

CARDINAL O'CONNOR MADE TARGET OF SLANDER

Polly Rothstein, president of the Westchester Coalition for Legal Abortion, has blamed John Cardinal O'Connor for the killing of the Buffalo abortionist, Dr. Barnett Slepian; she has also accused Protestant minister James Dobson for the doctor's death. "Without these leaders spewing hate, there would be no anti-abortion movements," she said. Rothstein then got specific, adding that although the New York Archbishop did not pull the trigger, "Cardinal O'Connor is accountable for these religious followers who do pull the trigger."

Catholic League president William Donohue took note of Rothstein's comment:

"Cardinal O'Connor is a public person and is therefore without the kind of legal protection that court rulings on libel provide for most Americans. But no one has a moral right to slander anyone, and this is certainly something that Polly Rothstein has done to the Cardinal. Indeed, the idea that Cardinal O'Connor is somehow responsible for the death of Dr. Slepian is the kind of charge that even under the 1964 Supreme Court ruling, *New York Times v. Sullivan*, would likely end in a loss for Ms. Rothstein should the New York Archbishop sue her for libel.

"Rev. Martin Luther King was a proponent of civil rights for African Americans and an advocate of non-violence. Cardinal O'Connor has championed the civil rights of the unborn and has always counseled against violence. Some in the civil rights movement resorted to violence, as some in the pro-life movement have, but just as no one in his right mind would blame Dr. King for the crazies supporting his cause, no one in his right mind would blame Cardinal O'Connor for the nuts supporting his.

“In his homily on Sunday, Cardinal O’Connor explicitly denounced the killing of Dr. Slepian. If Polly Rothstein has an ounce of decency in her, she will grant Cardinal O’Connor an apology for her rhetorical violence.”

PROTEST RALLY AGAINST “CORPUS CHRISTI”

On October 13, at 7:00 p.m., the Catholic League will lead a one-hour protest rally against the Terrence McNally play, “Corpus Christi”; we will assemble on 55th Street west of 6th Avenue.

Nearly 50 organizations, comprising Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims, have endorsed the Catholic League’s protest of the play. Representatives from all major faith communities will be at the rally. Bus loads of Catholics are coming from Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Long Island and upstate New York; they will join a large contingent of Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims who live and work in New York City.

Catholic League president William Donohue, who saw the play on Saturday evening, released a statement to the media today. He said earlier that if the play turned out to be inoffensive, he would cancel the rally. But because the play is a filthy attack on Christianity, and on Roman Catholicism in particular, there will be no stopping this demonstration.

For more information, call the Catholic League at (212) 371-3191.

“CORPUS CHRISTI” IS GAY HATE SPEECH

On October 10, Catholic League president William Donohue, and the league's director of communications, Rick Hinshaw, attended a showing of the Terrence McNally play, “Corpus Christi.” Here are Donohue's remarks:

“The basic message of ‘Corpus Christi’ is this: Jesus was no more divine than the rest of us and the reason why he was crucified was because he approved of homosexuality. That is why he was branded, ‘King of the Queers.’

“The play provides a faithful rendition of the gay stereotype. For example, the script is replete with sexual and scatological comments, as well as behavior that is prototypically gay, e.g., crotch grabbing. There is a clear obsession with the male sex organ, and there are instances where this fixation finds expression in Joshua (the Christ figure) pretending to urinate in front of the audience; he is joined by three of the apostles, complete with piped-in sounds of male urination. No doubt this is considered creative.

“When Joshua turns to the apostles and proclaims them all to be divine, he says to them, ‘F— your mother, F— your father, F— God.’ Joshua, of course, has sex with a man (Philip) at his high school prom. Philip dutifully says to Joshua, ‘I hope you have rubbers.’ He then asks the Jesus figure to perform fellatio.

“The key scene in the play, which occurs near the end, is when Joshua condemns a priest for condemning homosexuality. After hearing the priest recite Biblical teachings on homosexuality, Joshua charges that ‘you have perverted my Father's words.’

