

WAL-MART CAVES; BOYCOTT ENDS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on Wal-Mart's decision to yield to the league's demands:

"Yesterday, I said the Catholic League's boycott of Wal-Mart would proceed until the company a) rendered an apology b) withdrew its insane statement regarding the origins of Christmas and c) revised its website. When I left the office last evening, none of the three demands were met. When I checked news reports this morning, and Wal-Mart's website, all three were met.

"Wal-Mart spokesman Dan Fogleman released a statement last night saying, 'We sincerely apologize to any person or organization that was offended by the inappropriate and inflammatory comments made by this former associate.' Fogleman was referring to the objectionable remark offered by a Customer Service employee, Kirby, who started the entire controversy by sending the insane statement regarding the origins of Christmas to a female customer. Alas, Kirby has been fired. As for our third demand, Wal-Mart has now adjusted its website so that when a customer types 'Christmas' in its search engine, it no longer gets, 'We've brought you to our 'Holiday' page based on your search.' Now the customer is taken directly to a site named 'Christmas.'

"Wal-Mart says it is not going to change its policy of encouraging employees to say 'Happy Holidays' instead of 'Merry Christmas.' This is dumb, but it was never part of the Catholic League's complaint. We only trigger boycotts when we've been grossly offended.

"This is a sweet victory for the Catholic League, Christians in general, and people of all faiths. And it means that Wal-Mart can now enter the Christmas season without this cloud hanging over it."

WAL-MART HAS BEEN PUT ON NOTICE

Bill Donohue commented today on the latest development in the Catholic League's fight with Wal-Mart:

"Yesterday, I announced a boycott of Wal-Mart and asked 126 religious organizations that span seven faith communities to join with us. We want a) an apology for insulting Christians by effectively banning Christmas and b) a withdrawal of its insane statement regarding the origins of Christmas and c) a revision on its website.

"The piece today by Joe Kovacs on worldnetdaily.com quotes Wal-Mart spokeswoman Jolanda Stewart saying, 'We already serve a diverse customer base, and we're just trying to help them to celebrate their individual needs and wants.' I thought Wal-Mart was a department store—not a Wellness Center.

"Stewart's remark is flatulent. If Wal-Mart had a 'Holiday' section on its website that directed customers to its Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa sites, that would not be objectionable. What is objectionable is its steadfast defense of the statement about the origins of Christmas as crafted by its Customer Relations department, and the way its customers are directed online to find Christmas items. Searches for Hanukkah and Kwanzaa direct customers to the Jewish and African-American holiday sections, but searches for Christmas are directed to the 'Holiday' section. Ergo, Wal-Mart discriminates in its treatment of Christmas.

"Today, I e-mailed Dan Fogleman, Senior Manager of Public Relations, letting him know the following: 'Now that Wal-Mart is standing by its position, I hope you're ready for our next

move. Don't forget, we have the next six weeks to pull out all the stops, and we will.'"

IS THE ADL PROMOTING ANTI-SEMITISM?

On November 7, in a Catholic League news release, we reported the anti-Christian remarks of Anti-Defamation League (ADL) national director Abraham Foxman; the Israeli media outlet, Haaretz.com, carried the initial story. In that news release, there were two replies to Foxman: one from Catholic League president Bill Donohue, and one from Don Feder, president of Jews Against Anti-Christian Defamation.

Rabbi Daniel Lapin, president of Toward Tradition, has now offered a lengthy response to Foxman. (It can be accessed [here](#).) [Bill Donohue now responds to Rabbi Lapin:](#)

"It would be hard to find a more brutally honest and courageous Jewish spokesman than Rabbi Daniel Lapin. Commenting on Foxman's remarks, Lapin says, 'If you consistently bully your friends and treat them disrespectfully, pretty soon you won't have any friends left.' This deserves a reply.

"Christians who bash Jews because Abe Foxman bashes Christians are no different than whites who bash blacks because Minister Louis Farrakhan bashes whites. But does this mean that Foxman isn't a danger to good Christian-Jewish relations? Of course not. Leaders like him, and Farrakhan, pose a serious threat to the goodwill that has been achieved by other Jewish and African-American leaders.

“Foxman says that the goal of Christian activists ‘is to implement their Christian worldview.’ How dare they? Christians entertaining a Christian worldview in a nation that is 85 percent Christian! It would be instructive to learn from Foxman precisely whose views Christians should be expected to entertain. That of radical secularists?

“As many Jewish scholars have said, there is no place in the history of the world where Jews have fared better than in the U.S. That this nation was founded on Judeo-Christian principles explains why. It’s time someone gave Abe Foxman a history lesson.”

