

# OREGON BILLBOARD COMPANY SNUBS CATHOLIC LEAGUE OFFER

"The Pope is the Antichrist," is what the billboard owned by Outdoor Media Dimensions says. Paid for by Larry Weathers, a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Remnant Ministries (a splinter group of the Seventh Day Adventists), the anti-Catholic ad is posted on Interstate 5 near Medford, Oregon, in the southern part of the state. Many such ads have appeared since 1993 in that part of Oregon. Local Catholics have protested the latest attack and so have many non-Catholics.

For the past week, Catholic League policy staff members have been calling Outdoor Media Dimensions for the purpose of placing a billboard in the same location as the offensive Catholic-bashing ad. The woman who answers says she will pass along the information to Steve, but neither he nor anyone else returns our calls. Today, when we requested to speak to Jeff Herson (an employee whose name was printed in a local newspaper), we were told that he no longer works at the company.

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to this issue today:

"In the pages of the July 22 edition of the *Catholic Sentinel*, the diocesan newspaper of Portland, it is reported that an upper-level manager for Outdoor Media Dimensions justifies the anti-Catholic billboard by saying 'the company believes in freedom of speech.' I don't believe them. Now here's how they can prove me wrong.

"I have a proposal, one that the company continues to snub. The Catholic League is prepared to pay for a billboard along Interstate 5 near Medford that reads, 'Outdoor Media Dimensions Sponsors Anti-Catholicism.' If free speech is

their god, they'll go for it. But the fact that they won't even entertain our offer tells us everything. Nevertheless, it would be great if the local media could squeeze them to speak. After all, true free speech advocates should not be allergic to speaking freely."