

CALL FOR CENSURING BETTENCOURT STANDS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a request to withdraw his call for censuring New Hampshire House Majority Leader David J. Bettencourt; the request was made by Rep. Sean Cox. Because of a policy dispute, Bettencourt called Manchester Bishop John B. McCormack a “pedophile pimp who should have been led away from the State House in handcuffs with a raincoat over his head.”

Donohue responds to Cox as follows:

Rep. Bettencourt issued a long-winded letter to Bishop McCormack without ever apologizing for his incivility. He has thus dug himself in deeper. Now we have his Republican colleagues e-mailing us and calling on his behalf. They have a right to come to bat for their friend, but Rep. Cox has absolutely no moral grounds to stand on when he asks us to withdraw our call for censuring the House Majority Leader.

Bettencourt could have simply issued an apology, and the entire matter would have been behind him. But instead he chose to stick to his guns. Such arrogance is appalling. He needs to be censured now more than ever. If New Hampshire lawmakers tolerate

CENSURE BETTENCOURT, N.H.

LAWMAKER

New Hampshire House Majority Leader David J. Bettencourt is not backing away from his attack on Manchester Bishop John B. McCormack. After the bishop joined an interfaith rally last week protesting budget cuts and efforts to roll back labor union rights, Bettencourt, a Republican, called McCormack a “pedophile pimp who should have been led away from the State House in handcuffs with a raincoat over his head.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addressed this issue today:

As president of the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization, I am contacting every member of the New Hampshire House calling for a Resolution of Censure. House Majority Leader David J. Bettencourt has had plenty of time to retract his vicious assault on Manchester Bishop John B. McCormack and refuses to do so. Therefore, it is only fitting that he be censured for his invective.

This kind of incivility has no legitimate role to play in public life. It is not just Catholics who feel bruised, it’s Americans of every faith and political persuasion. Moreover, the insult extends way beyond the borders of New Hampshire.

NO ATTEMPT TO KILL “THE BORGHIAS”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue looks at the Catholic reaction to Showtime’s “The Borgias,” which begins this weekend:

The Kennedy clan got bent out of shape over the History

Channel's scheduled miniseries, "The Kennedys," and succeeded in getting it killed, even though \$25 million had been sunk into the project; it will air on the ReelzChannel this Sunday. Just a few weeks ago, the Israeli Mission and the American Jewish Committee didn't like a movie that paints Israel in a negative light, "Miral," and attempted to persuade the U.N. not to host a screening of the controversial film. But no one from the Vatican, or any Catholic entity, tried to manipulate Showtime.

What accounts for the different reaction? For one thing, Catholics are used to being slammed by Hollywood, so "The Borgias" hardly shakes them. But Caroline Kennedy, Maria Shriver, Ted Sorensen, et al. are not used to seeing Jack Kennedy sullied on the screen, and Jews are not accustomed to being dumped on either (it must be noted that the filmmaker behind "Miral," Julian Schnabel, is himself Jewish, a person some have labeled a "self-hating Jew").

What is most newsworthy about this issue, at least from the perspective of the Catholic League, is the passive reaction to those who tried to muscle their way in and stop "The Kennedys" and "Miral." If it were the reverse—if Catholic potentates or pressure groups sought to interfere with the showing of a film they objected to, while others took in stride movies they found offensive—it is a sure bet cries of censorship would be heard everywhere.

In other words, this is just one more reason why the Catholic League exists. Not until we achieve a level playing field will we be satisfied.