

KEN BLACKWELL, OHIO POL, OWED APOLOGY

Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell, the Republican candidate for governor, has recently been labeled anti-Catholic by the Ohio Democratic Catholic Caucus. The charge stems from the fact that Blackwell is co-authoring a book, *Rebuilding America*, with Jerry Corsi, the co-author of a book with John O'Neill about the swift boat veterans. Corsi once made anti-Catholic jokes on the Internet, and later apologized for doing so. This was sufficient grounds for the Catholic Democratic group to say, "The message from Blackwell to Ohio Catholics is clear. Mainstream and faithful Catholics need not apply."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue took issue with this today:

"Follow the logic: Ken Blackwell, who holds the same positions as the Catholic Church on abortion and school vouchers, and who was vice president and a professor at a Catholic university (his alma mater, Xavier University), is being branded anti-Catholic by an organization which rejects the Catholic Church's stance on abortion and school vouchers, simply because he is co-authoring a book with someone who once made anti-Catholic quips for which he has long apologized.

"Charging a public official with bigotry is serious business, and nothing that Ken Blackwell has ever said or done is anti-Catholic. Indeed, his record is one of championing Catholic causes: he has been honored for his pro-life work by the Knights of Columbus, and was given an award last year by the Catholic Inner-City School Education Fund. That is why he deserves an immediate apology from those who have slandered him."

HILLARY'S DEMAGOGIC RESPONSE TO VOUCHERS

According to *Newsday*, Senator Hillary Clinton told Bronx activists yesterday that she was opposed to school vouchers because it may lead to parents wanting to send their children to the "Church of the White Supremacist" or the "School of the Jihad." Here's what Catholic League president Bill Donohue said in response:

"According to Senator Clinton's logic, if school vouchers are given to parents who want to send their kids to Catholic schools (or Jewish yeshivas), the next thing you know the racists and terrorists will want to build a school so they can cash in as well. No wonder the *Newsday* story described the audience as 'somewhat puzzled.' Too bad they didn't denounce her on the spot for fear mongering, hypocrisy and bigotry.

"If Clinton had any courage, she would tell Catholics to their face that she will never do anything to help them send their kids to parochial schools. Ditto for poor African-American parents, most of whom are Protestant: she should tell them to their face that she will never assist them in their quest to escape urban public schools, even though she never once considered sending her daughter Chelsea to a public school in Washington, D.C.

"Ironically, Senator Clinton supports tuition tax credits to help make college tuition more affordable. So where is WSU—White Supremacist University? And where is JU—Jihad University? The reason why she supports public monies being spent for higher education and not at the elementary and secondary levels is obvious: Catholic schools may have a more

dramatic effect molding kids than colleges would, and that's not something this 'pro-choice' abortion-rights enthusiast can stomach.

"Clinton doesn't have the courage to say that school vouchers may help schools run by the Nation of Islam—that might offend blacks. How much safer it is to concoct a story about white racists. Interestingly, she doesn't mind feeding the fear that Abdul may want to set up a School of Jihad. Hope Muslims take note."

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW: CATHOLICISM AND FREE SPEECH MAKE IT JUMPY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue issued the following remarks today:

"Today I e-mailed Colin McNickle, the editorial page editor of the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, requesting permission to reprint an article by Don Collins of February 10, and a reply by Bob Lockwood of February 14 (when he asked for more info about the Catholic League, I directed him to our website and mentioned that Lockwood was a member of the board of directors of the Catholic League); the two columns, I said, would appear in the April edition of our monthly journal, *Catalyst*. Then came his reply: 'Permission denied.'

"Permission denied? Why? Because Lockwood ripped apart Collins' anti-Catholic rant? (Collins is on the board of FAIR, an anti-immigrant and notoriously anti-Catholic group.) Here are some examples of what Collins wrote: U.S. policy is

being shaped by 'Rome and these bishops'; 'We now have five male Catholic justices on the U.S. Supreme Court,' thus creating an unseemly 'concentration of power'; 'Samuel Alito has been confirmed and installed, and this behind-the-scenes plan [of the Catholic Church] should get much of the credit'; the bishops are 'infiltrating and manipulating the American democratic process at national, state and local levels'; and the bishops have 'taken over the Republican Party.' Has anyone told Howard Dean?

