

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY DELETES BIASED REMARK

On August 1, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote to Cathy Gorn, executive director of National History Day (NHD), about the contents of a flier promoting its 2006 program. What Donohue objected to was the following remark: "The student might choose an NHD topic involving a situation where a person or group failed to take a stand when they might reasonably have been expected to act. For example, what were the circumstances leading to Pope Pius XII's decision not to oppose Adolph Hitler before and during World War II?"

Donohue labeled this comment "outrageous." He provided evidence from two wartime editorials from the *New York Times* that singled out Pope Pius XII for being "a lonely voice" in a world marked by "silence" over Hitler's genocide. He also noted the new book by Northwestern professor Laurel Leff, *Buried by the Times*, that is highly critical of the *New York Times* for its nonresponse to the Holocaust. And he mentioned the new volume by Rabbi David Dalin, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, that defends Pius against his harshest critics. "Interestingly," Donohue said, "the students were not asked to consider 'what were the circumstances leading to the *New York Times*' decision not to oppose Adolph Hitler before and during World War II?'"

Professor Gorn, who teaches at the University of Maryland, wrote to Donohue on October 26 apologizing for what happened; the letter was received today. "I most sincerely regret that a leading statement found its way into the information for our 2006 program," she said. She further stated that the remark in question has been deleted from NHD's website.

Dr. Donohue commented on Dr. Gorn's letter today: "This settles the matter. How such an irresponsible statement found

its way into the 2006 NHD program in the first place, I do not know. But what matters at this juncture is that Dr. Gorn responded to our complaint without being at all defensive. Indeed, her response is nothing if not professional."