outrageous abuses of power and smack of a double standard.”