"McNickle did not like it when Lockwood said he should be 'ashamed' of himself for publishing the Collins piece, and said so on February 19. Indeed, the man who denied me permission to reprint the Collins article had the nerve to say that he would never be ashamed to print 'points of view contrary to the conventional wisdom,' because to do so would mean 'the beginning of the end of a robust free press.'

"We now know what makes the *Tribune Review* jumpy—Catholicism and free speech. Unfortunately for them, I have a big mouth, and they can't censor that." [Contact McNickle at cmcnickle@tribweb.com]

CARTOON UPSETS UNIV. OF ILLINOIS OFFICIALS

The February 9 edition of the *Daily Illini*, the student newspaper at the University of Illinois, republished cartoons that made fun of Muhammad. Those responsible for doing so, the editor in chief and the opinions page editor, have now been suspended.

The response of school officials to this incident is the

subject of Catholic League president Bill Donohue's news release:

"Richard Herman, the chancellor of the University of Illinois, is critical of the decision to reprint the anti-Muhammad cartoons. He maintains that a discussion about the controversial Danish cartoons could have taken place without republishing them. He's right, but that is not the way the university treats anti-Catholic fare on campus.

"In March 1997, the same Urbana-Champaign campus displayed drawings by Michele Blondel that showed red glass vaginas hanging inside European Roman Catholic cathedrals; two of them had red glass holy water cruets with crosses on them. I wrote a letter to the president registering my objections, and received a reply from the chancellor, Michael Aiken.

"Aiken said he regretted that the art 'disappointed' me (flat beers disappoint me, not lousy art). He instructed, 'Most viewers find Blondel's art to be quite subtle as it invites the viewer to contemplate and reflect on topics as diverse as the body, the church, and architectural and religious symbolism.' Stupid me—I thought it was Catholic-bashing porn. His closer was precious: 'The University believes that true intellectual discourse extends not only to written communication but also to the visual.' Except when Muslims get angry.

"So what's changed? Do Catholics have to call for beheadings to get respect? How else to explain the condescending response I got, and the sympathetic response afforded Muslims? Similarly, nobody was disciplined for offending Catholics, but two kids have been suspended for offending Muslims!"

BIGOTRY MARKS AD ON CATHOLIC HOSPITALS

The Fairness Foundation, an Indiana-based non-profit, is waging a TV and radio ad campaign in Chicago and Washington, D.C. against Catholic hospitals. The foundation, which was founded to represent the interests of the medically uninsured, is led by J. Patrick Rooney, a businessman and philanthropist who operates a private health company; the foundation is critical of the billing practices of non-profit hospitals.

The ad comes at a time when Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan is supporting legislation that would mandate non-profit hospitals to tighten their billing and collection procedures. She also wants to force these institutions to contribute more to charities, lest they risk their tax-exempt status.

The ad says how regrettable it is that the Attorney General had to get involved, “but as with other immoral actions,” it concludes, “apparently the church needs to be forced by lawyers to do the right thing, to be moral. How sad.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

“What is really sad is that an organization which stands to benefit by punishing not-for-profit hospitals is running anti-Catholic ads in the name of helping the uninsured. And it’s not just this one ad that gives away the anti-Catholic bigotry of this group: wherethemoneygoes.com is another Fairness Foundation project, and it is strewn with bigotry.

“For example, the website lambastes Wheaton Franciscan Services for making allegedly exorbitant profits. ‘Maybe the Church should ask them to help the schools, or pay for the high priced lawyers who defend accused priests in the sex scandals....’ It even questions whether there are too many

Catholics on the Supreme Court.

“Rooney has a stellar reputation for helping the Catholic poor. That is why he should pull these bigoted ads immediately. Either that or rename his foundation.”

