

REGENT UNIVERSITY HOSTS ANTI-CATHOLIC BIGOT

On October 26, Regent University, which is the academic arm of the Christian Coalition, will host Rev. Ian Paisley, the man most responsible for inflaming anti-Catholicism in Ireland. Invited by the student chapter of the Rutherford Institute, Paisley is scheduled to speak on "Religious Liberty: Its Role in International Politics." The student group is fully recognized by Regent but is not funded by the school.

Pat Robertson is the founder and chancellor of Regent University and is founder and president of the Christian Coalition.

Catholic League president William A. Donohue issued the following statement on this incident:

"Rev. Ian Paisley is, unquestionably, the most notorious anti-Catholic bigot in all of Europe. For decades he has provoked warfare between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, even to the point of organizing his hooded Third Force paramilitary thugs. It is therefore outrageous that any American university would extend to Paisley the right to legitimize his demagoguery. Moreover, to ask Ian Paisley to speak on religious liberty is akin to asking Mark Fuhrman or Louis Farrakhan to speak on racial harmony.

"The most disturbing aspect of this affair is the nature of the school that is hosting Ian Paisley. In the November edition of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Baptist minister and Harvard theologian Harvey Cox describes Regent University as 'the intellectual and theological center of the Christian Coalition' (Cox also notes the presence of anti-Catholicism on the campus). It is important, therefore, that the Christian Coalition condemn the decision to extend a forum to Paisley.

“It is doubly important that the newly-created auxiliary of the Christian Coalition, the Catholic Alliance, join with us in denouncing Regent’s role in this affair. After all, the Catholic Alliance advertises itself as an organization that ‘was formed this year as Christian Coalition’s largest and most important affiliate to speak out against anti-Catholic bigotry....’ That being the case, we anxiously await the response of the Catholic Alliance, as well as the Christian Coalition.”

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.