

PLANNED PARENTHOOD GUILTY OF DEMAGOGUERY

In an advertisement in the New York Times of January 5, Planned Parenthood blamed Cardinal O'Connor and Cardinal Law for the killings of John Salvi in Brookline, Massachusetts. The ad labeled Cardinal O'Connor's statement that "you cannot prevent killing by killing" as "a backhanded apology for the attackers." It further noted that Cardinal O'Connor "seems to justify Friday's murders by blaming women who seek to end their unwanted pregnancies with abortion and blaming clinics that help them." Similarly, Cardinal Law's call for a temporary moratorium on anti-abortion protests was met with disdain, questioning "How many more murders will it take before we see a permanent national moratorium?" The ad continued by saying that "The leaders of the extreme religious right whose rhetoric destabilizes their followers have the lives of these innocent victims of violence on their consciences."

Dr. William A. Donohue, president of the Catholic League, had this to say about the ad:

"Planned Parenthood's inflammatory ad makes it clear that it cannot distinguish between John Cardinal O'Connor and John Salvi. By doing so, it indicates who the real extremist really is.

"Cardinal O'Connor has a legal right and a moral obligation to say that 'you cannot prevent killing by killing.' As Planned Parenthood well knows, Cardinal O'Connor has repeatedly condemned the killing of abortionists, even going so far as to say that would-be killers of abortionists should kill him instead. To tie Cardinal O'Connor to the immorality of John Salvi is a demagogic outrage that demands an immediate apology.

"True to form, Planned Parenthood threw Cardinal Law's good will gesture back in his face. Not satisfied with Cardinal Law's offer, Planned Parenthood seeks to up the ante by calling for a permanent national moratorium on the First Amendment right of Americans to protest abortion. This is not good will at work, rather it is a pernicious call to silence debate and stifle a central constitutional right.

"Just as Martin Luther King was not responsible for the behavior of the Black Panthers, Cardinal O'Connor and Cardinal Law are not responsible for the behavior of the John Salvis of this world. Accordingly, Planned Parenthood should immediately desist in its McCarthyite attempt to discredit responsible voices in the Catholic community.".

The Catholic League is the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization. It defends the right of Catholics-lay and clergy alike-to participate in American life without defamation or discrimination.