

SEATTLE ABC-TV AFFILIATE LIBELS PRIESTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue released the following comments today on what happened on Seattle's KOMO-TV on September 29:

"Ken Schram, a commentator for the ABC affiliate in Seattle (KOMO), sarcastically complained yesterday about a piece of public art that the Seattle Art Museum wants to display. The work in question is that of a nude man reaching for a nude boy; it is to be displayed at a public park on the Seattle waterfront. Schram said that 'a naked guy reaching for a naked kid has far more sordid interpretations in this day and age,'" and then said: 'The sculpture might as well as be called the priest and the altar boy.'

"It is hard to think of a more vile, sweeping indictment of the over 42,000 priests who serve the Catholic Church. Because a tiny minority of homosexual priests have molested young males, commentators like Schram think now's the time to libel all priests. But if he thinks he's heard the last of this, he's not only a bigot—he's a fool."

We urge our members to contact Doreen Kaylor, Programming Director for KOMO-TV, about Schram's remark. Kaylor can be reached by writing to 140 Fourth Ave. North Seattle, Washington 98109; by calling 206-404-4000; by faxing 206-404-4422 or by emailing programming@komotv4.com.

CATHOLICS, MUSLIMS AND JEWS: DISPARATE TREATMENT ON INTERNAL MATTERS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue today contrasted the disparate way our society treats the internal matters of Catholics, Muslims and Jews:

“What were once regarded as internal matters for Catholics to resolve are now being treated as public matters. So it is that everyone, regardless of religious affiliation, is now opining on the wisdom of celibacy and gays in the priesthood. Such gossip can be read in newspaper editorials and opinion pieces in magazines; it can also be heard on talk radio and TV. But when it comes to other religions, a different rule applies.

“For example, Ramadan begins October 4, yet no survey has asked John Q. Public whether he approves of the Ramadan practice of abstaining from sex during daylight. Moreover, there will be no talking heads ridiculing Muslims for their ‘sexual hang-ups.’

“Two Jewish holidays will be observed in October as well. There will be no op-eds, and no roundtable discussions questioning the rationality of celebrating Rosh Hashanah or the rituals attendant to Yom Kippur.

“Today, the New York City Fire Department will hire its second Muslim chaplain. The imam, Intikab Habib, does not believe that Muslim men bombed the Twin Towers; he thinks it was a conspiracy. Yet he will be employed to service men whose friends were killed in 9-11 and none of them will be permitted to comment. This is considered a Muslim issue.

“Last year, an Orthodox rabbi in New York, performing a

religious ritual, sucked the blood from the penis of three baby boys after they were circumcised. In doing so, he transmitted herpes to all of them, and one of them died. Initially sued by city authorities, the lawsuit was recently withdrawn and the Department of Health announced it will not make its medical investigation public. This is considered a Jewish issue.

“It’s time Catholics told the meddlers to mind their own business.”

WHO’S CATHOLIC? FERRER OR BLOOMBERG?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on New York mayoral hopeful Fernando Ferrer and Mayor Michael Bloomberg:

“Freddy (as he affectionately calls himself) Ferrer is all over the New York news for advertising himself on his website as a product of public schools when, in fact, he went to Catholic schools from K-12. When asked about this yesterday, all he could say was that it was ‘nonsense’ to say he lied about his schooling. What he still could not do was to say that he went to Catholic schools, and his revised website makes no reference to his parochial education either.

“This is not the first time that Freddy-the-Faker-Ferrer has turned his back on Catholics. In 1996-97, when Mayor Rudy Giuliani floated the idea that one way to stem overcrowding in the public schools was to send students to Catholic schools, the Faker went mad. No doubt he would be just as mad to learn that his challenger, incumbent Mayor Michael Bloomberg, is a

contributor to the Catholic Schools Foundation.

“Freddy-the-Faker will not only do nothing for Catholics, he has the gall to say he’s been exploited by the Catholic Church. In 2001, he said that the most ‘personally wrenching’ issue he ever faced was supporting gay rights, adding that ‘the pummeling I was getting from my own church on that issue was just incredible.’ Really? A Lexis-Nexis search on this subject turns up nothing. Indeed, the only time he has been criticized for anything dealing with gay rights was when he refused to march in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade up Fifth Avenue, and I was the one who nailed him. By contrast, Bloomberg marches in the parade and he’s Jewish!

“When an anti-Catholic bigot threw elephant dung on a portrait of Our Blessed Mother and had it displayed at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Mayor Giuliani and the Catholic League protested. But Freddy-the-Faker said nothing, except to sue Giuliani for withdrawing funding for the museum. And in 2001, when Bloomberg endorsed the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer in the public schools, the Faker went ballistic. Makes you wonder: Who’s Catholic? Freddy-the-Faker-Ferrer or Mike Bloomberg?”

