

# LEAGUE SUPPORT DR. CHRISTINA JEFFREY

Shortly after the Republicans took control of the House in 1994, Rep. Newt Gingrich caved into pressure by dumping Dr. Christina Jeffrey as House historian. It was alleged that she was anti-Semitic for maintaining that the Nazi perspective should be taught to students in courses on the Holocaust. Dr. Jeffrey, however, is no anti-Semite and was only offering this advice as a way to understand the mentality of Nazi-thinking. A good Catholic, Dr. Jeffrey asked for the league's assistance in clearing her name.

The following letter was read by Senator Sam Nunn from the House floor and submitted for publication in the Congressional Record.

September 26, 1996

Hon. Sam Nunn

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Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nunn:

As president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization, I am delighted to write a letter of support for Dr. Christina Jeffrey. Dr. Jeffrey, as the public knows, was terminated as House historian on the grounds that she promoted the inclusion of the Nazi perspective in Holocaust curriculum.

What the public does not generally know is that Dr. Jeffrey is a determined anti-Nazi scholar whose reputation has been unfairly maligned by uninformed ideologues. It was a disgrace that she was terminated in the first place, and it is doubly disgraceful that her reputation remains unfairly tarnished. That is why I am

appealing to you to clear her name by submitting this letter, and others like it, into the Congressional Record.

I have spent most of my life as a college professor, and, having taught Political Sociology, I know that it is important for students to understand the mind-set of those who sponsor genocide. Yes, in the hands of a Nazi sympathizer, such a pedagogical approach could be misused to engender empathy for terrorists. The same is true of virtually any topic of an incendiary nature. But when taught by someone with the impeccable moral credentials of a Dr. Jeffrey, such an orientation can yield very positive results, both scholarly and morally. After all, if the goal is to stop another Holocaust from ever happening again, it is critical that everyone know the psychological and social soil in which genocidal ambitions flourish.

Dr. Jeffrey represents the very best of her Catholic training: she wants to help craft a world where injustice does not prevail. It is a travesty that injustice has been visited upon her, even if those who perpetrated it remain sadly ignorant of her character, intentions and effects.

Sincerely,  
William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President