

League Pressure Secures Hate Crime Conviction

In an historic move, the Catholic League succeeded in pressing for a hate crime prosecution and conviction of a person charged with violating the rights of Catholics. Never before in the history of New England had someone been found guilty of violating the rights of Catholics under a hate crime statute.

The conviction stems from an incident on June 10 at St. Mary's Church in Lawrence, Massachusetts. It was on that day that David Cedeno and another man burst into the church in the middle of Mass with hoods over their heads and stole two chalices and a communion paten, all of which contained the Blessed Sacrament. Parishioners chased the men down the street and managed to get the attention of the police, who promptly made the arrest. Cedeno was charged with larceny and disturbing an assembly of worship, but no civil rights charges were lodged against him.

When the Massachusetts chapter of the Catholic League learned of the charges, it issued a public statement calling for prosecution under the civil rights law. Essex County District Attorney Kevin Burke responded to the League's plea by seeking a grand jury indictment against Cedeno for constitutional rights violations. Burke was successful but Cedeno's attorneys petitioned to have the constitutional charges dismissed. However, Essex County Superior Court Judge Joseph Grasso denied the defense motion.

Following his guilty plea, Cedeno, despite having no previous criminal record, was sentenced to 3 to 5 years incarceration in state prison. Operations Director Joe Doyle congratulated District Attorney Burke and called the sentence "an appropriate penalty, and a strong signal to those who would contemplate attacking a house of worship." It was significant

that a letter from Massachusetts Chapter President Dan Flatly was entered into a victim impact statement. The letter, which described Cedeno's offense as an "outrageous and unprecedented crime," was reviewed by the court prior to sentencing.

The Catholic League has no position on the merits of hate crime legislation. But if it is legal to use this law against those who have trashed the rights of virtually every other segment of society, then surely the Catholic League will not sit back and watch the rights of its people be abused without availing itself of the same remedy.

League Protest of Public TV Show Pays Off

On October 30, WNYC-TV, New York City's public TV station, carried a program called "Inversion of Solitude." It advertised the show as "An irreverent video satire based on the life of Saint Therese de Lisieux, whose seemingly uneventful life became the subject of a global media campaign." When the Catholic League learned of the show (through one of its diligent members), it registered its outrage with Neal Hecker of WNYC and with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

In a letter addressed to Hecker and Giuliani, the League raised the following question: "Why is the City of New York using taxpayer dollars to satirize a figure that many Catholics revere?" The letter said that if the League did not hear from either WNYC or from Mayor Giuliani before October 28, it would go public with its criticisms. The League had this to say:

“Mayor Giuliani has often spoken of his commitment to fairness and of his long-standing opposition to bigotry. Yet he allows public monies to be spent underwriting programs like ‘Inversion of Solitude.’ It is not likely that he would allow ‘an irreverent satire’ about Jews or African Americans, and it is therefore perplexing to note that he tolerates this kind of production when it is aimed at Catholics. This is particularly disconcerting because Mr. Giuliani has frequently proclaimed his proud status as a Roman Catholic. Given that 43 percent of New York is Catholic, Mr. Giuliani’s inaction on this issue may very well come back to haunt him the next time he runs for elected office.”

On October 25, Roxanne Robinson of **WNYC** called the League to say that, as a result of our objections, a panel was formed to review the film. The panel determined that there were portions of the program that might well be seen as offensive by Catholics. Therefore, a few minutes of the show were edited out for TV (it had previously been shown in its entirety at the New York Film Festival and at Lincoln Center; predictably, it had received a favorable review in the *New York Times*).

When the show aired it stated that it was edited for TV. While the League is pleased that city officials acted responsibly, it takes no comfort in knowing that the film would have been shown in its entirety had it not been for the League’s objections.

The League Made Its Mark In 1994

As the year comes to a close, we at the Catholic League are

struck by two outstanding sentiments: gratitude and optimism. We are very grateful for the generous support that our members have given us and we are quite optimistic about the future of the Catholic League. All indicators are positive.

The level of support that we have garnered is impressive. We are especially pleased that so many cardinals, bishops, priests and religious have responded to our work with enthusiasm. The munificence of our own Catholic League members is incredible, and this is especially obvious when we measure donations from appeals. Also encouraging is the renewed interest that members have in remembering the League when making bequests. And as the picture indicates, the number of new members that we have gotten over the past year and a half – via our direct mail campaign – is astounding. According to Brian Walsh of Boyce Creative Services (our direct mail outfit), “in terms of gifts and support received, the League has more than doubled the national average for the Catholic market.”

