

FARRAKHAN MALIGNS CATHOLICISM

On the April 13th edition of *Meet the Press*, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan made several disparaging comments about Catholics and the Catholic Church; he also defended his bigoted remarks about Jews.

Farrakhan did not dispute a comment that he previously made stating that Catholicism has been a white religion designed to oppress blacks. He also did not disagree with a remark made by one of his minions that the pope is a “cracker.” He even blamed the Catholic Church for slavery. When asked if his comments were anti-Catholic, Farrakhan retorted that the “Catholic Church should not fasten on our words [it should] fasten on our deeds.”

Farrakhan then cited recent criminal acts committed by white Catholic men in Philadelphia, Bridgeport and Chicago as examples of Catholic behavior. He questioned how the Church could be “the bastion of love” when “all of this hate is coming towards us out of the Church.” He also charged that Pope Pius XII “looked the other way” during the Holocaust.

Catholic League president William Donohue responded to Farrakhan today:

“It is no secret that Farrakhan is anti-Catholic, as well as anti-Jewish. On *Meet the Press*, he was given an opportunity to retract his bigoted remarks, but he chose not to do so. Indeed, he made several new anti-Catholic statements, the most of absurd of which was to blame all Catholics for the conduct of a few Catholic thugs.

“Farrakhan is a minister of hate and that is why it is good news to learn that Catholic and Jewish leaders are refusing to meet with him in Philadelphia this week. They should no more dialogue with Farrakhan than with the Imperial Wizards of the Ku Klux Klan.”

KLAN RALLY IN PITTSBURGH SEEKS CATHOLIC SUPPORT

On Saturday, April 5, the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is scheduled to march in downtown Pittsburgh. This branch of the Klan, which is headquartered in Indiana, is making an appeal to Roman Catholics, hoping to garner their support. A recent story in the *Tribune-Review*, a newspaper from the eastern Pittsburgh community of Greensburg, suggested that in the past decade "the Klan dropped its anti-Catholic message." Stories like this have fed the rumor that the Klan is now receptive to Catholics.

Commenting on this development is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"From its inception, the Klan has been viciously anti-Catholic, as well as anti-black and anti-Jewish. All the phony appeals to Catholics that are now being made can never change the Klan's notoriously anti-Catholic heritage. That is why it is important for all Catholics, and especially Catholic leaders, to denounce without equivocation the march in Pittsburgh.

"It is especially disturbing to read news reports, like the one that appeared in the *Tribune-Review*, that say that the Klan has dropped its anti-Catholic message. It has done nothing of the kind. Indeed, I personally contacted the sociologist who was cited in the story as the basis for this conclusion and she quickly branded the statements attributed to her as false. Professor Kathleen Blee, Director of the Women's Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh, maintains that the Klan has not ceased to be anti-Catholic and

nothing in her scholarship has ever suggested otherwise.

"Because the Klan is a paramilitary terrorist organization, it should be given no presumptive right to exist in a democratic nation. However, the authorities have seen fit to protect their right to march. This makes it all the more imperative for Catholics to reject the Klan's overtures by joining the scheduled counter-demonstration against them."