WAL-MART BAGS CHRISTMAS: BOYCOTT LAUNCHED

A woman who recently complained to Wal-Mart that the store was replacing “Merry Christmas” with “Happy Holidays” received an e-mail response from Customer Service. It appears below in its exact form:

“Walmart is a world wide organization and must remain conscious of this. The majority of the world still has different practices other than ‘christmas’ which is an ancient tradition that has its roots in Siberian shamanism. The colors associated with ‘christmas’ red and white are actually a representation of the amanita muscaria mushroom. Santa is also borrowed from the Caucasus, mistletoe from the Celts, yule log from the Goths, the time from the Visigoth and the tree from the worship of Baal. It is a wide wide world.”

To which Catholic League president Bill Donohue says: “This statement was signed by someone called Kirby. When I read it,

I fought he might be drunk. But I was wrong. We sent Kirby's response to Wal-Mart's headquarters only to find that Dan Fogleman, Senior Manager, Public Relations, agrees. After acknowledging that he read Kirby's response, Fogleman said, in part, the following":

"As a retailer, we recognize some of our customers may be shopping for Chanukah or Kwanza gifts during this time of year and we certainly want these customers in our stores and to feel welcome, just as we do those buying for Christmas. As an employer, we recognize the significance of the Christmas holiday among our family of associates... and close our stores in observance, the only day during the year that we are closed."

Bill Donohue says: "It's nice to know that Wal-Mart is closed on a federal holiday. Now here is why I am asking the leaders of 126 religious organizations that span seven religious communities to boycott Wal-Mart. Go to its website and search for Hanukkah and up come 200 items. Click on Kwanzaa and up come 77. Click on Christmas, and here's what you get: 'We've brought you to our 'Holiday' page based on your search.' In other words, Wal-Mart is practicing discrimination."

Contact Fogleman at dan.fogleman@wal-mart.com

GAY EPISCOPAL BISHOP SLAMS CATHOLICISM

Gene Robinson, the Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire, and the first openly gay Anglican bishop, attacked the Catholic Church over the weekend while in London. "I find it so vile that they [the Catholic Church] think they are going to end the

child abuse scandal by throwing out homosexuals from seminaries. It is an act of violence that needs to be confronted.” He added: “Pope Ratzinger [sic] may be the best thing that ever happened to the Episcopal Church. We are seeing so many Roman Catholics joining the church.”

Responding today is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“Gene Robinson is a walking embarrassment to Episcopalians everywhere, and is profoundly ignorant of what has been happening to his own church. Had he read David Shiflett’s splendid book, *Exodus: Why Americans are Fleeing Liberal Churches for Conservative Christianity*, he might have been able to connect the dots: it is because of people like him—a practicing homosexual—that his church is imploding. And prior to Shiflett’s work we had the ground-breaking volume by professor Thomas C. Reeves, *The Empty Church: Does Organized Religion Matter Anymore*. His book is also about what happens when the likes of Robinson assume power.

“Here’s to you, Mr. Robinson. Your proselytizing efforts are deeply appreciated by Roman Catholics.”

ADL FEARS CHRISTIAN AMERICA

Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League, and Don Feder, president of Jews Against Anti-Christian Defamation, called attention today to the anti-Christian statements made by Anti-Defamation League (ADL) national director Abraham Foxman over the weekend.

According to an article in today’s Haaretz.com, Foxman told members of the ADL’s national commission of alleged efforts by

Evangelical organizations to “Christianize America.” He said, “Today we face a better financed, more sophisticated, coordinated, unified, energized and organized coalition of groups in opposition to our policy positions on church-state separation than ever before. Their goal is to implement their Christian worldview. To Christianize America. To save us!”

Foxman identified Focus on the Family, Alliance Defense Fund, the American Family Association and the Family Research Council as the “major players.” He accused them of wanting “to Christianize all aspects of American life, from the halls of government to the libraries, to the movies, to recording studios, to the playing fields and locker rooms of professional, collegiate and amateur sports; from the military to SpongeBobSquarePants. No effort is made to hide their goals or their ambitions, and their vision of America is far different from ours.”

Don Feder issued these remarks: “Abe Foxman is hysterical, paranoid and agenda driven. There is no conspiracy to Christianize America unless Foxman considers keeping God in the Pledge of Allegiance and maintaining the traditional definition of marriage to be Christianizing America. Where does Foxman think the so-called Christianizers got the morality they are trying to force on America? From the Bible! The Torah is the foundation of Western ethics.”

CSI TO VIEWERS: THE REAL CRIME IS RESPECTING LIFE

The Catholic League was bombarded with complaints this morning about “Secrets and Flies,” the November 3 episode of the CBS

program *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*. "Secrets and Flies" revolves around the murder of Christina, a single mother. After an autopsy reveals that Christina was a virgin, it is learned that she adopted a fertilized embryo from Project Sunflower, an organization devoted to finding surrogate mothers for abandoned embryos.