Getting new members and getting money to balance the books is important, but it is not enough. No one wants to give a dime to organizations that do nothing but “manage the office.” The world is full of bureaucrats, those slumbering administrators who are always busy yet never seem to accomplish anything, and that is why it is such a relief that no one – not even our biggest critic – has ever tried to tag us as being bureaucratic. That’s a stigma we pledge never to earn.

Sociologically, it is easy to understand why organizational sclerosis occurs. Virtually all voluntary organizations are founded by very committed men and women. But what happens over time is that many on the staff tend to get so caught up with the means, with the sheer volume of processing, that they lose sight of the ends. As a result, the reasons why the association was established in the first place become distant and neglected. It is distressing, even if it is understandable, to see how many organizations succumb to this

kind of stasis.

So how do we avoid organizational paralysis? Partly by being conscious of what happens to other organizations. What helps, too, is that every employee of the Catholic League is excited about what we do; seeing evidence that our work is having a salutary effect contributes to the level of excitement. The growth of Catholic League chapters, like those that have recently been established in San Diego and El Paso, also keeps us on our toes.

If there is one reason, above all others, why the Catholic League remains fresh, it is due to its members. To put it bluntly, they just won't leave us alone. We get reports about Catholic-bashing from places we never knew even existed. To that extent, we have thousands of mini-chapters all over the place, watchdog agents who track anti-Catholicism and notify us accordingly. Every incident that bears merit is entered into a log and is then presented to the press and others when necessary. The more egregious the incident, of course, the more likely we are to act on it.

In 1995, the Catholic League will be even more vocal and more visible than in 1994. We have an array of different venues planned for our public ad campaigns and we have a variety of different themes that we will address. Our chapters will grow, and with it our presence. We will continue to do battle in the courts but we will also do battle in the culture. Changing the way people think about Catholics and the Catholic Church is inextricably tied to the right of the Church to participate fully in American life, and that is why the role of culture will never be ignored by the Catholic League.

But enough of this shop talk. Merry Christmas!

Anti-Catholicism In The Media

by Robert P. Lockwood

It is true, though not always acknowledged, that there is an anti-Catholic bias in the press and in the media in general. Many reporters perceive a culture that is overwhelmingly secular and rational. Furthermore, they see secularism and rationality as equated with progress: human freedom, individuality, personal liberation from restrictive codes of morality and the like. Indeed, they embrace secularism as a way of life. For example, they view the role of religion in contemporary culture much as an Eastern European apparatchik a decade ago: a benighted, dangerous world view that should be kept off the streets, and confined to the sacristy.

These are the attitudes, certainly in general, that the press and media bring to their collective coverage of the Catholic Church. Richard Harwood, former ombudsman for the *Washington Post*, readily acknowledged it: "there is no question whatever that these media are secular institutions. There is no question that secular thought is the preferred body of thought within the media."

Harwood sees this media secularism as merely reflecting the culture of the times and leading to a banal objectivity which tends to misunderstand Catholicism rather than openly oppose it. I see the results as more fundamental: the view of the media of the Catholic Church strongly and purposefully creates a negative caricature of the Church in American society; that the Church's ability to impact on the culture is controlled and, in effect, censored by the press through an unwillingness to allow the Church's views even a hearing in the public conversation; and, finally, that anti-Catholicism rooted in this secularism is utilized as a de facto tool of argument and presentation in the press, both in news coverage and opinion-making. Anti-Catholicism, like institutionalized racism, is

normative in the press – acceptable, useful, and understood to be the product of an enlightened mind, rather than a nativist bigot. Strong words are not without strong dissent. Peter Steinfelds, one of the few religion editors who regularly shows a sensitivity and understanding of the Catholic perspective on issues, denies that there is a normative anti-Catholicism. He believes that mistakes are made and bad conclusions reached simply through ignorance, rather than through a pervasive bigotry. That was also the conclusion of the Freedom Forum's survey, "Bridging the Gap: Religion and the News Media." That study contends that, surely, coverage of religion in general is "often superficial and sometimes wrong," still "a misled public needs to know that journalists harbor no ill-will toward religion." Yet, the facts of the matter cannot lead one to those conclusions. Surely, there is bad reporting on the Catholic Church simply through ignorance, particularly among the great unwashed periodicals outside the New York, Washington, and Los Angeles areas. Often, religion reporters are the cub on the beat – new kids fresh out of journalism school who don't know an Anglican priest from an Orthodox rabbi.

But that is not the pervasive problem. Ignorance in the press over what is being reported on is not bigotry – it's the order of the day. The pervasive problem in the press in regard to the Catholic Church is that the Church is viewed as alien, un-American, oppressive, puritanical, and a contrary and unacceptable public voice in the contemporary culture. The Church's views can be dismissed not on their merits or lack thereof, but simply by their source since the views of the Church are at odds with the prevailing secularism by which the press defines American culture.

