

LOOKING FOR DIRT

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

William Donohue

In 1968, David Horowitz became the editor of *Ramparts*, which at that time was far and away the most influential anti-American, left-wing magazine in the nation. He was well trained for the job: a self-described "Red Diaper Baby," his secular Jewish parents were both members of the Communist Party. But midway through the 1970s, he began having "second thoughts," and indeed co-hosted a conference by that name in 1987. The time had come for Horowitz to change; he has been a force in the conservative movement ever since (and friendly to the Catholic League).

Horowitz has said many times that the problem with conservatives is that they are too nice. Unlike leftists, they are not consumed with power. They go to work; attend church; play golf; go to baseball games; attend high school reunions; volunteer; donate to charities, etc. In short, they are the heart and soul of America. They try to be ethical, but sometimes fail. Left-wing fanatics fail all the time, and that's because they think ethics is for chumps.

The fact is that the foes of the Catholic Church don't use the same ethical playbook we do. As the Marxists have long said, "the truth is that which serves the cause." Winning matters—nothing more. This has been on grand display recently with the non-stop attacks on the Catholic Church, and no one has felt this more than Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn.

I first learned about Bishop Finn last year in Philadelphia at a Catholic Leadership Conference. It was my good fortune to meet Jack Smith, editor of *The Catholic Key*, the diocesan newspaper under Bishop Finn. Jack spoke for quite a while

about how much he admired his bishop, convincing me that he was working for a very special person. So when the foes of the Church targeted Finn, it was easy to rally to his side. One of his foes is the *Kansas City Star*.

The *Kansas City Star* is one of the most ideologically corrupt newspapers in the nation. Indeed, it operates more like a left-wing tabloid than a respectable newspaper. It can do so largely because it has no competition in the area, especially in the print medium: there is no other newspaper of any size nearby. Moreover, local television stations often take their stories from what the *Star* dishes out each morning.

Here's a little background. A few years back, the *Star* went ballistic when Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline sought information on Planned Parenthood's abortion mills; he was searching for evidence of their failure to report cases of child rape (to this day, the *Star* still condemns Kline for his inquiry). This is the same newspaper that singled out priests twelve years ago for a survey looking to determine how many had HIV or AIDS. Actually, it was looking for dirt.

When I told Jack in the latter part of October that I was submitting an ad to the *Star* exposing how the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and its lawyers were seeking to take down Bishop Finn, he told me I shouldn't be surprised if they turned it down. He was right. They are just that corrupt.

Working with the *Star* is SNAP and its lawyers. We previously detailed our report on what happened at the SNAP conference held last July; they refer to the Church as the "evil institution." Jeffrey Anderson, who carries a truck load of dirt, has been busy filing suit, but most of the Kansas City work is being done by Rebecca Randles, one of his students.

In the first six months since Rev. Shawn Ratigan was publicly named by the Diocese, Randles filed almost two dozen lawsuits

on behalf of her newly discovered "victims." The quotation marks are deliberate: I don't believe her. Are we to believe that these persons have come forth, many of whom are now claiming that their "repressed memory" has suddenly awakened, right after the Diocese called the cops on Ratigan? Is there something in the water in Kansas City, Missouri that accounts for this phenomenon? After all, there has been no burst of "repressed memory" cases in Kansas City, Kansas. Or elsewhere.

Four years ago it was reported by a team of psychiatrists and literary scholars that "repressed memory" was a cultural invention, having no basis in science. They examined the writings of literary figures prior to the modern era looking for discussions of this condition, but could not find any. By contrast, what we call paranoia and schizophrenia today were clearly seen as psychological maladies by fictional writers throughout the ages; but there was no such exposition of what we call "repressed memory."

Harvard professors Dr. Harrison Pope and Dr. James I. Hudson led the inquiry, and the team's findings only confirmed their skepticism of this alleged reality. Yet the courts continue to give it credence, allowing rapacious lawyers like Randles to exploit it. Even more disturbing, no other institution in society has had "repressed memory" cases thrown at it with greater regularity than the Catholic Church. To put it differently, when they can't find new dirt on the Church, they just invent it.

Bishop Finn is a good man. Keep him in your prayers. Merry Christmas!

On pp. 4-6, we have listed, in chronological order, our response to the attacks on Bishop Robert Finn. We had more to say beyond these releases, but they were mostly comments about our mass mailing to Kansas City, Missouri groups. We have not changed the tense of the verbs—we want you to see exactly how we handled this.