

GAY GROUP REWARDS BIGOTRY AGAINST CHRISTIANS

On March 28, at the 10th annual Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) Awards, the best Off Off Broadway honor went to the anti-Christian play by Paul Rudnick, "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told."

William Donohue, Catholic League president, took note of this award:

"If the Catholic League had given an award to an anti-gay play, we would have come under fire from every cultural maven in the artistic community. But when gays give awards to plays that bash Christians, that's perfectly acceptable. Of course, there is no such thing as an anti-gay play—there are only anti-Christian plays. GLAAD lies when it says it is opposed to defamation. Indeed it rewards it. As long as it's Christians getting defamed, that is.

"When 'The Most Fabulous Story' surfaced in December, I said that I had no intention of seeing a 'routine homosexual play' that featured 'full-frontal male nudity, filthy language, discussions of body parts, butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, ranting against nature, damning God for AIDS, etc.' I can only guess that the reason why this play captured the Off Off Broadway award and 'Corpus Christi' didn't win the Broadway and Off Broadway award is because the boys managed to keep their pants on in the Terrence McNally play."

CLINTON NOMINEE UNDER FIRE FOR BIGOTRY

Since January 1998, Senate Republicans have been blocking the Clinton administration's nominee for the position of Ambassador to Luxembourg, James Hormel. A homosexual activist, Hormel has come under fire from many conservative groups. The Catholic League has said from the beginning that it is not opposed to Hormel because of his sexual orientation (it has not, for example, opposed any Clinton appointee on this basis), but it is concerned about his refusal to distance himself from an anti-Catholic group in San Francisco, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

The White House is poised to push for Hormel's nomination again. This comes at a most interesting time: the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence is holding a public celebration on Easter Sunday. Thus far, Mayor Willie Brown, the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Catholic League have opposed the decision by the San Francisco Supervisors to grant this anti-Catholic group the right to mock Catholics on Easter Sunday. It is important to know what position Hormel takes on this issue.

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to this matter today:

"I have written to the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee requesting that they revisit the issue of James Hormel's suitability for public office. Explicitly, I have asked that they pursue with Mr. Hormel the line of questioning that Senator Tim Hutchinson previously developed, namely Hormel's stance with regard to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The anti-Catholic group will hold a public celebration in San Francisco on Easter Sunday mocking Catholics, and that is why it is so urgent to learn whether Mr. Hormel approves of this action.

“I have also expressed my desire to testify before either the Subcommittee on European Affairs or the entire Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The Catholic League will soon commence a letter-writing campaign asking its 350,000 members nationwide to contact the committee.”

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CATHOLICS FOR A FREE CHOICE

On March 24, Catholics for a Free Choice, headed by Frances Kissling, announced that it was starting a postcard campaign asking organizations to write to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan requesting that he review the Vatican's non-member state permanent observer status.

Kissling objects to the Holy See's status because of the Vatican's opposition to abortion. She wants it to have the same status as her group, which is that of a non-governmental organization (NGO); NGOs have more limited rights than member states. Currently, the Holy See's representative can take part in General Assembly debates and U.N. Conferences but cannot vote.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, countered Kissling's tactics this way:

“Catholics for a Free Choice is a fraud: denounced by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops for its false credentials, Kissling's effort is nothing more than a well-funded letterhead comprised of anti-Catholics. Were it not for the likes of the Ford Foundation, there would be no such group; it has no members.

“The Catholic League will answer Kissling’s campaign by starting its own: we will commence with a postcard campaign asking U.N. officials to revoke the NGO status of Catholics for a Free Choice. We are writing to Catholic organizations nationwide requesting that they contact Nitin Defai, Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, and Hanifa Mezoui, who heads the NGO Section of the same department.

“From its inception, Catholics for a Free Choice has misrepresented itself as a Catholic organization. To be a Catholic and lobby for abortion is as incongruous as it would be for a Catholic to lobby for slavery. It is time for the U.N. to give Kissling the boot.”

BOYCOTT OF SAN FRANCISCO PROCEEDS

On Monday, March 29, the Catholic League is taking out a half-page ad in the *San Francisco Chronicle* asking all Catholic organizations nationwide to boycott San Francisco: they are being urged to take their convention money to a city that truly believes in tolerance.

This decision comes after a unanimous ruling by the San Francisco Supervisors to allow an anti-Catholic group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, to hold a public celebration on Easter Sunday; the Supervisors reversed the position of the Department of Parking and Traffic.

“San Francisco: City of Tolerance?” is the title of the ad. The league argues that the First Amendment is conditioned on time, place and manner, and therefore there was no need for the Supervisors to overturn the decision by the Department of

Parking and Traffic. The ad explicitly says that if the event is moved to a day after Easter, there will be no boycott. The Supervisors are expected to address this issue on Monday.