In addition, there is a consistent attribution of motives or agenda to the Catholic Church in its teachings so that such teachings are never reported at face value. Again, since the motives are primarily religious, the secular press refuses to

see that as a serious motivation and looks instead for alternatives: greed, the desire to oppress and, of course, power. The assumption is virtually always made that when the Church states its beliefs in the public forum, or makes statements based on its beliefs, the motivating factors are false.

The anti-Catholic tactic of the general secular press in the United States is never to address the actual issue involved, but to invoke negative, nativist images of the Church to discredit the position. In 1990, a clear example of this was presented by David Boldt, senior editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

To briefly review, Boldt attacked the bishops of the United States simply for adopting a strong public voice over abortion. In his feature, Boldt never addressed that position nor attempted to counter it. Instead, he called the Church an "unAmerican" institution and gravely warned "how delicate the balance of Church and State is in regard to the Catholic Church in America."

Over and over again, he dismissed the viewpoint of the Church not by contrary arguments, but simply denying the Church the right to speak on the issue, attacking it with insults and epithets and warning that if the bishops continued to publicly address this issue, there was a danger of "reawakening all the old religious prejudices" against Catholics, "by giving them substance."

This is also an argument consistently used on the editorial pages of the *New York Times*. In effect, the argument is that if the Church refuses to keep its benighted views to itself, it can only expect a bigoted response, and reduction to the second-class status it had in this country prior to the election of John F. Kennedy. It is a curious argument as it blames bigotry on the victims of bigotry. It is like saying, if black Americans simply would avoid moving into white

neighborhoods then they would not have to put up with burning crosses on their lawns.

The image routinely conveyed of the Catholic Church in the news media in the United States has been adequately documented in *Anti-Catholicism in the Media*, published by Our Sunday Visitor. The book contains the results of a study of media coverage of the Catholic Church conducted by the Center for Media and Public Affairs for the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

The study focused on coverage of the Catholic Church by the leading (and dominating) news outlets in American culture: the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time* magazine and the "CBS Evening News." The study focused on news reports, but also on columns, editorials, and op-ed pieces. This is important to keep in mind. When Peter Steinfelds discusses ignorance, he is referring to cub reporters making ignorant factual mistakes in news stories. Where the use of anti-Catholic arguments, tactics, and presumptions most often appears is in commentaries, analysis, features and editorials.

To briefly summarize those results, the study of both news coverage and opinion pieces found that overwhelmingly "the descriptive terms most frequently applied to the Church emphasized its conservative theology, authoritarian forms of control, and anachronistic approach to contemporary society." Church involvement in the public sphere "was always seen as an inappropriate threat to the separation of Church and State"- a threat, by the way, that is almost solely confined in the American press to fundamentalist Muslim terrorists and Catholic bishops. Additionally, and I would underline this, the report concluded that "an institution that was usually described as conservative and authoritarian, was also presented more often than not as irrelevant."

The point is not to argue whether or not, by the culture's definition or even its own definition, the Church is

“conservative” or “authoritarian,” though certainly the presentation is purposely meant to convey a pejorative image.

No. The point is that the goal within the press and the methods employed are not to objectively and fairly present the Church’s position and respond to them; the goal is to dismiss whatever position the Church takes simply based on a negative and biased stereotype of the Church itself. The Church’s views in the public forum are “irrelevant” because the Church itself is “irrelevant.”

The secularization of the American culture has caused this nation to lose its soul. At heart, the anti-Catholicism of the press is the symptom of a major institution of American life that has become totally and completely secularized, so much so that it identifies that secularization with the American culture. This secularized press that is supposed to be the true marketplace of ideas of the republic, has jettisoned an entire approach to the moral, spiritual and political dilemmas we face as a nation. Our nation simply cannot function – cannot address the dire difficulties that plague our streets and threaten our freedoms – if we ban the spiritual from the marketplace of ideas.

For the Church, it is not “harmed” by this anti-Catholicism, no more than, in a historical framework, it was harmed by 45 years under Communist domination in Eastern Europe. A faith that counts time in eternals, is little harmed by the pebbles thrown at it by an immature, bullying press. But, as the Church’s goal is to evangelize the cultures in which it lives, that goal will be effectively blocked in America until the press can be brought to a true understanding of objectivity, and can throw off the shackle of bigotry that still binds it to a narrow, blind, and unthinking secular way of thought.

