

ABA "Regrets" Offense

Vicki Quade, the editor of the ABA journal, *Human Rights*, has made a reply, of sorts, to those who criticized the cover of the journal's summer edition. Catholic League members will recall that in that edition, a pregnant woman appeared on the cover, in a crucifix-like pose, with her unborn child showing inside her body. So proud of their work, the ABA section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities refused us permission to reprint the illustration.

Quade's response goes like this: "No offense was intended by our cover and I regret any offense that was caused. Because there are two sides to every issue, we will be publishing in the future an article by a priest/lawyer explaining the First Amendment rights of sectarian hospitals."

In short, we still don't have an apology. What we have instead is the familiar, "I'm sorry if you took it that way but I really didn't mean it." Oh, really? And what is the purpose of publishing an article that balances the one published in the summer edition? Our complaint spoke to the cover illustration, not the article (flawed though it was) on the merger of Catholic hospitals with non-sectarian ones. As for the quip that "there are two sides to every issue," we hope that the sages at the ABA don't publish an article on the horrors of slavery or genocide lest they be compelled to offer a rebuttal.

Hate Groups Not Entitled To

Public Funding

The Catholic League objects to public funding of hate groups, and that is why it supports the efforts of Congressman Peter King to deny government contracts to the Nation of Islam. Printed below is the text of the letter sent by the Catholic League to Congressman King and to Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros.

October 23, 1995

*Hon. Peter King
House of Representatives
118 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3203*

Dear Congressman King:

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights strongly supports the amendment that you have proposed to the U.S. Housing Act of 1995, HR 2406. It is due to the delinquency of the Department of Housing and Urban Development that security contracts have not been adequately screened, allowing, perversely, for public funding of hate groups.

The Nation of Islam has a long track record of anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic bigotry, and that is why the Catholic League vehemently objects to the federal government extending contracts to the organization. HUD has an obligation to investigate how and why the Nation of Islam qualifies for public funding, and since it won't do so voluntarily, it makes it imperative that your amendment succeed.

As president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization, I can say without equivocation that nothing is more disturbing than to find instances of taxpayer-funded bigotry. Your amendment addresses this issue and has therefore merited the support of the Catholic League.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue

President

cc: Hon. Henry Cisneros

Keep Your Victim Status!

by Susan Fani, Editor

A cartoon that appeared in the fall edition of the national college news- paper *Campus* was called "Diversity Training in the U.S." It showed a group of people pointing fingers at each other and crying epithets including "Racist! Homo! Reverse Racist! Anti-Semite! Anti-Catholic!" *Anti-Catholic?* That the term anti-Catholic is coming into vogue is heartening for civil rights activists. However, as Catholics, we hope not to fall into the contemporary trap of proclaiming victim status. It is true that we have substantive objections to the way we are received in society, but that is not synonymous with the quest for victimhood. Whereas some groups use their historically deprived status to seek special rights, insuring minority standing in perpetuity, Catholics have always wanted to stay faithful to the Church while being fully accepted American citizens. There is no conflict contrary to what many believe; nevertheless, it was a source of Catholic bashing prior to the election of President Kennedy.

Unlike others who clamor for victim and special status, Catholics as a group only want to be treated fairly. In fact, instead of being ostracized as being different-a fact Catholics have had to face throughout American history-Catholics want to be accepted as patriotic Americans who love their God and their country, not mutually exclusive concerns.

Although Catholics can respect the concerns of many victim groups, they do not want to be lumped with them and treated as untouchable. The source of their ill treatment for the most part is no longer based in the idea that Catholics are loyal to a foreign power and thus fail to be true Americans. Now the problem, especially from the way the media, academia and the other elites treat Catholicism, is that the Church is one of the last moral strongholds left with absolutes in an era of relative indifference. That makes the Church and anyone who agrees with her a target. Thus, a loud Catholic voice is finally fighting back.

Catholics, however, have not responded like many other victimized groups by demanding affirmative action programs to make up for past discrimination, of which there was plenty. ("Catholics need not apply" signs were not uncommon earlier this century.) Given equal access, Catholics have been able to achieve great success. Not that the remnants of past discrimination are all gone; there are pockets in America where being Catholic is a liability over and above the mockery that merely demeans. Followers of the Pope are seen as not being fully Christian by many in the Protestant community, for example, since there are segments that view the Pope as the Antichrist. In many respects, Catholics are more disadvantaged than others who proudly wear the mantle of victimhood—they are attacked for their strong moral beliefs, usually by the Left, and are distrusted for their traditional, hierarchical relations with the Vatican, usually by the Right.

Catholics by and large have not made excuses; they have persevered. Now that they have escaped the ghetto, as it were, they are prime players in the life of America. Catholics no longer have to suffer abuse by those who oppose beliefs, systems, and ideas that are uniquely Catholic. The awakening of one quarter of the population may be disturbing to the status quo, but that does not mean that Catholics want to join the spirited minority, many of whose groups band together to

fight America. Catholics challenge what is wrong with the culture, but do not reject America itself. The difference is crucial, keeping Catholics in the mainstream and undeserving of minority, victim status. Thanks, but no thanks.

Pace University Funds Anti-Catholic Play

On October 12, 13 and 14, the Pace Players performed the anti-Catholic play, *Agnes of God*, at Pace University. Pace Players received approval from the Student Government Association for this play and used school funds to defray the costs.

William Donohue expressed his reservations about the play in a statement to the press:

“It is one thing for a college or university to show a movie that is regarded by many Catholics as offensive, quite another to use student monies to fund a play that is anti-Catholic. In his book, *Hollywood vs. America*, Michael Medved lists *Agnes of God* as one of the most anti-Catholic movies in recent years. This movie shows a nun in a convent murdering her baby and flushing the bloody corpse down the toilet. It further shows the Mother Superior covering up the crime. The film not only offends Catholic sensibilities, it promotes contempt for their religion.

“I would be willing to bet my last dollar that the Pace Players will not be staging a production of any play that might offend Native Americans. Indeed, the very thought of dumping on Indians would be considered an offense against the multicultural agenda. But Catholic-bashing plays can be performed precisely because tolerance for the cultural

heritage of Catholicism has not passed the political litmus test of the multicultural gurus. If the high priests of tolerance on the faculty at Pace had any back-bone, they would join our protest."

Texaco Apologizes, Bravo Condescends

Bravo's *Windows* offended Catholics by featuring a segment called "Temptation," as *Catalyst* readers will recall from the last issue. The temptation in the dance routine was a nun and the tempted was a priest whose behavior was scandalous. As a result of the League's actions, Texaco apologized for sponsoring this anti-Catholic bigotry. Further, W. Michael Keenan, the Manager of Corporate Advertising and Sales Promotion, stated in a letter to Dr. Donohue that Texaco voiced its concerns to Bravo and "have instructed them not to air this program on our **Showcase** in the future." Affirmatively, he informed the League that there was going to be a "screening procedure for the **Texaco Performing Arts Showcase**."

However, Bravo remains unrepentant. The Executive Vice President and General Manager, Kathleen A. Dore, wrote in a letter to Dr. Donohue that "Bravo is television's foremost exhibitor of arts programming." She proceeded to explain the meaning of *Windows*. She lamely offered that it was not Bravo's "intent...to offend any group...We view...the surreal events portrayed... open to wide interpretation." The final condescension came with the comment "we very much appreciate hearing your viewpoint, and will take this into consideration when programming this or other titles in the future."

The League is pleased that Texaco is acting responsibly, but is dismayed at Bravo's attitude.