

Massachusetts Chapter Honors Mayor Collins

On Wednesday, November 2, 1994, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights bestowed its *John W. McCormack Public Service Award* on former Boston Mayor John F. Collins. The award, named after the late U.S. House Speaker from South Boston, was conferred during the Annual Award Banquet of the League's Massachusetts Chapter at the Sheraton Tara Hotel in Braintree.

With 250 people in attendance, former Massachusetts Governor Edward J. King presented the award and praised Collins' outspoken and unceasing support for the pro-life position, while League Chapter President Daniel T. Flatley paid tribute to Collins' "irreproachable integrity as a public official" and for his "enduring and unswerving loyalty as a Catholic in public life."

Among the distinguished guests in attendance were Cardinal Bernard Law, Archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Cabal Daly, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, Boston Auxiliary Bishops Lawrence J. Riley and Daniel Hart, and Catholic League President Dr. William A. Donohue.

Cardinal Law acknowledged the role of Mayor Collins in building the Catholic League Chapter in Massachusetts, saying "no one was more deserving of recognition than Mayor Collins." The Cardinal went on to state that he was "always reassured by the presence of the Catholic League" when public controversies involving the Church arose.

Cardinal Daly thanked the audience for the concern and support demonstrated by American Catholics for Ireland and for the peace process in that country.

Catholic League President Bill Donohue commended Mayor Collins

for his long-standing dedication to the League, and lauded the accomplishments of the Massachusetts Chapter.

The Master of Ceremonies was Massachusetts Senate President William M. Bulger. Bulger hailed Collins as a "battle-scarred veteran" of Catholic causes. Bulger told the audience that "Catholics should place greater value on being respected, rather than liked" by their fellow citizens.

An attorney, John F. Collins was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts and served in U.S. Army Intelligence during World War II. First elected to public office in 1946, he served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1947 to 1951, and in the State Senate from 1951 to 1955. In 1954 he was the Democratic nominee for Attorney-General of the Commonwealth. From 1956 to 1957 he was a Boston City Councillor, and from 1957 to 1960, Collins was Register of Probate for Suffolk County. In 1959, Collins was elected to the first of two terms as Mayor of Boston, serving as the city's chief executive from 1960 to 1968.

After retiring from elective politics, Collins served for thirteen years as a consulting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. For nearly twenty years, he has been a panelist on the WCVB television program "Five-On-Five," where he has earned a reputation as a forceful and articulate advocate of traditional moral values.

Collins served on the national Board of Directors of the Catholic League from 1986 to 1992, and as vice-president of the League from 1986 to 1991. A resident of Falmouth, Massachusetts, he is currently a member of the Board of Advisors of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Catholic League.