CATHOLIC BASHING IN COLORADO: PANDORA’S BOX OPENS FOR TEACHERS

The Colorado legislature has been considering bills that would loosen or lift the statutes of limitations for child sexual abuse lawsuits. Because the legislation was to apply only to private institutions—and was specifically designed to affect the Catholic schools, but not public schools—Catholic League president William Donohue e-mailed the entire legislature on February 1 asking that the bills blanket all institutions equally. Amendments that would do just that are now being considered. Donohue commented on the latest development today:

“The whole nation is getting quite a lesson in the politics of child sexual abuse as it is being played out in Colorado. The Catholic Church, led by Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput, does not oppose legislation that would amend the statutes of limitations for all institutions, public as well as private. But guess who’s balking? The Colorado education establishment. The Colorado Association of School Boards and the Colorado Association of School Executives are still ‘studying’ the bills, while the Colorado Education Association (CEA) is speaking out against them. It looks like the Catholic-bashing crusade has opened Pandora’s box for

Colorado's teachers: they're in a lose-lose situation.

"The CEA has quite a record dealing with child abusers. Indeed, in 1997 it spent a small fortune trying to intimidate the parents of children who brought suit against an alleged child molester: the CEA launched a libel suit. According to one media account, the CEA pursued the accusers 'as if they were all conspirators in a right-wing plot to overthrow the public education system rather than concerned, fearful parents....'

"Doing the CEA's bidding is Rep. Terrance Carroll. Yesterday, he said that the Catholic Church's insistence that the public schools should be covered by all legislation 'thoroughly disgusts me.' That's funny, the day before he said that amending the bills to include the public schools was done so he could 'call the Catholic Church's bluff.' Looks like he lost."

HOLLYWOOD AND ACLU VS. CATHOLICISM

One of the stories on tonight's episode of "Boston Legal" concerns a teenage girl who is raped, becomes pregnant and then wants to sue a Catholic hospital for denying her emergency contraception. Catholic League president Bill Donohue took note of this show today:

"If there is one Hollywood producer who has shown himself to be positively obsessed with Catholicism, it is David E. Kelley. His treatment of Catholicism on 'Ally McBeal,' 'Picket Fences,' 'Chicago Hope,' 'Snoops,' 'The Practice' and 'Boston Legal' is so well known that we have a big fat file on

him. This time Kelley has decided to hook up with the equally anti-Catholic folks at the ACLU: the Pennsylvania affiliate is providing a viewing guide that can facilitate discussions at a 'Boston Legal Viewing Party' (courtesy of RaisingHerVoice.org, a project of the state affiliate).

"Tonight's plot is the work of Corinne Brinkerhoff. The 26-year-old started as an intern for Kelley, then became his personal assistant, then was promoted to development manager and now has been hired as a script writer. It is said she 'won over Kelley and the show's writing staff on her first attempt,' which, of course, is entirely believable: the show puts a lousy face on the Catholic Church. What's not to like?

"The Pro-Life Office of the Bishops Conference, by the way, holds that 'A woman who has been raped should be able to defend herself from a potential conception and receive treatment to suppress ovulation and incapacitate sperm. If conception has occurred, however, a Catholic hospital will not dispense drugs to interfere with implantation of a newly conceived human embryo.' But don't look for the party animals at a 'Boston Legal Viewing Party' to be instructed in such nuances.

"Whoever thought that Hollywood and the ACLU would unite to present the Catholic Church with a Valentine's Day gift? And all along I thought these guys didn't like to party—I just thought they were always out of their minds."

NY STATE SEN. KLEIN TO HIKE

PENALTIES ON VANDALS

Today, New York State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein will introduce legislation that will sharply increase the penalties for vandalizing a house of worship. The bill also covers the destruction or theft of religious symbols that occur on such grounds.

Catholic League president William Donohue supports the legislation and offered the following words of support today:

“Every year, nativity scenes, menorahs and other religious symbols are ransacked, and too often the offenders are treated as if they vandalized an ice cream parlor. Fortunately, State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein wants to increase the penalties associated with the trashing of churches, synagogues, mosques and other houses of worship. His bill is one that every lawmaker in Albany should support, and we look forward to its speedy implementation.

