

FUNDING BIGOTRY

Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC) is anti-Catholic, pro-abortion letterhead (it has no members) led by Frances Kissling. Were it not for some very rich foundations, they wouldn't exist. While it is difficult to get a complete record of its funding sources, new research by Francis J. Butler, president of Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities, has revealed some interesting information.

The big money comes from the following foundations: Ford, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur, Rockefeller, Public Welfare, William and Flora Hewlett, David and Lucile Packard and Buffet. The Ford and Packard Foundations each contributed \$1.3 million in 1996 alone.

Not surprisingly, Butler also found that not one foundation that gives grants to CFFC is in any way connected with philanthropic giving to religious institutions. It is not hard to conclude that those who fund Kissling have no use for the Catholic Church.

HATE MAIL

One of the most viciously anti-Catholic pieces of mail ever received at the Catholic League was recently addressed to William Donohue. Obviously angered over our protest of "Yo Mama's Last Supper," the offender sent an obscene note to Donohue. On the other side of the self-made "postcard" was a drawing of a man performing oral sex on Jesus Christ nailed to the cross; vulgar inscriptions adorned the drawing.

Sick as this is, it has absolutely no effect on our

willingness to continue to fight for the Church. If anything, it strengthens our resolve.

CONTROVERSY MOUNTS OVER HEALTH BILL

Things are heating up in New York State regarding a health bill.

In the last *Catalyst*, we commented on how the New York State legislature was trying to pass a bill that would require all employers to provide contraceptive health insurance coverage for its employees. Now the bishops have entered the fray, voicing opposition to the bill unless it allows for a religious conscience protection clause.

The New York State Senate has no problem with offering this religious exemption, but the Assembly does. In the last month, things got really hot when Edward Cardinal Egan visited Albany to lobby against the bill as it stands now.

The Catholic League, of course, takes the side of the bishops. “Any bill which forces religious organizations to relinquish their doctrinal prerogatives and institutional autonomy is an expression of intolerance,” we said. Then there is the issue of diversity. “The diversity that marks our nation’s religious institutions is one of our most treasured assets,” we emphasized, “and that is why attempts to impose a secular agenda—via the heavy hand of the state—is strikingly un-American.”

What we found troubling was the opposition to the Catholic call for a religious exemption that came from other religions.

Members of the clergy from the United Church of Christ, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reform Jewish communities proclaimed it “a matter of justice for women” that the clause is stricken.

This is a sad commentary on these members of the clergy. What this shows is that some men and women of the cloth are more driven by an ideological commitment to the politics of feminism than they are to any real fidelity to the principle of separation of church and state. No wonder mainline Protestant denominations, and the Reform branch of Judaism, are in decline: they’ve all assimilated to the culture.

A RABBI LOOKS AT PIUS’ CRITICS

David G. Dalin is a rabbi and historian with impeccable credentials. He recently reviewed several books on Pope Pius XII, both pro and con, for *The Weekly Standard*. His review essay has attracted a lot of attention, and rightly so: Dalin’s analysis of the controversial role Pius XII played during the Holocaust is itself a worthy contribution to the subject.

“A true account of Pius XII would arrive,” Dalin says, “at exactly the opposite to [John] Cornwell’s conclusion: Pius XII was not Hitler’s pope, but the closest Jews had come to having a papal supporter—and at the moment when it mattered most.” Indeed, in a statement made after his article appeared, Dalin proposed that Pope Pius XII be proclaimed “Righteous Among the Nations,” the highest award that Israel confers on those who assisted Jews during World War II.

We urge Catholic League members to obtain a copy of this important article and distribute it far and wide. They can do so by sending a check for \$3.95 (includes shipping and handling) to Attn: Back Issues, *Weekly Standard*, 1150 17th Street, NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. The article, "Pope Pius XII and the Jews," appeared in the February 26 edition of the magazine.

CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

On April 22, Nassau Community College will open its Center for Catholic Studies. The community college, which is located in Garden City, Long Island, is one of over 50 colleges and universities that are part of the State University of New York system of higher education. The newly appointed director is Dr. Joseph Varacalli, a prominent sociologist and active Catholic League member.

The opening day festivities, which start at 1:30 pm at the College Center Building, are open to the public. Dr. William Donohue will give the keynote address. His topic is, "Religious Discrimination as a Social Problem." Also speaking are Dr. Candace de Russy and Dr. Paul Vitz. Father Robert Batule, of Corpus Christi Church in Mineola, will act as moderator of this panel.

The purpose of the Center for Catholic Studies is to provide a clear understanding of Catholic social thought as it relates to academic scholarship and the mission of higher education. Based on the principles of multiculturalism, the Center is unique in that it is housed on the campus of a secular institution.

The Catholic League extends its most sincere congratulations

to Dr. Varacalli for pioneering this important effort. We hope it serves as a model for other such centers on campuses throughout the nation.

