

INDIANA UNIVERSITY-PURDUE UNIVERSITY HOSTS “CORPUS CHRISTI”

The Terrence McNally play about Jesus having sex with the twelve apostles will be performed this summer at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW). The Catholic League entered the fray and immediately drew front-page coverage in local Fort Wayne newspapers. Bob Lockwood, our research director, lives in Fort Wayne and represented the league to the media.

Six state senators from Indiana raised serious questions regarding the propriety of a state-assisted university hosting an anti-Christian play. They are going to drill Chancellor Michael Wartell when he comes before them asking for more funding. Interestingly, the students raised money for the play voluntarily. But that didn't stop the league from criticizing the arrangement.

In a statement made to the press, William Donohue said, “Here we go again. Taxpaying Christians are asked to support a school that mocks their religion. It matters not a whit that IPFW is not funding ‘Corpus Christi.’ What matters is that this public institution is hosting the play.” Donohue applauded the six state senators who raised objections to what he termed “this abuse of public financing.”

Just as we saw with the situation at Florida Atlantic University, IPFW proudly advertises its commitment to multiculturalism; it even has multiculturalism in its mission statement. Indeed, it has an office of Multicultural Services “to serve as a support system for African American, Hispanic, Native American, International [and] Asian” students. In addition, there is an Islamic Student Association on campus

and a “diversity” week that teaches students to be tolerant of homosexuals.

We focused our attention on Chancellor Michael Wartell. Noting that he is casting the issue squarely as an academic freedom matter, we fired back saying that “part of his [Wartell’s] academic responsibilities is the promotion of tolerance for everyone, Christians included.”

Donohue then made his request. “That is why I am asking him to personally sit down with those associated with the play and discuss how hurtful this exercise in free expression really is to Christians,” he said. “After all,” he continued, “IPFW’s mission statement also mandates that the school strive to ‘reinforce ties to the surrounding community.’ That would seem to include Christians.”

Because Chancellor Wartell has not replied to Donohue, we suggest you write to him as soon as possible. Write to him at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, 2101 E. Coliseum Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46805.

STICKS AND STONES REDUX

William A. Donohue

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” Kids who repeat such rubbish can be forgiven for mouthing childish statements, but adults should know better. If anything, history is replete with examples where a lot more than bones have been broken by name-calling. Remember what happened when they screamed, “Crucify him.”

Intellectuals know this to be true. As the British historian

(and Catholic) Paul Johnson has shown, intellectuals are responsible for much of the bloodshed in history. For example, it was Marx and Lenin who provided the blueprint for Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot. These three monsters simply acted like good students, and the result was that more than 100 million men, women and children were murdered under their tutelage in the twentieth century. All done in service to a name. Marxism-Leninism.

Communists, as well as fascists, are known for banning art, books, movies, cartoons, magazines, music, sculpture, etc. They do so not because they're mad, but because they know that every form of human communication carries with it the possibility that the people might revolt. So they censor. If that doesn't work, they shoot them.

What's changed today is that Marxism is dead, save for places like China, Cuba, North Korea and American college campuses. Thought control, however, is alive and well. Take the U.S. While no one is being killed as a result of name-calling, attempts to shut down debate on issues deemed politically incorrect are rampant.

Quite a few subjects are considered off-limits in today's climate. For starters, just try to discuss the following in public:

- the universality of patriarchy (there is no society in history where women have been dominant, not even in those little societies that Margaret Mead found—she cleared this up before she died)
- the athletic superiority of males (the fact that we segregate the sexes in the Olympics is never questioned, not even by feminists);
- the large and persistent I.Q. gap between the races (this holds even when comparisons are made between whites and blacks of the same socio-economic class);
- gay sex practices and their health consequences (it is

virtually impossible to have an honest discussion about this very disturbing issue);

- the way Jews in America responded to the Holocaust after they knew what was happening (a New York commission on this subject was shelved in the 1980s—by Jews);
- the accuracy of calling Indians Native Americans (there is evidence that others were here first, and in any event the Indians migrated here from Asia and are thus not an indigenous people);
- the daily disposal of babies aborted in clinics (“60 Minutes” wouldn’t have the guts to film it).

What’s not off-limits, however, is Catholic bashing. That’s okay. As a matter of fact, when the Catholic League complains about an anti-Catholic movie or play, we are told to lighten up—movies and plays aren’t real anyway. So why don’t these same people tell that to Jews and blacks who get bent out of shape over comic strips and cartoons?