This article is excerpted from a paper presented by Robert P. Lockwood at the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Convention, September 24, 1994, Corpus Christi, Texas. Mr. Lockwood is

president and CEO of Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., and is a member of the board of directors of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

Newark Archbishop Congratulates League, Encourages Support

Archdiocese of Newark
Most Reverend Theodore E. McCarrick
Archbishop of Newark

Archdiocese of Newark



Dear Dr. Donohue:

I have been speaking to the bishops of New Jersey at our Provincial meeting and encouraging them to support the work of the Catholic League in their own dioceses.

I am very grateful for the encouragement and example which we see in the work of the Catholic League.

For that reason, I am happy to make a personal contribution in the amount of \$1,000 for a life membership in the League.

Please keep me and the bishops of New Jersey alerted to the program of the League and do not be afraid to ask for our cooperation in any of the important concerns in which the League is involved.

With congratulations to you on the courageous and thoughtful positions which you make in the sense of our Church and with kind personal regards, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Theodore E. McCarrick

Most Reverend Theodore E. McCarrick
Archbishop of Newark

League Letter Asks Surgeon General to Place Warning Labels on Condoms

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The following is the text of an open letter dated November 4, 1994 to Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders from the Catholic League:

Dear Dr. Elders:

Throughout the month of November, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is conducting an ad campaign in Washington, D.C. that addresses the issue of condoms. Alongside 50 buses there is a huge ad (over seven feet in length) that calls for warning labels on condoms. The ad reads as follows:

FACTS ABOUT CONDOMS
Some Break. Some Leak. Some Are Damaged.
We Put Warning Labels on Cigarettes.
We Put Warning Labels on Beer.
So Why Not On CONDOMS?

Listed also is the Catholic League's address and phone number.

We make our claim based on scientific research that shows the inutility of condoms in preventing leakage of the HIV virus. Because this research shows that the holes in condoms are roughly 50 times larger than the size of the AIDS virus and because leakage of HIV-sized particles through latex condoms has been detected in fully one-third of the major brands tested, the Catholic League calls on you, the Surgeon General, to authorize the placement of warning labels on every package of condoms sold in the U.S. To do any less is to mislead the public, the biggest losers of which will undoubtedly be adolescents and women.

We look forward to hearing from you about this urgent request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President

FACTS ABOUT CONDOMS

Some Break. Some Leak. Some Are Damaged.

We Put Warning Labels on Cigarettes.
We Put Warning Labels on Beer.
So Why Not On CONDOMS?

Some common sense and a public service message from the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights
1015 First Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(212) 697-1191

The League's latest public service message is a seven foot long poster which was carried on fifty Washington, D.C. buses during the month of November.

NOTE: Dr. Elders' office has since contacted the League and has asked it to provide the data upon which it made its claims. We duly replied.

Long Island Chapter Honors Dr. Viscardi



Dr. Henry Viscardi (center), founder of the National Center for Disabilities Services, is shown accepting an award from William Lindner, president of the Catholic League's Long Island Chapter, while League president Dr. William A Donohue looks on. Dr. Viscardi was honored at an October 21 Award Reception held at the Nassau County Bar Association Building in Mineola, N.Y. (Photo courtesy of Thomas F. Moloney, *The Long Island Catholic*)

Massachusetts Chapter Honors Mayor Collins

On Wednesday, November 2, 1994, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights bestowed its *John W. McCormack Public Service Award* on former Boston Mayor John F. Collins. The award, named after the late U.S. House Speaker from South

Boston, was conferred during the Annual Award Banquet of the League's Massachusetts Chapter at the Sheraton Tara Hotel in Braintree.

With 250 people in attendance, former Massachusetts Governor Edward J. King presented the award and praised Collins' outspoken and unceasing support for the pro-life position, while League Chapter President Daniel T. Flatley paid tribute to Collins' "irreproachable integrity as a public official" and for his "enduring and unswerving loyalty as a Catholic in public life."

Among the distinguished guests in attendance were Cardinal Bernard Law, Archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Cabal Daly, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, Boston Auxiliary Bishops Lawrence J. Riley and Daniel Hart, and Catholic League President Dr. William A. Donohue.

Cardinal Law acknowledged the role of Mayor Collins in building the Catholic League Chapter in Massachusetts, saying "no one was more deserving of recognition than Mayor Collins." The Cardinal went on to state that he was "always reassured by the presence of the Catholic League" when public controversies involving the Church arose.

Cardinal Daly thanked the audience for the concern and support demonstrated by American Catholics for Ireland and for the peace process in that country.

Catholic League President Bill Donohue commended Mayor Collins for his long-standing dedication to the League, and lauded the accomplishments of the Massachusetts Chapter.

