

OREGON BILLBOARD COMPANY SNUBS CATHOLIC LEAGUE OFFER

"The Pope is the Antichrist," is what the billboard owned by Outdoor Media Dimensions says. Paid for by Larry Weathers, a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Remnant Ministries (a splinter group of the Seventh Day Adventists), the anti-Catholic ad is posted on Interstate 5 near Medford, Oregon, in the southern part of the state. Many such ads have appeared since 1993 in that part of Oregon. Local Catholics have protested the latest attack and so have many non-Catholics.

For the past week, Catholic League policy staff members have been calling Outdoor Media Dimensions for the purpose of placing a billboard in the same location as the offensive Catholic-bashing ad. The woman who answers says she will pass along the information to Steve, but neither he nor anyone else returns our calls. Today, when we requested to speak to Jeff Herson (an employee whose name was printed in a local newspaper), we were told that he no longer works at the company.

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to this issue today:

"In the pages of the July 22 edition of the *Catholic Sentinel*, the diocesan newspaper of Portland, it is reported that an upper-level manager for Outdoor Media Dimensions justifies the anti-Catholic billboard by saying 'the company believes in freedom of speech.' I don't believe them. Now here's how they can prove me wrong.

"I have a proposal, one that the company continues to snub. The Catholic League is prepared to pay for a billboard along Interstate 5 near Medford that reads, 'Outdoor Media Dimensions Sponsors Anti-Catholicism.' If free speech is

their god, they'll go for it. But the fact that they won't even entertain our offer tells us everything. Nevertheless, it would be great if the local media could squeeze them to speak. After all, true free speech advocates should not be allergic to speaking freely."

STATEMENT ON "CORPUS CHRISTI" CATHOLIC LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RIGHTS

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, issued the following statement today on the play, "Corpus Christi." It will be performed on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne in August.

"The decision of IPFW to host the play, 'Corpus Christi,' is not an endorsement of the play itself. It is, rather, a decision grounded in the free speech rights of faculty and students to express themselves by staging this performance.

"The Catholic League has strong moral objections to the play. Accordingly, league president William Donohue has asked IPFW chancellor Michael Wartell if it would be acceptable for the Catholic League to have a statement distributed to the audience that would explain the league's position; final approval would rest with the chancellor. The request was granted and the statement has been approved.

"The Catholic League is opposed to censorship and is therefore opposed to those who would resolve this issue by going to court. It is the league's firm belief that the most

responsible way to handle this delicate issue is to allow both the play and the protest to proceed. IPFW is not endorsing either the play or the protest; it is simply acceding to the requests of those involved in both exercises to have their voices heard. We believe that this is the best democratic remedy.”

MILLER BREWING STICKS IT TO CATHOLICS

On June 30, porn star Rebecca Lord, Howard Stern and Robin Quivers (Stern’s sidekick) slandered Catholic priests on the “Howard Stern Show” on E! Entertainment television.

On July 2, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote a letter to Jeffrey C. Bible, the CEO of Philip Morris Companies, Inc. (Philip Morris owns Miller), requesting that Miller drop its sponsorship of the show; Miller is the most prominent sponsor of the program. Philip Morris directed the issue to Miller Brewing and on July 13, Michael Hennick, marketing communications director for Miller, told the Catholic League that the decision to sponsor the show is based on what “our consumers are telling us they want to see and hear.” While he regrets that the program offended people, he also said that the Miller Brewing Company was standing by the “Howard Stern Show.”

William Donohue announced today the Catholic League’s response:

“I am writing to all the nation’s bishops telling them what Stern and Quivers said about priests. It is nothing if not slanderous to wildly charge Catholic priests with child sexual

molestation. I will also make copies of the tape available to those who are interested. But most of all, I will tell the bishops, and our members across the nation, about the corporate arrogance and irresponsibility of Miller Brewing.

“In my letter to Mr. Bible, I told him how Unilever, which owns Lipton, had recently acted responsibly by withdrawing an ad that offended Catholics. I was hoping that Miller would also act responsibly and drop its support for the ‘Howard Stern Show.’ But instead they have decided they’d rather stick it to Catholics.