Here's what Catholic League president Bill Donohue had to say:

"A talented writer could easily spin an interesting who-done-it from this plot, but *CSI* chose to advance a pro-abortion rights agenda by portraying those who are opposed to abortion as religious nuts not to be taken seriously. The murder victim, who gave life to a baby who would otherwise be left to die, is described as a 'prude' for being chaste. A remark is made about her being 'our Virgin Mary.'

"According to the *CSI* website, the doctor in charge of Project Sunflower is 'a very unlikable woman.' The pro-abortion rights forensic investigators sneer at her work and beliefs, informing us that a pope once decreed that a baby isn't a human until quickening. (Of course, it is not explained that the Church has always considered abortion to be illicit, regardless of the status of the baby. Never mind the fact that we have learned a few new things about biology in a few hundred years.)

"It is a rare Hollywood big-wig who doesn't embrace the right to abortion. Clearly, those in charge at *CSI* don't buck convention. 'Secrets and Flies' speaks volumes about the way CBS executives view those who hold pro-life convictions.

"Americans who respect human life in all of its stages have become the target of public ridicule. Enough is enough. Let CBS know how you feel by visiting http://www.cbs.com/info/user_services/fb_global_form.shtml."

CHRISTMAS CENSORS ALREADY AT WORK

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded today to the first attempts to censor Christmas in 2005:

“The regional director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in San Diego announced this week his disdain for ‘Christmas programs’ and his support for ‘winter programs.’ Morris S. Casuto explained his reasoning by saying, ‘School and public events should be designed to enable diverse communities to participate without feeling left out or marginalized.’

“When Casuto hears about what’s happening this year at Marshall University in West Virginia, he’ll be dancing in the street: they’ve instituted a decoration contest emphasizing non-Christmas symbols. ‘The main idea in our contest is to enrich [the] campus according to the winter tradition,’ explains Christina Burgueno, associate professor of modern languages and a member of the contest committee. Her reasoning? ‘There is such an amount of diversity right now at our campus. We want to celebrate the traditions of other people, people from other places.’

“Following Casuto’s logic, the schools should ban Black History Month because it leaves white kids ‘feeling left out or marginalized.’ As for Burgueno, it’s nice to know she feels it is necessary to emphasize diversity at Christmastime so that those ‘other people’ can feel included. Just imagine her reaction if straight kids on her campus organized a ‘Straight Is Great’ celebration during Gay Pride Week? That would sure make for diversity.

“They really do hate Christmas, don’t they?”

FEMINIST MAJORITY WARNS OF CATHOLIC MAJORITY

Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority, is warning her members that if Samuel Alito becomes a Supreme Court Justice, “the majority of the Court would be Roman Catholics, which would underrepresent other religions, not to mention nonbelievers.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue replied to her as follows:

“Smeal didn’t whine when Jewish nominee Stephen Breyer was slated to join Jewish Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the Supreme Court. No, it’s only when we have too many (practicing) Catholics that people like her complain. Indeed, even if Alito gets on the bench, there will be a greater disproportion of Jewish justices than Catholic justices: Catholics are 25 percent of the population and would constitute 55 percent of the Justices if Alito is confirmed; Jews are 1 percent of the population and already comprise 22 percent of the Justices.

“Smeal is no stranger to anti-Catholicism. She was once arrested outside the Vatican embassy in Washington while protesting the visit of Pope John Paul II to the U.S. And she has joined with other bigots to protest outside the Vatican Mission in New York.

“Smeal should swallow her own medicine and disband the Feminist Majority immediately—it is an affront to men who feel underrepresented in her organization and to the majority of women who refuse to identify themselves as feminists.”

NPR FEARS ALITO'S CATHOLICISM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on what National Public Radio (NPR) is saying about Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito:

"Yesterday, NPR reporter Dahlia Lithwick exclaimed, 'People are very, very much talking about the fact that Alito would be the fifth Catholic on the Supreme Court if confirmed.'

"Catholics do make her nervous. On August 2, she said it was the 'very, very strong religious views' of Catholic Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas that accounted for their conservative positions, something she feared might happen if John Roberts were to get on the bench.

"Lithwick is bothered by 'a 2004 case in which he [Alito] allowed a New Jersey Christian children's group to proselytize on public school grounds,' and a 'Christmas display case that he felt was constitutionally permissible even though there were overt religious symbols.' In her mind, this 'clearly' makes him 'a fan of allowing greater entanglement between church and state in public plans.'

"What she doesn't say is that in the former case, Alito said that the school district could not engage in 'viewpoint discrimination' by treating the free speech rights of Christian students differently from the rights of other students. In the latter case, the 'overt religious symbols' were deemed acceptable because they were surrounded by secular holiday symbols; in doing so, Alito followed the exact standard that Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor developed in 1984.

"We at the Catholic League are very, very disappointed that

Lithwick doesn't come right out and demand a moratorium on Catholic nominees for the high court. It would be so much more honest of her to do so."