“The Catholic League is proud of what Senator Klein is doing, and we ask all Catholics to rally behind him. The time has come to clamp down on vandals who seek to destroy our First Amendment right to worship as we see fit.”

FEAR GUIDES MEDIA RESPONSE TO CARTOONS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the controversy over the Danish cartoons that lampoon Muhammad:

“The decision of most mainstream media outlets not to reprint

or show the controversial cartoons is the right one: the Catholic League sides with the U.S., Britain and the Vatican in denouncing the inflammatory cartoons. Regrettably, the decision by the media not to offend Muslims is motivated by fear, not ethics. Worse than this by far is the violent reaction, and calls for violence, that have sprung up all over the Muslim world. This is pure barbarism.

“Whenever the Catholic League criticizes a work of art, cartoon, movie or TV show, we are told that (a) we’re the intolerant ones (b) what is offensive is in the eye of the beholder (c) art is supposed to make people uncomfortable (d) no one can criticize anything until they have seen it (e) protests have a ‘chilling effect’ on free speech (f) it’s not real anyway, and (g) get over it. So why have Muslims been spared this lecture? Because the extremists in their ranks—and they are not a tiny minority—have shown they may respond with beheadings.

“Why, according to the *Washington Post*, did European newspapers reprint the cartoons? It was ‘not their love of freedom but their insensitivity—or hostility—to the growing diversity of their own societies.’ The *Los Angeles Times* says it won’t reprint ‘these insensitive images.’ The *Miami Herald* boasts that it ‘must take great care not to offend.’ The *New York Times* says it is wrong to publish ‘gratuitous assaults on religious symbols.’ The *San Francisco Chronicle* says ‘insulting or hurting certain groups’ is wrong. Both CBS and NBC say it isn’t necessary to show the cartoons in order to report on them. CNN even went so far as to say that it ‘has chosen not to show the cartoons out of respect for Islam.’ Now if Catholicism were treated with such sensitivity and respect, we would have to shut down the Catholic League.

“Ethics, not fear, should guide the media. As for Muslims offended by the cartoons, they should learn what a civilized response entails.”

RUTH BADER GINSBURG'S INTOLERANT STREAK

The February edition of the Jewish bimonthly magazine, *Moment*, carries an excerpt from a book by Abigail Pogrebin, *Stars of David*; the book details conversations Pogrebin had with 62 famous Jews. The excerpt features Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, one of Pogrebin's subjects. What Ginsburg had to say about Christianity was noted by Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

"In the January 30 edition of the Connecticut *Jewish Ledger*, Abigail Pogrebin was asked which Jewish persons have left a 'profound impression' on her. She answered, 'I will never forget Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg saying, 'Don't put a [Christmas] wreath on this door.' Indeed, Ginsburg admits to putting a gold mezuzah on her office door's frame as a way of saying, 'This is my space, and please don't put a wreath on this door.' To observant Jews, the mezuzah reminds them of their connection to God. To Ginsburg, who is not observant, it is a symbol of protest.

"Ginsburg used to attend the annual Red Mass, a Catholic Mass that honors lawyers, but then she had a bad experience: 'I went one year and I will never go again, because this sermon was outrageously anti-abortion.' So much for respect for diversity. Just imagine how it would go down in the Jewish community if a Catholic Supreme Court Justice were to say that he would never again attend a particular Jewish event because he had to endure a talk that was 'outrageously pro-abortion.'

"In 1995, the Supreme Court ruled, 7-2, that it was constitutional to put a cross outside Ohio's state capitol

building. The ruling said that the park was a public forum open to all expression, and could not therefore exclude a Christian symbol. Ginsburg dissented, explaining to Poguebin, that 'a Jewish child who is passing by the Capitol' would surmise that 'this is a Christian country,' thus provoking the conclusion that 'There's something wrong with me.' Ginsburg had nothing to say about the fact that a menorah had been allowed on the same grounds prior to the ruling.

"What Ginsburg has said should give all Christians pause, especially Catholics. Her intolerance for our teachings and traditions is striking."