

CALVIN KLEIN AD PULLED AFTER PUBLIC PRESSURE

The Catholic League, which led the fight against the latest Calvin Klein jean ad, is delighted that Calvin Klein, Inc. is withdrawing its offensive “kiddie porn” ad. The statement by Calvin Klein in today’s *New York Times*, though not an apology, is nonetheless an admission of guilt. It was Catholic League vice-president Bernadette Brady, along with New York City Councilman Noach Dear, who first called for a boycott of the jeans.

The controversy began when the *New York Daily News* ran a front page story on the ad on August 18; Catholic League president William Donohue was cited in the piece. Immediately following the *Dally News* article, the Catholic League issued several statements to the media, making its case against the vulgar ad campaign.

Catholic League president William Donohue offered the following comment:

“The decision to withdraw the Calvin Klein jean ad makes good sense, but it should never have been launched in the first place. There is never any defense for sexually exploiting adolescents. The Calvin Klein comment that the ad ‘has been misunderstood by some’ is without foundation. It is precisely because the public understood the intended message of the ad that Calvin Klein, Inc. had to pull it.”

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ORLANDO NEWSPAPER INSULTS CATHOLICS

In the August 10-16 edition of the *Orlando Weekly*, there is a column by Liz Langley ("Possession is Nine-Tenths of the Fun") that derides the Eucharist and insults Catholics. Admitting that she purchased a box of Communion Wafers from a Christian bookstore, Langley explained her purchase as follows:

"These are the little wafers that Catholics believe are the body of Christ. These, I thought, might come in handy if you were possessed and couldn't get to a priest right away. Say you got possessed at the zoo. What then? If you have the box Jesus on your hands, you might be able to get out of this pickle on your own."

Langley then made disparaging remarks about transubstantiation and offered the following advice to her readers: *"Mortify your Catholic friends by setting them [the Communion Wafers] out with the hors d'oeuvres at a party."* She adds that it would be of greater benefit to the Church if it substituted *"Twinkies"* or *"Bagel Bites"* for unleavened bread.

Catholic League president William Donohue issued the following remark about this incident:

"The Langley piece is one of the most anti-Catholic articles to have appeared in some time. Jeff Truesdell, the editor of the Orlando Weekly, has refused to run an apology for publishing Langley's article. When asked whether he would accept an article from the Ku Klux Klan, Truesdell said he would not, explaining that he 'doesn't agree with their views.' He has no problem, he said, with Langley's views, stating that he didn't think she meant to offend Catholics."

“Accordingly, I will now mobilize a public relations offensive against the newspaper, using every tactic this side of the law to discredit the paper. As for Langley herself, the best way to discredit her column is to republish it. Having already received permission to reprint the article, I will make certain it appears in the next edition of *Catalyst*, the monthly journal of the Catholic League. We will also publish the address, phone and fax numbers of the newspaper, complete with advice to our readers.”

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GIULIANI'S SUPPORT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WELCOMED

In his August 14 address at the Wharton Club, New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani spoke of the inefficiencies of the public school system and the success of the Catholic school system. The Mayor said that “if we don't do something, and do something dramatic, it's [the public school system] close to collapse.” Mayor Giuliani called for a program of “radical reform” and urged education officials to consider Catholic schools as a model.

The Catholic League welcomes Mayor Giuliani's position. William Donohue, the League president, offered the following statement on Giuliani's speech:

“Mayor Giuliani is to be commended for opening a much needed debate on the problems that are inherent in New York's public

school system. While there are good public schools and bad Catholic schools, the record shows that overall Catholic schools are superior to their public competitors. This is especially true of Catholic schools in the inner city. It is no secret that poor African American students, most of whom are not Catholic, perform at or above national standards when enrolled in Catholic schools.