OPEN LETTER TO BARBARA WALTERS

The following is Bill Donohue’s letter to ABC personality Barbara Walters:

It seems you have a problem with the Catholic Church. On the September 22 episode of "The View," you read a selection from the Catholic Catechism on homosexuality that you found disagreeable. To be precise, you wondered aloud what the Church meant by saying homosexuality was an "objective disorder." To the approval of your co-hosts, you further added that celibacy was "unnatural" or "supposedly" so. Moreover, co-hosts Meredith Vieira, Elisabeth Hasselbeck and Joy Behar piled on by speaking in

the most disparaging way about the Catholic Church's teachings on women, celibacy and homosexuality. As the executive producer of this show, you watched approvingly.

You have crossed the line. You and your friends wouldn't dare read selections from the Torah or the Koran and then castigate Jews and Muslims. Nor would you ridicule the sexual practices of Orthodox Jews or Muslims during Ramadan. That's because anti-Catholicism finds a ready audience in this country today, and it is because of people like you that the bigots are so fat. You feed them well, Ms. Walters.

Sadly, you are no stranger to this issue. On the July 20 episode of "Good Morning America," you dipped into

America's ugly history of anti-Catholicism by trying to establish a nexus between John Roberts' Roman Catholicism and his ability to render an independent judgment from the bench. After noting his religion, you asked, "Do you think it might affect him as a Supreme Court Justice?" Yet when Ruth Bader Ginsburg was being considered for the high court, you never once cited her Jewishness as a possible impediment to clear thinking. No, it took a Roman Catholic to make you

nervous.

We urge our members to contact her by phone at 212-456-7050; fax her at 212-456-0951; write her at "The View," 320 W. 66th St., Bsmt Level, NY, NY 10023; or provide feedback at <http://www.abc.go.com/daytime/theview/mail/walters.html>.

ABC RADIO, CATHOLICS AND MUSLIMS

The following is the text of the letter Catholic League president Bill Donohue sent to ABC Radio President James Robinson yesterday about its Los Angeles affiliate, KABC:

I am writing to you about a serious matter that concerns a totally irresponsible and bigoted remark by KABC radio talk-show host Kim Serafin and the refusal of KABC program director Eric Braverman to address the issue.

On September 10, Serafin discussed the victims of Hurricane Katrina. She relayed a story about hearing from someone that he was going to make a donation to Catholic Charities. Serafin said, "Why? The Catholic Church is totally corrupt and molests young boys, you know."

When we learned of her remark, we verified its accuracy and then contacted the station. We were effectively dismissed. We then issued a news release on September 14 (enclosed) that was the text of a letter I sent to Brian Burch (the letter should have been addressed to Eric Braverman; nonetheless, he learned of our complaint through someone on his staff and never returned our calls).

On September 17, Serafin answered a complaint by a Catholic League member saying that her remark was taken out of context and that he should "have an open mind in the future." (Enclosed.)

Over the summer, ABC radio talk-show host Michael Graham was fired because of an offensive remark he made about Islam. At the time, ABC Radio did not buy the line about Graham's comment being "out-of-context," and neither should it allow Serafin to get away with this excuse.

Justice demands that Serafin be disciplined over this matter. Not to do so would send a message to Catholics that ABC Radio harbors a double standard: bigotry against Catholics is not the same as bigotry against Muslims.

We have a monthly journal, *Catalyst*, that records anti-Catholicism nationwide and what we are doing about it. Serafin's comment will appear on the front page of the October edition* and Braverman will be deluged with mail in a few weeks time. It would be great if we could provide our members with an update in the November edition that effectively settles this matter.

***NOTE:** Just before going to press, Ms. Serafin issued a formal apology. We now consider this to be a closed matter.

PHILADELPHIA D.A. COMES UP EMPTY

Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham released a grand jury report today on cases of alleged sexual abuse by priests in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Commenting on the report is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"The incredible amount of time and money that Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham has wasted in her fanatical crusade against the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is just cause for her being thrown out of office. After all is said and done, she has come up empty: not a single priest will be

prosecuted for any alleged crime. And she knew this from the get-go: the report says that 'much of the abuse goes back several decades' and that 'many of the victims were unnamed, unavailable or unable to come forward.'

"In other words, Abraham wants us to believe that many years ago (decades ago?) there were priests who molested kids she can't identify. Other alleged victims moved away and can't be found (perhaps they're hiding from her). Still others are apparently too old to meet with her.