On Easter Sunday, newspapers all across the country ran a Johnny Hart “B.C.” comic strip that showed a menorah being transformed into a cross. Some Jews, like those in the ADL, said the comic strip was offensive. So what happened? Several newspapers dropped the strip permanently.

Then there’s Bugs Bunny. The sensitivity priests at AOL Time Warner squashed 12 cartoons slated for airing during a 49-hour marathon of Bugs’ best. The reason? The ever non-judgmental entertainment executives judged these cartoons to be “racially offensive.”

You get the point. All across the country we are banning Indian nicknames used by high schools and colleges. And in one New York school they have already banned Mother’s Day simply because one gay father complained it was unfair. Yet if we Catholics merely express our objections to Catholic bashing, we’re called censors.

Comic strips and cartoons, like movies, plays and artwork, communicate ideas. They form the way we think about reality and thus have behavioral consequences. When evil ideas permeate the collective conscience of a nation, it is not uncommon for evil deeds to follow.

That is why it makes sense for blacks and Jews to protest when they feel slighted, whether it be in the form of a comic strip or a cartoon. We readily acknowledge that it is easier to survive sticks and stones than it is name-calling. We just want the same rule applied to Catholics. And we won't give up until we get what we want.

NARAL, Anti-Catholicism and The Roots of the Pro-Abortion Campaign

By Robert P. Lockwood

The public debate over abortion was critical in a resurgent anti-Catholicism in the mid-1960s. With the cooperation of media, abortion became an ongoing battle waged with a war of words mired in anti-Catholicism.

Why did Catholicism become the issue in the abortion debate? It was in many ways a planned effort by the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League. Called by the acronym NARAL, it was organized at the First National Conference on Abortion Laws held in Chicago, February 14-16, 1969. It was a conglomeration of abortion referral services, interested state legislators, women's organizations, new feminists and old warriors from the birth control and eugenics crusades.

One of the primary motivations in NARAL's abortion campaign was the anti-Catholicism of its founder and first executive director, Lawrence Lader. Lader would effectively harness and use anti-Catholicism as a fundamental aspect of NARAL in abortion politics, legislating, public debate and media coverage. According to a recent interview with the Catholic League's Louis Giovino, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, one of NARAL's original members and a close confidant of Lader, this anti-Catholicism "was probably the most effective strategy we had."

In his book "Aborting America," Dr. Nathanson had described an early conversation he had with Lader. Nathanson had operated the largest abortion clinic in the world. But by 1974, he had begun to seriously reconsider his support for legalized abortion. He would later become a leading figure in the pro-life movement.

According to Nathanson, he and Lader were discussing the overall strategy for legalizing abortion in the United States in October, 1967, six years before the Supreme Court would knock down all state laws that criminalized abortion in its *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions and two years before the formation of NARAL. Lader, as recalled by Nathanson, "brought out his favorite whipping boy":

"...(A)nd the other thing we've got to do is bring the Catholic hierarchy out where we can fight them. That's the *real* enemy. The biggest single obstacle to peace and decency throughout all of history.'"

Nathanson continued, "He held forth on that theme through most of the drive home. It was a comprehensive and chilling indictment of the poisonous influence of Catholicism in secular affairs from its inception until the day before yesterday. I was far from an admirer of the church's role in the world chronicle, but his insistent, uncompromising recitation brought to mind the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. It passed through my mind that if one had substituted

'Jewish' for 'Catholic,' it would have been the most vicious anti-Semitic tirade imaginable.'"

Lader had come to the abortion issue through his involvement with various leftist causes in New York politics after World War II. According to Nathanson, "[Lader] had a long history of being ultra-radical and anti-Catholic. He was for a time a political aide to Vito Marcantonio, who was the only card-carrying Communist ever elected to Congress."

Vito Marcantonio (1902-1954) was considered the most radical congressman to ever serve consecutive terms and ran in Communist circles. Representing New York's East Harlem from 1935-1937, 1939-1950, he espoused various radical causes and defended America's Communist Party. He ran for office when abandoned by Republicans and Democrats under the American Labor Party, which was considered a Communist front group. Through this early involvement with Marcantonio and extreme leftist circles, Lader was, according to Nathanson, "inoculated with the anti-Catholicism virus" years before he was involved in the abortion movement.