The league's objections to the Sisters do not center on the group's practice of men dressing as nuns. What the league finds most offensive about the group is its history of attacks on the Eucharist, the very nucleus of Catholicism. We make it clear that we are unimpressed by the charitable contributions that the Sisters make: "Does this mean that if the Klan decides to 'Adopt a Highway,'" the ad says, "we should ignore their conduct?"

Catholic League president William Donohue commented further:

"We are grateful to Mayor Willie Brown that he listened to our grievances and has asked the Supervisors to reschedule the event. That his latest appointee to the Supervisors, Alicia Becerril, has reversed her position, siding with the mayor, is also appreciated, as is the new position of another Supervisor, Pastor Amos Brown. It is too bad that the other Supervisors don't do the decent thing and join with them."

RULING ON TURNER NEEDED BEFORE BASEBALL BEGINS

On February 16, Atlanta Braves owner Ted Turner made anti-Catholic and anti-Polish remarks before the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association in Washington, D.C. He ridiculed the Ten Commandments (they're "a little out of date"; "If you're only going to have 10 rules, I don't know if prohibiting adultery should be one of them") and he mocked the Pope (when asked to comment on the Pope, Turner lifted his

leg and said, "Ever seen a Polish mine detector?"; he also said the Pope should "get with it. Welcome to the 20th century").

The Catholic League accepted Turner's apology the next day, but that did not end the controversy. In 1993, Cincinnati Redlegs owner Marge Schott was suspended for making bigoted comments, and the league wants Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig to give the same sanction to Turner—a one year suspension.

Catholic League president William Donohue outlined the league's latest strategy:

"In the history of baseball, only four owners have ever been suspended and Ted Turner is one of them. In 1977, he was suspended for tampering with a soon-to-be free agent, Gary Matthews. The last owner to be suspended was Marge Schott; she was suspended for one year for making racial and ethnic slurs. Justice demands, therefore, that Turner be suspended for one year. After all, he is a repeat offender and is guilty of the same offense as Schott.

"In the April edition of *Catalyst*, the monthly journal of the Catholic League, we are calling on all members to write to Bud Selig demanding equal justice for the recidivist Turner. It has been six weeks since Turner's offense was committed and the case still lingers. With the baseball season ready to begin on April 4, it is time for Selig to make public the fruits of his investigation and announce the sanctions he thinks are appropriate."

CATHOLIC HOSPITALS TARGETED BY CALIFORNIA BILL

California Assemblywoman Shelia James Kuehl has introduced legislation that would deny funds to Catholic hospitals that are collected through the sale of revenue bonds. The bill revokes the right to sell revenue bonds from any health facility that does not provide for the full range of reproductive services. In essence, it would penalize Catholic hospitals for being Catholic.

Catholic League president William Donohue outlined the league's strategy:

"The bill by Assemblywoman Kuehl is a mean-spirited retaliatory attack on Catholic hospitals. It comes in the wake of months of discussion among abortion advocates: they are exercised over the merger of secular and Catholic hospitals. This is the latest club they are using to beat Catholic hospitals into submission. Susan Fogel, legal director of the California Woman's Law Center, admitted as much when she said, 'This is only the first of its kind in the country, and not the last.'

"The First Amendment allows for separation of church and state. What Kuehl is trying to do is superimpose on Catholic hospitals a hostile secular vision of health care. If this bill passes it will surely be tested in the courts.

"The Catholic League is writing to every member of the California legislature expressing its grave concerns over this bill."

AN APPEAL TO MAYOR BROWN OF SAN FRANCISCO

The Catholic League has asked Mayor Willie Brown of San Francisco to intervene in a matter that is of great interest to the Catholic League. It involves a decision by the San Francisco Supervisors to allow an anti-Catholic group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, the right to hold a public celebration on Easter Sunday; a public street will be closed to accommodate them.

The unanimous decision by the Supervisors, 11-0, overturned a ruling by the Department of Parking and Traffic. The league has asked Mayor Brown to act quickly, arguing that the First Amendment is conditioned on time, place and manner, and thus it is inappropriate that the Sisters be given a public opportunity to attack Catholicism on such a Holy Day as Easter.

Catholic League president William Donohue explained the league's concerns and announced what will be done if Mayor Brown does nothing:

"Men dressed as nuns mock Catholicism, but this is not the central objection we have to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence: it is their vicious attacks on the Eucharist, the nucleus of Catholicism, that we object to more than anything else.

"The Supervisors have a twisted notion of separation of church and state: they hold that while government cannot sponsor religion, it can facilitate attacks on it. Moreover, it must be asked if the Supervisors would have voted to allow an anti-gay group the right to mock homosexuals on the anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death?