“The time has come for those who claim to support the best interests of minority children to support any initiative—voucher or otherwise—that might facilitate indigent parents in placing their children in the school of their choice. If parochial schools offer a more reliable ladder to social mobility, then it is in the public interest to provide public support for such efforts. The lives and livelihood of minority children should not be jettisoned because some elites entertain a phobia about religion ”

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A&E OFFERS BIASED SHOW ON POPE PIUS XII

On August 11, A&E (Arts and Entertainment) aired a production entitled “A&E Investigative Reports: The Pope and the Nazis” that portrayed the Pope as guilty of passive acquiescence with the Nazis during World War II. Though the program began with a statement indicating impartiality, the outcome was anything but fair. The conclusion of this “investigative report” was

that Pope Pius XII was a failed pope who did little or nothing to thwart the Nazi onslaught.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, watched the program and issued the following statement today:

"A&E has an ugly track record of bashing Catholics. But this production, the creation of Bill Kurtis, is by far the worst. Tendentious and contrived, this broadcast is a thinly disguised attempt to substitute ideology for scholarship. If everything that 'The Pope and the Nazis' said was about Pope Pius XII, then it at would make inexplicable the praise that the Pope received—during and after the Holocaust—from the likes of Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, the *New York Times*, Pinchas Lapide, Jeno Levai, Emilio Zolli (the chief rabbi of Rome who converted to Catholicism after the war), the World Jewish Congress and many others.

"Just as there are revisionists who argue that the Holocaust didn't happen or has been grossly exaggerated, there are revisionists who maintain that the Catholic Church did nothing while evil advanced. It is one thing to claim that the Catholic Church could have done more, quite another to suggest that it acquiesced in the slaughter of Jews.

"Unfortunately, A&E is not the only agent of disinformation on this subject, and that is why the Catholic League is determined to set the record straight whenever this problem arises. There are many sources, including the Catholic League's book, *Pius XII and the Holocaust*, that provide a useful corrective to the A&E version of history, and we will be only too happy to disseminate them to as wide an audience as possible."

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BENETTON DELIGHTS IN SACRILEGIOUS AD

The New York based Benetton Sportssystem, a division of Benetton Group S.p.A., is about to launch an advertising campaign that will outrage Christians. The ad shows a picture of Jesus crucified on a cross with Roman soldiers hammering nails to the bottom of the cross. The label "BENETTON SPORTSYSTEM" is placed near the cross with the inscription "DO YOU PLAY ALONE" next to it. To the side is a picture of the Benetton Asolo climbing boot and in small print is the statement "WHEN THERE IS NOTHING BUT YOU AND THE MOUNTAIN DON'T FEEL ABANDONED. YOU HAVE SOMETHING STRONG TO BELIEVE IN. ASOLO ASF COUNT ON IT FOR EXTREME PERFORMANCE."

The Benetton ad is already appearing in some tennis magazines, but is scheduled for widespread publication this fall in the United States, Europe and Asia.

Catholic League president William A. Donohue released the following statement on the ad:

"Benetton has a history of confusing indecency for creativity. But now it has crossed the line in a most serious way. The symbol of Christ on the cross expresses the most central message of Christianity. Benetton's advertising director, Oliviero Toscani, has publicly boasted of his delight in jarring public sensibilities. So obnoxious is his work that Benetton ads have been banned in Germany and declared offensive by a French court.

"The Catholic League does not want to see Benetton's ads banned in the U.S., rather it wants to see them stigmatized. Those whose moral compass is their pocketbook are not affected

by moral suasion, and that is why appeals to decency never work with such people. What they respond to is organized pressure. Accordingly, the Catholic League would rather see Benetton go belly up than be banned by the courts. It will use its influence to affect that end.”

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ABA OFFENDS CHRISTIANS

The cover story of the summer edition of Human Rights, the American Bar Association journal of the Section on Rights and Responsibilities, concerns the implications of hospital mergers between Catholic and secular institutions. The piece by Tena Jamison (“Should God Be Practicing Medicine?”) is highly critical of such mergers. But it is not the article that the Catholic League objects to (flawed though it is), rather it is the cover illustration. On the cover is an image of a pregnant woman lying on an operating table in a crucifix-like pose. Ready for an abortion, the woman’s child is shown inside her body in a fetal position; hands and legs are being held down by band-aids.

William A. Donohue, president of the Catholic League, released the following statement on this incident:

“The cover of the summer edition of Human Rights would be considered disturbing had it appeared on the cover of any publication. But when it appears on the cover of a journal of the American Bar Association, it is doubly disturbing. Most offensive is the fact that the journal is published by the

ABA's Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities. Evidently, this ABA group thinks that amongst its rights is the right to disabuse the rights of those with whom it disagrees. As such, it is clear that the term individual responsibility has no principled meaning for the ABA's Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities.

"We demand an apology from the ABA. And we request that a panel discussion on what the ABA means by rights and responsibilities be held at its next convention."

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