“Howard Stern is no Mel Brooks. His assault on Catholic priests is mean-spirited, vicious and humorless. That Miller Brewing would stand by this attack is reprehensible.”

ANTI-CATHOLIC BIGOTS RALLY TO ATTACK VATICAN

On July 14, a group of pro-abortion feminists, led by Frances Kissling of Catholics for a Free Choice, and Feminist Majority leader Eleanor Smeal, will hold a rally at the Vatican Mission in New York and the Vatican embassy in Washington, D.C. The demonstrators are protesting what they say is the Vatican’s lack of accountability in addressing the alleged issue of sexual abuse of nuns by priests.

Commenting on the scheduled rally is Catholic League president William Donohue:

“The purpose of these rallies is so transparent that only a raving lunatic couldn’t figure it out. Frances Kissling and Eleanor Smeal have been at war with the Roman Catholic Church

for decades. Because the Church is against abortion and they are for it, they look for every opportunity to bash Catholicism. What motivates them is malice, not genuine concern for the well-being of nuns. Here's the proof: Kissling is on record admitting that her goal is to 'overthrow' the Catholic Church and Smeal is on record tying Catholic bishops to the Klan as part of a 'reactionary coalition.'

"In 1987, Kissling and Smeal managed to get themselves arrested outside the Vatican embassy in Washington while protesting the visit of Pope John Paul II to the United States. It is doubtful that these aging activists have it in them to get escorted off in cuffs one more time, but if they do, it sure will make our day.

"In any event, if Kissling and Smeal are truly interested in the issue of men preying on women, they ought to leave priests and nuns alone and start investigating what's happening in Washington between politicians and their interns."

TNT SHOW, "WITCHBLADE," SMEARS CATHOLICISM

Last night's episode of the TNT show, "Witchblade," smeared Catholicism with an historically unfair portrayal of the role of Pope Pius XII during the Holocaust.

The script dealt with a New York City Policewoman, Sara Pezzini, who exercises special powers given to her by the magical witchblade (an instrument originally possessed by the Vatican). In the course of her investigation, it is revealed that there was "an unholy bargain" between Pope Pius XII and

Hitler. Under the alliance Hitler agrees to leave the Vatican alone as long as the pope remains silent about Nazi atrocities. As a symbol of the deal, Hitler is given the witchblade.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, spoke to this issue today:

“It looks like the top brass at AOL Time Warner want a fight with the Roman Catholic Church. Otherwise, why would they stand behind TNT’s malicious lies about the Catholic Church?

“The two most damnable untruths told about Pope Pius XII are that (a) he was silent in the face of Jewish persecution by the Nazis and/or (b) he actively cooperated with Hitler. Neither accusation can withstand an honest reading of history. Indeed, two editorials during the war by the *New York Times* explicitly singled out Pius XII for *not* being silent. Moreover, as Israeli diplomat Pinchas Lapide found, as many as 860,000 Jews were saved as a result of the Holy Father’s actions. That is why noted historian John Toland has written that no person—from any religion—did more to help Jews than Pius XII.

“The truth is that Pope Pius XII should be praised for what he did. He was a Righteous Gentile who did what he could, absent an army, to help Jews. That is why it is so despicable for AOL Time Warner to allow this attack to go forward. One more show like this and we will pull out all the stops.”

SALVATION ARMY ISSUE IS A

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ISSUE

In today's edition of the *Washington Post*, it is alleged that there is an agreement between the White House and the Salvation Army that would protect charities like the Salvation Army from intrusive state and local laws in return for support for President Bush's faith-based initiatives.

Commenting on this development is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"The central issue in the Salvation Army controversy is whether state and local governments are free to meddle in the internal affairs of religious organizations. Under federal law, religious organizations are given wide latitude in hiring and job promotions. It is generally understood that houses of worship and religious charities would be unfairly burdened in their mission if they had to yield their religious prerogatives to the secular interests of the state. All the White House seems to be proposing is a guarantee that state and local governments will be held to the same standard that currently shields religious organizations from federal interference.