Joshua says he knows Scripture as well as anyone and that no one should take everything that he says literally. The Bible, he says, is about love. Joshua then presides over a 'wedding' between James and Bartholomew. Not finished damning the priest, Joshua says 'I despise you,' and then proceeds to hit him several times. Not surprisingly, the all white audience responded favorably to the violence.

"One final note: the recitation of the 'Hail Mary' and the references to priests, nuns and Boys Town, makes it clear that Catholics are the real target of McNally's hate speech."

PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY OPPOSES FREE SPEECH

People for the American Way will gather with a small band of anti-free speech protesters on October 13 to oppose the First Amendment rights of the thousands of Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims who will stage a demonstration against hate speech that evening. The anti-hate speech rally, orchestrated against the blasphemous and obscene play, "Corpus Christi," is being organized by the Catholic League and will occur on October 13 on 55th Street and 6th Avenue.

It is the league's position that the play should not be censored by the government but that the producers of the play should have canceled it in the name of common decency.

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed this issue today:

"If the Catholic League's protest of 'Corpus Christi' has accomplished anything, it has exposed the real agenda of

People for the American Way: it is a voice for intolerance. Ever since the Catholic League began exercising its First Amendment right to object to this play, People for the American Way has opposed our right to free speech while defending the hate speech of playwright Terrence McNally. Thus, People for the Fascist Way would be a more accurate title for the organization.

“The reason why Barbara Handman, vice president of ‘People,’ is leading the charge against the First Amendment is because she delights in exhibitions that assault the sensibilities of Catholics. She once told me that the Andres Serrano display of a crucifix submerged in a jar of urine was ‘glorious’ and ‘reverential.’ Given this mind-set, it is not surprising that she loves the idea of a Christ-like figure having sex with the apostles. But her enthusiasm for indecency is one thing, it is quite another when her debased appetite descends to gag speech.”

STUMPING FROM THE PULPIT: THE DOUBLE STANDARD

Yesterday, Senator Alfonse D’Amato gave a highly partisan speech at Rev. Floyd Flake’s Allen AME Church in Queens. Rev. Flake also made highly partisan remarks.

Catholic League president William Donohue took note:

“On the front page of the *New York Times* there is a color photo of Senator D’Amato speaking before Rev. Floyd Flake’s congregation. In addition to the *Times*, the *Daily News*, *New York Post* and *Newsday* all ran articles on this story. Yet there were no editorials condemning this incident as a

violation of church and state.

“Had Senator D’Amato, or any other candidate for political office, made a political speech at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, the New York media would have gone ballistic. And just think what the reaction would have been had Cardinal O’Connor done what Rev. Flake did—promise that he would soon announce his endorsement of either Senator D’Amato or Congressman Charles Schumer! The civil libertarians would be marching into federal district court today screaming church and state violations.

“The Catholic League does not regard Senator D’Amato’s or Rev. Flake’s actions to be of grave constitutional question. What it objects to is the two-faced, hypocritical reaction that colors the media and the double standard practiced by civil libertarians. If Cardinal O’Connor even voices his sentiments on partial birth abortion, the same gang that tolerates what happened yesterday at Allen AME Church immediately finds fault. It is high time we had one rule for all clergymen, independent of religion.”

“PECKER” TAKES A POKE AT CATHOLICS

“Pecker,” the title character in John Waters’ new movie, is a teenage photographer who surges to fame and fortune with his pictures of the seamier side of Baltimore life. Among his subjects are a drug addict and a shoplifter in action, gay and lesbian strippers plying their trade, two rats copulating in a garbage can—and his grandmother’s talking statue of the Virgin Mary.

League director of communications Rick Hinshaw offered the

following comment after viewing the movie:

“Hollywood just can’t leave Catholics alone. There is absolutely no reason for an image of the Virgin Mary to be a recurring part of this movie. No reason, that is, except to imply that Catholics who have a devotion to Mary are just as bizarre as Pecker’s other subjects—gay strippers, drug abusers, a sugar-addicted, hyperactive little girl, or the man we see having sex with a vibrating washing machine in a laundromat.

“It is, I suppose, a measure of their creativity that—no matter what the plot, no matter how far removed it is from religious subject matter—our entertainment moguls can always find a way to work in a shot at Catholics.”