

SOUTH CAROLINA'S "FETISH BALL"

This fall the student newspaper of the University of South Carolina, the *Gamecock*, included a very disturbing story about an event held off-campus in Columbia called "The Fetish Ball." The story described in detail the sexual performances by the participants including those dressed as Catholic schoolgirls, nuns and priests. In reporting the general motivation of the event's organizers, the reporter wrote, "The performance was directed against conservatism and intolerance, represented by stereotypes of the Catholic Church."

William Donohue wrote to the school's president, Dr. John M. Palms, saying, "I find the prominence and placement of the story (the front page of 'The Mix' section with more column space than the preview of the upcoming USC football game) to be outrageous." Donohue also complained that the accompanying photographs were equally offensive.

Donohue made it clear that while he was not holding Dr. Palms personally responsible for what happened, he did feel that a proper response was due the Catholic League.

Dr. Palms began his letter by saying that he identified with our concerns as he himself is a Catholic. He then proceeded to offer the standard legal defense saying that the article in question was not libelous (we never said it was). He ended by saying that the vice president for student and alumni services would investigate this matter further.

The students responsible for this action should be told by faculty and administrators alike that what they did was offensive and in bad taste. But to do so would take courage and that is not a quality found in high quantity on college campuses these days.