"Not surprisingly, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and People for the American Way are already engaging in demagoguery by charging that there is a cabal under way between the White House and the Salvation Army. This is utter nonsense. Those who truly believe in separation of church and state should enthusiastically support any increase in insularity afforded religious organizations. The alternative is to have the state encroach on the internal affairs of churches, synagogues, temples and mosques.

"In short, there can be no religious liberty without respect for the autonomy that religious organizations duly exercise. That is why the Catholic League supports laws that keep the

government in its place.”

NEW NOW LEADER IS FOE OF CATHOLICS

On July 1, the National Organization for Women (NOW) announced that Kim Gandy was elected the new president of the organization. Catholic League president William Donohue regards her as a foe of Catholicism and explained why today:

“NOW claims to represent 145 million women in the United States yet has only 500,000 members. Even more telling, less than 1,000 members showed up to vote over the weekend for their new president. This means that less than .002 percent of NOW’s members voted for Gandy; it also means that .00006 percent of women in the nation voted for her. Some mandate.

“The Catholic League has good reason to sense trouble with the election of Gandy. In 1987, she supported NOW’s protest of Pope John Paul II’s visit to the U.S. In 1992, she attacked New York Archbishop John Cardinal O’Connor for recommending that the Knights of Columbus build a ‘tomb of the unborn child’ in Catholic cemeteries across the nation. Though it was none of her business, Gandy labeled the Cardinal’s plan ‘outrageous.’ In 1996, when the Knights built temporary memorials to the unborn on the Mall in Washington, Gandy branded it ‘offensive.’ In 1993 and 1994, she supported efforts that would coerce the Catholic Church into funding abortions. Her enthusiasm for abortion rights is so strong that she even favors silencing the free speech rights of abortion protesters: in 1993, she advocated using the draconian RICO law to gag pro-lifers.

“Regarding women, Gandy was livid at the Dulles Chapter of NOW for supporting Paula Jones in her sexual harassment suit against President Clinton. Her curious brand of feminism also allows her to oppose the ban on prostitution: ‘How come I can rent my uterus,’ she said in 1987, ‘but not my vagina? They’re only an inch apart.’ Gandy also opposes Internet filtering software to block pornography from children and considers Promise Keepers to be a ‘political army.’

“I can’t wait to ask her whether she supports NOW’s S/M Policy Reform Project. But I will do so at a distance.”

HOWARD STERN SLANDERS PRIESTS

On Friday night, porn star Rebecca Lord appeared on the “Howard Stern Show” on E! Entertainment. When she said she had a comment to make about religion, Stern gave her the okay. Lord said her complaint was with the Catholic Church for being critical of her line of work. At that point Stern jumped in saying, “Catholic priests are having sex with young boys.” He added that those who work in the pornography industry were healthier than Catholic priests. In an angry voice, Stern charged that priests show boys pornography so they can molest them. Then his companion Robin Quivers commented that the Catholic Church would like to stop Lord from practicing her profession. Lord then undressed on the show.

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke for the league today:

“Thanks to someone who had seen the Stern show Friday night and had alerted me to it, I saw the show when it was repeated on Saturday, July 1, at 2:30 a.m. What I witnessed was not a

Mel Brooks comedic spot but a vicious segment that libeled all Catholic priests. Perhaps most revealing, the segment was wholly devoid of humor. This was not a colorful satire of priests—it was a hate-filled attack.

“It will not do to say that Stern is not an anti-Catholic bigot because he is known for targeting every group. It is one thing to poke light fun at African Americans by playing ‘Black Jeopardy,’ quite another to trash priests in the vile way that he did on Friday. Moreover, if he goes too far with making fun of blacks, his sidekick Robin Quivers stops him. Just who is around to stop Stern when he—and Quivers—attack Catholics?

“Miller Lite is one of Stern’s sponsors. Philip Morris owns Miller and that is why I am writing to Philip Morris CEO Jeffrey C. Bible asking him to get Miller Brewing to stop advertising on the ‘Howard Stern Show.’ If he shuns his corporate responsibility, he will leave the Catholic League with very few options. It is my hope that this can be resolved quickly, fairly and amicably.”