BUSH INVITE TO IAN PAISLEY OFFENDS CATHOLICS

On March 16, President George W. Bush held a St. Patrick's Day reception for Irish-American leaders. He also invited leading members from the various parties in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Among the attendees was Ian Paisley, the Northern Ireland activist known mostly for his hatred of the Catholic Church.

William Donohue was invited to attend the reception but turned down the offer due to a scheduling conflict. That was before he learned of the invitation to Paisley. Once this was known, he released the following statement to the press:

"There is no bigger Catholic basher in all the world than Ian Paisley. And this is the guy deemed worthy of attending a St. Patrick's Day reception in the White House.

"We would have no problem with anyone from the Bush administration discussing the peace accords in Northern Ireland with Ian Paisley, useless though the exercise would be. But to invite this hate-monger to a reception that honors a Catholic saint is on the order of inviting Yasser Arafat to a Hanukkah party. It's insulting.

"It is not clear why this invitation was extended. After all, Paisley's only following in the U.S. is limited to the folks at Bob Jones University. Be that as it may, it is not just

Irish Catholics who are offended by this move, it is Catholics of all ethnic stocks.”

Several media outlets picked up this news release. As we emphasized, it was the timing and the nature of the occasion that troubled us more than anything. We were also troubled by the comment from the Bush administration that Paisley’s presence was a tribute to the “inclusivity” of the event. Why it makes sense to include a notorious anti-Catholic bigot at an event that celebrates a Catholic saint is something we don’t understand.

In the end, Paisley refused to meet with Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and other leaders from the Republic of Ireland. But this didn’t stop Ahern from saying it was “a positive step” for Paisley to be there. How did not explain how he reached this conclusion.

CRITIC OR BIGOT?

The Catholic Church should not be immune from criticism anymore than any other institution. But neither should it be the object of bigotry. The question is, what is the difference between criticism and bigotry?

Criticism of the Church is focused; bigotry is not. A critic focuses on some aspect of the Church, pointing out its shortcomings. A bigot seizes on shortcomings to make a larger point: he wants a wholesale transformation of the Church, tailored to meet his politics. That is why we don’t regard Jason Berry to be a critic of the Church.

For many years now, Berry has written critically of the way the Church has mishandled the problem of priest pedophilia.

There is much room for criticism here and we don't wish for a minute to minimize the problem. But when Berry veers off into a tirade against the Church, e.g., "a clerical culture fraught with hypocrisy and a calcified power structure, from the pope down," we know we're dealing with something that goes beyond criticism.

Shame on the *Chicago Tribune Magazine* for extending to Berry this opportunity to bash the Church. His article, "A Dark Journey of the Soul," was published on February 11.

RAGING RABBI

Rabbi Mordechai Friedman is a raging rabbi from New York who hates lots of people. Lately he has taken aim at the pope and the Catholic League. He spews his venom on public access cable TV because that's the only media outlet available to him.

Rabbi Friedman has called the pope "a dumb Pollock" and a "stinking old cocker." He has branded the Catholic League "Nazis" and has referred to William Donohue in terms we'd rather not repeat in print.

As is often the case with extremists, Rabbi Friedman also despises those Jews with whom he disagrees, which is most of them. He once called the murder of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin "an act of the Almighty" and more recently said there is cause to "assassinate" the "evil" Senator Joseph Lieberman.

What drove the raging rabbi to attack Donohue again (he did so on March 10) was a letter Donohue sent to him last fall. Here's what Donohue wrote: "Unlike most rabbis—and unlike most Jews in general—you are a man full of hate. Thus you are a

pariah in your own ranks and accordingly do not endanger good relations between Catholics and Jews.” Donohue closed by saying, “Just thought you’d like to know my reaction.”

CLASSIC NON SEQUITUR

The February 18 edition of the CBS show, “60 Minutes,” did a segment on the extent to which the De Beers company controls the diamond industry throughout the world. Interviewed for this spot was James Twitchell of the University of Florida. When asked if there was ever a time in history when one institution exercised this much control, he replied, “Holy Roman Catholic Church, which was selling a different kind of product—salvation, generically.”

What was going through Twitchell’s head is anyone’s guess. But “60 Minutes,” which allows most of its footage to wind up on the cutting room floor, found it necessary to air this classic non sequitur. Which makes us wonder. That is why we wrote a letter of protest to Don Hewitt, the program’s executive producer.

APOLOGY NOTED

John Gray from East Quogue, Long Island, was listening to WRCN-FM on March 1 at about 6:45 am when he heard “Chaz and AJ” do a bit about phone sex lines and Catholic priests. They mocked celibacy and took several shots at priests, in general. Angered, Gray called Bishop James McCarthy and former

Ambassador Frank Ruddy. They said call the Catholic League. He did.

But before we could squeeze the manager of the station, Gray had already scored: he got the general manager to apologize. We note the apology and congratulate Gray for his persistence.