"At bottom, Abraham is a phony. From the beginning, she had absolutely no evidence that would lead her to conduct a massive taxpayer-funded investigation of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia while not similarly investigating ministers, rabbis, public school teachers, abortion counselors, et al. But all of them got a pass nonetheless. Worse, Abraham has the gall to say she wants to tighten the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law yet never states that abortion counselors should be added to the 'Mandated Reporters' list. And that's because her friends at Planned Parenthood would then have to report cases of statutory rape.

"Some will say she is heroic simply because she successfully named some priests who apparently were molesters. But it is not an act of heroism to select one institution out of many for an investigation that was destined to fail. It's an act of exploitation."

SCHOOL CHOICE NEEDED IN NEW

ORLEANS

Catholic League president William Donohue praised the Bush administration today for approving federal aid to private schools in New Orleans. Furthermore, he is urging congressmen and senators to vote in favor of this measure. Here is his statement:

“Education Secretary Margaret Spellings has advanced a plan to help the parents of school-aged children in New Orleans to obtain the kind of quality education they deserve. Under the Bush administration proposal, \$488 million of the \$2 billion in federal aid would be earmarked for those parents who elect to send their children to private schools; 25 percent of New Orleans students had been enrolled in private schools, mostly Catholic. The total per-child allotment would not exceed \$7,500 and would be available to all displaced families.

“I am writing to every member of the House and Senate urging a quick approval of this proposal. This is more than an education issue—it is a matter of fundamental civil rights. Having been ravaged by Hurricane Katrina, the residents of New Orleans want to put their lives back together as soon as possible. What they don’t need now is for federal lawmakers to stand in their way by playing politics with the choices they make.

“To achieve the status quo ante, congressmen and senators must not discriminate on the basis of religion. That is why they need to affirm the decisions parents make. After all, it is their money and their kids.”

JEWISH CHAPEL BUILT WITH FEDERAL FUNDS:NO OUTCRY FROM ADL, ACLU or AU

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today about the absence of outcry from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU) over the building of a Jewish chapel at the U.S. Naval Academy. From September 16-18, several events will take place at the Naval Academy celebrating the opening of the Commodore Uriah P. Levy Center and Jewish Chapel; formal dedication will take place Sunday. Here is what Donohue had to say:

“The Catholic League understands the central role that religion plays in the lives of most Americans, and it is particularly sensitive to the need for religious expression among our men in women in uniform. That is why we congratulate the Naval Academy for opening the Jewish Center and heartily approve of federal funds being used to build the Jewish chapel. Our problem is with the hypocrites at the ADL, ACLU and AU.

“To the applause of the ADL, ACLU and AU, Catholic schools are denied government money for the purchase of maps in the classroom, but the federal government can spend nearly 2 million dollars to build a Jewish chapel at the Naval Academy without a word of protest from any of them. Catholic kids in New York City public schools cannot have a crèche in their classroom but Jewish kids can have a menorah (all to the approval of the ADL), and now a U.S. military building on the grounds of the Naval Academy can display a huge Star of David on its exterior without a peep from any of the church-and-state watchdog groups. Moreover, since 1845 the Naval Academy has had a non-sectarian prayer said before lunch, but the ADL

and the ACLU now want it censored; the ADL has even written to the Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate calling the practice 'deeply troubling.'

"In other words, prayer rugs can be purchased with federal funds to accommodate suspected Muslim terrorists in Guantanamo Bay, and Jewish chapels can be built with federal monies, but Christian kids can't sing 'Silent Night' in the classroom. Got it everyone?"

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE NEEDED IN PLEDGE CASE

Catholic League president William Donohue issued the following call to action to California public school teachers:

"Now that U.S. District Judge Lawrence Karlton has said he would sign a restraining order banning the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in some California school districts, the time has come for patriotic teachers in those schools to practice civil disobedience. They need to lead their students in the Pledge, bellowing the dreaded words 'under God.' But nothing should be done until the television cameras are in place—the sight of teachers being handcuffed by the police would be an invaluable teaching moment.

"Settling this issue in court is fine, but it is inadequate: it's time to shock the conscience of the nation by bringing this matter directly into their living rooms."

L.A. RADIO HOST: CORRUPT CHURCH MOLESTS KIDS

Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League, wrote to the KABC (Los Angeles) program director today about a bigoted comment made on September 10 by radio talk-show host Kim Serafin

The following is the text of Donohue's letter to Burch:

On Saturday, September 10, at the conclusion of her show, Kim Serafin discussed the victims of Hurricane Katrina. She told listeners "a sort of funny story" regarding Catholic Charities. Serafin said that when she was told by someone that he was going to make a donation to Catholic Charities, she answered: "Why? The Catholic Church is totally corrupt and molests young boys, you know."

This is not humor—it is slander. As such, it is deserving of the same kinds of punitive sanctions that have been visited upon other purveyors of hate speech.

Please be advised that unless justice is swiftly forthcoming, I will take this matter to another level.

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