

# MORE TURMOIL AT UNIV. OF OREGON

The intolerance continues at the University of Oregon.

The student senate at the university met in May to discuss the March issue of the student newspaper the *Insurgent* in which pornographic depictions of Jesus were shown. Student senator Dallas Brown proposed a resolution condemning the *Insurgent's* offending publication on the grounds that it was intended to offend and not educate. He had also planned to ask the Senate to freeze the *Insurgent's* funds for the remainder of this year or next year unless the newspaper apologized.

During a five-minute recess, seven student senators, including the senate's president and vice-president, left the meeting. Catholic League president Bill Donohue blamed the university's president Dave Frohnmayer for the turmoil.

Donohue, in a press release, referred to an incident at the university on April 1, 1996 in which some white students yelled racial slurs to black students. In the April 15, 1996 edition of *News & Views*, the campus newsletter, President Frohnmayer declared, "We do not tolerate racism." Frohnmayer followed that by asking for reports on racially based incidents, a joint meeting of the university's Race Issue Task Force and Racial Advisory Council, and drew a parallel between the racist incident and the Holocaust.

Donohue said, "if Frohnmayer had treated the Catholic-bashing incident the way he treated the racist incident, he would have drawn another parallel to the Holocaust. So as not to be misunderstood, it was irresponsible of him to make the Holocaust analogy in 1996 and it would have been equally irresponsible had he done so now. But the essential point

remains: Had he acted quickly to morally condemn the *Insurgent*, this matter would have been closed by now."

Donohue said Frohnmayer "cannot dismiss outraged Catholics, public officials and the taxpayers. He needs to commence a campus-wide discussion on two subjects: anti-Catholicism and the relationship between rights and responsibilities."

On June 1, the University hosted a panel discussion on the *Insurgent* issue. Michael Tarascio of the group Students of Faith was the only person on the five-person panel who supported the University taking action. He said in an e-mail that the university appointed attorney, also on the panel, referred to the 2000 Supreme Court case *Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin v. Southworth*. Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote in his opinion that all university students were required to pay student fees regardless of the type of speech that the fees eventually financed. Tarascio said Justice Kennedy's decision prohibits the university from taking back funds in this case, but does not prohibit the university from taking other action.

Tarascio also said that some people in the audience at the panel discussion shouted out statements attacking Jesus, saying Jesus was gay and had erections.

It seems offensive speech is not tolerated at the University of Oregon, unless it is directed at Jesus and Christians.