

# PBS ' "FRONTLINE" EXPLOITS CATHOLICISM IN ABORTION PROGRAM

On Tuesday, February 6, PBS aired a program called, *Murder on "Abortion Row."* The two hour special purported to be a serious look at the life of John Salvi, the person who wounded five and killed two women working at a Brookline, Massachusetts abortion clinic on December 30, 1994.

The Catholic League was given an opportunity to preview the program and offered the following comments to the press:

"The FRONTLINE program, *Murder on 'Abortion Row'*, is nothing more than a front for Planned Parenthood and an irresponsible propaganda piece against Catholicism.

"John Salvi is obviously a very disturbed individual. As such, anyone truly interested in his aberrant behavior would investigate the psychodynamics that drives his condition. Instead, what FRONTLINE tries to give us is a sociological portrait, one that seeks to establish Catholicism as the foundation of Salvi's derangement. This abusive social science technique could be used to indict any institutional milieu, but somehow FRONTLINE seems content to apply it only to Catholicism.

"FRONTLINE wants to displace the individual guilt of John Salvi onto the teachings of Roman Catholicism. Its deliberate portrayal of Catholic symbols when discussing Salvi's behavior adds to its ploy. We hear from Planned Parenthood's Nikki Nichols-Gamble, but we don't hear the bigoted assault she made on Cardinal O'Connor and the cheap misuse of Cardinal Law's statements that were made at the time of the tragedy.

"Hours of taped interviews with responsible pro-life advocates in Massachusetts were never aired, the effect of which is to show pro-lifers as extremists and pro-choicers as reasonable. This smacks of a political agenda and is not the work of professionals seeking to uncover the truth.

"If someone were to do a portrait of the behavior of Colin Ferguson, the man who randomly killed innocent white passengers on a Long Island Rail Road car in 1994, by referencing his roots in the black community, it would properly be seen as racist. It is hoped that those who see this FRONTLINE program will properly label it as anti-Catholic bigotry."