The Master of Ceremonies was Massachusetts Senate President William M. Bulger. Bulger hailed Collins as a "battle-scarred veteran" of Catholic causes. Bulger told the audience that "Catholics should place greater value on being respected, rather than liked" by their fellow citizens.

An attorney, John F. Collins was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts and served in U.S. Army Intelligence during World War II. First elected to public office in 1946, he served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1947 to 1951, and in the State Senate from 1951 to 1955. In 1954 he was the Democratic nominee for Attorney-General of the Commonwealth. From 1956 to 1957 he was a Boston City Councillor, and from 1957 to 1960, Collins was Register of Probate for Suffolk County. In 1959, Collins was elected to the first of two terms as Mayor of Boston, serving as the city's chief executive from 1960 to 1968.

After retiring from elective politics, Collins served for thirteen years as a consulting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. For nearly twenty years, he has been a panelist on the WCVB television program "Five-On-Five," where he has earned a reputation as a forceful and articulate advocate of traditional moral values.

Collins served on the national Board of Directors of the Catholic League from 1986 to 1992, and as vice-president of the League from 1986 to 1991. A resident of Falmouth, Massachusetts, he is currently a member of the Board of Advisors of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Catholic League.

League Targets Two Major Advertisers

The Catholic League has registered complaints with the distributors of Dewar's scotch (Schieffelen and Somerset) and with the Ramada Milford Plaza Hotel in New York for sponsoring a program that contained anti-Catholic material.

Both Dewar's and Ramada were among a list of sponsors who helped underwrite the Lesbian and Gay Cultural & Business Expo, a program held in New York City, October 7-8. In one of the exhibitions, the Haunted House, there was a strong anti-Catholic presence.

The Haunted House exhibition consisted of a maze of rooms. The first room, a "prayer room," featured a spinning statue of Jesus with red eyes and dreadlocks. In response to hand clapping, Jesus emitted eerie laughter. Sitting in front of Jesus were several Jack-in-the-Box type items called "Cracker Crumbs," featuring likenesses of Cardinal O'Connor and others. Bowls on the table contained a yellow liquid which resembled urine. A crucifix sat in one of them and was adorned with the letters NEA (obviously a reference to the National Endowment for the Arts and its funding of Andres Serrano's "art" which included a crucifix immersed in urine).

In another bowl there was a reference to Cardinal O'Connor's plea that if anyone is thinking about killing an abortionist, he should kill the Cardinal instead. There was a little statue of a pope or bishop with an altar boy kneeling in front of him, with a noose around the boy's neck.

In the center of the room was a four-sided cardboard pillar that had holes in it. The holes were labeled "Cardinal O'Connor's Sphincter" etc. There was also a room which identified the Catholic League along with other, presumably "beyond the pale type," organizations.

The League expressed its outrage with Dewar's and Ramada, asking representatives of both companies to say whether they condoned this type of exhibition. And if they did not, then we asked them to explain why they didn't; we also asked what measures might be taken in the future to guard against this kind of thing happening again.

University of Kansas Professor Grants Apology

Anti-Catholicism is so deeply entrenched on college campuses that it doesn't take much to trigger it. Consider what happened to University of Kansas undergraduate Patricia Trausch this past October.

On October 5, Pat went to see her mentor, Dr. Albert Cook, to discuss her schedule. She first apologized for missing a previous appointment. In her statement to Dr. Cook, Ms. Trausch explained that she had to miss her earlier appointment because of a meeting with the local Archbishop. Ms. Trausch, who was wearing a pro-life T-shirt that day, was then informed by Dr. Cook that she "ought to tell the church that the Catholic Church needs to join the 20th century on birth control." He then expanded on his remarks, offering more unsolicited "advice."

Ms. Trausch, who had done nothing to provoke Dr. Cook, contacted the Catholic League. A letter was immediately sent to Dr. James Muyskens, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, with copies to Dr. Cook and Ms. Trausch. The letter stated that "There is little doubt that if an offensive remark had been made to a black, Jewish or homosexual student, formal action by appropriate university authorities would be forthcoming." The letter went on to note that "somehow Catholics are not part of the process of inclusion" that dominates the multicultural landscape of most universities. The letter ended with a request for a copy of the school's procedures for dealing with students who have been victimized on the basis of their race, religion, ethnicity or lifestyle.

Shortly after Drs. Cook and Muyskens received the League's letter, Dr. Cook extended an apology to Ms. Trausch. Dr. Muyskens wrote directly to Dr. Donohue at the League, stating that he was "convinced that Professor Cook deeply regrets the incident." The response seemed genuine enough and that is why the League did not pursue the matter any further.