League Letter Asks Surgeon General to Place Warning Labels on Condoms

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The following is the text of an open letter dated November 4, 1994 to Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders from the Catholic League:

Dear Dr. Elders:

Throughout the month of November, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is conducting an ad campaign in Washington, D.C. that addresses the issue of condoms. Alongside 50 buses there is a huge ad (over seven feet in length) that calls for warning labels on condoms. The ad reads as follows:

FACTS ABOUT CONDOMS
Some Break. Some Leak. Some Are Damaged.
We Put Warning Labels on Cigarettes.
We Put Warning Labels on Beer.
So Why Not On CONDOMS?

Listed also is the Catholic League's address and phone number.

We make our claim based on scientific research that shows the inutility of condoms in preventing leakage of the HIV virus. Because this research shows that the holes in condoms are roughly 50 times larger than the size of the AIDS virus and because leakage of HIV-sized particles through latex condoms has been detected in fully one-third of the major brands tested, the Catholic League calls on you, the Surgeon General, to authorize the placement of warning labels on every package of condoms sold in the U.S. To do any less is to mislead the public, the biggest losers of which will undoubtedly be adolescents and women.

We look forward to hearing from you about this urgent request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President

FACTS ABOUT CONDOMS

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We Put Warning Labels on Cigarettes.
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So Why Not On CONDOMS?

Some common sense and a public service message from the
Catholic League
for Religious and Civil Rights
1011 First Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(212) 371-3191

The League's latest public service message is a seven foot long poster which was carried on fifty Washington, D.C. buses during the month of November.

NOTE: Dr. Elders' office has since contacted the League and has asked it to provide the data upon which it made its claims. We duly replied.