"The fact that the Sisters give a few dollars to charities is

unimpressive. So do lots of fascists.

“If Mayor Brown proves uncooperative, we will let the City of Tolerance know what we think of them by taking out a half-page ad in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on March 29.”

THE BIGOTS AT PLANNED PARENTHOOD

On Tuesday, March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day, Planned Parenthood of Connecticut distributed green condoms at the state Capitol in Hartford. The condoms read, “Kiss Me I'm Irish,” “Put on the Green,” and “Four Leaf Cover.” State Senator Louis DeLuca has called for an investigation into how the state chapter of Planned Parenthood spends the \$1.1 million it gets annually in state funds.

Catholic League president William Donohue supported Senator DeLuca's idea:

“Planned Parenthood, which began as a racist eugenics movement, has a history of Catholic bashing. That is why its latest in-your-face demonstration in Hartford is so emblematic of the organization.

“The Catholic League is writing to every member of the Connecticut legislature asking him to support Senator DeLuca's investigation of the state chapter of Planned Parenthood. But we are also asking that they send a more direct message to the organization by completely defunding their operation. It is one thing to advocate condoms, quite another to insult an ethnic group and the members of a world religion. That such a stunt was also pulled by the Planned Parenthood chapter in

Newfoundland proves that this is a coordinated attack.

"We are sending to Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, and to the national headquarters in New York, copies of the *Catholic League's 1998 Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism*; their contribution will be duly noted in the 1999 report. It wasn't until October of last year that a chapter of Planned Parenthood had done something to merit inclusion in our 1998 report, suggesting that the Connecticut bigots are a little quicker on the draw."

INTOLERANCE FOR IRISH-CATHOLICS COLORS PARADE

Yesterday, police investigated a bomb threat at St. Patrick's Cathedral staged by homosexual militants. It is believed that the threat was a response to court decisions upholding the right of parade organizers to exclude gay groups from marching in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade.

In the Bronx yesterday, a gay group called the Lavender and Green Alliance was barred from marching in the St. Patrick's Day parade by the Throgs Neck Benevolent Association. City Councilwoman Christine Quinn and State Senator Thomas Duane, were arrested when they sought to march illegally with the gay group. Bronx Borough president Fernando Ferrer, New York City Public Advocate Mark Green, and City Comptroller, Alan Hevesi, refused to march, showing sympathy for the gay cause.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, remarked as follows:

"If a pro-life group were to stage a bomb threat against

abortion providers, Governor Pataki would be outraged, a major investigation would take place, cries of chilling free speech would be heard and talk of terrorism would be in the air. But when it's Irish-Catholics who are being targeted—for simply exercising their right of freedom of association—not a sound is heard.

“It is a lie that gays cannot march in the St. Patrick's Day parade; they do so every year. What they cannot do is march as a separate contingent with their own banners. Nor can right-to-life advocates. That doesn't make parade organizers anti-life anymore than it makes them anti-gay. It simply means they will not put up with those who have an agenda which is extrinsic to the parade's purpose.

“The politicians who refuse to march show their hostility to Irish-Catholics and their contempt for the law. We trust the NYPD will take the necessary security precautions at the Cathedral on Wednesday and will promptly arrest parade-busters. At this point, we have greater confidence in the police than we do in many elected officials.”

BASEBALL MUST SUSPEND TED TURNER

The following letter was faxed today by Catholic League president William Donohue to Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig:

“On February 17, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights issued a news release criticizing Ted Turner for his anti-Catholic remarks. The next day Mr. Turner sent to us an apology, which we accepted.

"This issue, however, has now taken a new course, one which involves professional baseball. In 1993, Cincinnati Redlegs owner Marge Schott received a one-year suspension and a \$25,000 fine for her bigoted remarks against blacks and Jews; she was also required to attend sensitivity training workshops. This raises serious questions regarding the proper response to Mr. Turner.

"One of the reasons why Marge Schott was punished was the repetitive nature of her offense. The same is true of Ted Turner: he has previously attacked Christianity and his network has been implicated in releasing anti-Catholic stories.

"For the Catholic League, what professional baseball does to Mr. Turner matters gravely: if he is treated lightly, then it would contribute to the very problem that the Catholic League is established to address, namely this nation's tolerance of anti-Catholicism. We are sick and tired of the old double standard that allows bigotry against Catholics to go unchecked while bigotry against others is penalized.

"Accordingly, the Catholic League demands that professional baseball suspend Ted Turner for one year. Because of our opposition to mind control exercises, we oppose mandatory sensitivity training. And the idea of fining a billionaire \$25,000 strikes us as ludicrous, though it certainly wouldn't be a bad idea if Mr. Turner were required to give \$25,000 to Catholic Charities."