Lader, who came from a wealthy family, became a wandering journalist developing articles on different causes until he joined Margaret Sanger's birth control crusade in the 1950s. In 1955 he authored his first book, "Margaret Sanger and the Fight for Birth Control," which nurtured his animus toward Catholics. In addition to Sanger, Lader was no doubt influenced to bring anti-Catholicism to the forefront of the abortion debate by Paul Blanshard, another veteran of the post-war New York leftist circles. Lader's writings on the Church echoed Blanshard's anti-Catholic theories.

In his landmark best-selling 1949 book, "American Freedom and Catholic Power," Blanshard argued that there was an ascendant Catholic Church in America, dominated by the hierarchy, that was becoming a majority through the uncontrolled breeding of the laity. When Catholics became a majority, they would amend

the Constitution making Catholicism the official religion, require the teaching of Catholic morality in public schools, and impose on America Catholic beliefs on marriage, divorce and birth control, Blanshard charged.

This was foundational to Lader and was re-stated in his 1987 book, "Politics, Power & the Church": "The development of Catholic power – the influence of its religious morality and political aims on American society – has followed a careful design...By 1980, with the election of President Ronald Reagan, the Catholic church achieved what it had only grasped for before: national power that gave the bishops more access to the White House than any other religion, and made them one of the most awesome lobbying blocs on Capitol Hill."

These would be the ideas that permeated the abortion debate in the United States. As many pro-life activists would discover early on, through Lader and NARAL the debate would not focus on abortion itself. Pro-abortion activists raised the specter of "Catholic power" threatening civil liberties, and the machinations of the "Catholic hierarchy" and their "unquestioning constituents" marching in lockstep. It was more appealing to argue against Catholicism than for abortion. This strategy, Nathanson confirmed, "was strictly out of NARAL."

Lader's thesis was that Catholic pro-life activities were in opposition to true American "pluralism": "The attack on the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion...seems to threaten our whole pluralist tradition and could damage our social cohesiveness...Catholic power, allied with Fundamentalism, has threatened the American tenet of church-state separation and shaken the fragile balance of our pluralistic society."

Under Lader's leadership, NARAL would quickly move to make the abortion debate appear to be a "Catholic" issue. The strategy was simple: convince the media and the public that this was a case of the Catholic hierarchy attempting to impose its will

on America. Portray all opposition from Catholics to legalized abortion as a power play by the Church with the laity marching in lockstep to its clerical overlords. Accuse the Church of abusing its tax exemption for a political power-grab. Paint legislators who were Catholics and pro-life as ignorant dupes of the bishops; those Catholic legislators who were pro-legalization were painted as heroes who refused to impose their beliefs on non-Catholic neighbors.

The NARAL anti-Catholic strategy took hold. Catholics addressing the issue publicly were portrayed as being sent out by the pope to foist Catholicism on democracy. From the late 1960s on, abortion was presented in the media as a peculiarly Catholic issue. In newspaper reports, pro-life legislators or pro-life spokesmen were consistently identified by their religion if they were Catholic, though no one else would be so identified. To newspapers and television reporters, abortion was a “religious” rather than a social issue, and the pro-life movement simply the vanguard of a repressive Catholic Church hierarchy.

In 1973, the Supreme Court would wipe away the entire debate in the states by voiding every state law against abortion. In the majority decision in *Roe v. Wade*, Justice Blackmun would favorably cite Lawrence Lader’s 1966 book “Abortion” eight times. At the end of his book “Abortion II” in 1973, the executive director of NARAL spelled out the attitude toward the Catholic Church. “What the Church fears is the rejection of its dogma by a large proportion of its communicants and the increasing use of abortion by Catholics as a backup to contraception. Concomitantly, it fears a sharp decline in the size of Catholic families...The whole structure of authority is further threatened when the single Catholic woman need no longer be forced into marriage against her will, or bear an illegitimate child for a Catholic foundling home – children that often become priests and nuns, who, when adopted, become the source of considerable financial contributions to the

Church from adopting parents.”

In 1975, Lader was forced out of his position as Executive Director at NARAL. He would go on to organize Abortion Rights Mobilization (ARM) whose primary function in the beginning was to attempt to have the Catholic Church’s tax exemption removed because of its activities in opposition to abortion. The case was rejected for lack of standing by the Supreme Court in 1990. Lader then went on to campaign for the legalization and the distribution of the abortion drug, RU 486. His anti-Catholic strategies never left him, and he began to make a jumbled attack on a “Catholic-Fundamentalist” alliance which he claimed to have elected Ronald Reagan in 1980.

NARAL, of course, has continued as the leading pro-abortion organization in the United States. After *Roe v. Wade* it changed its name to the National Abortion Rights Action League and now calls itself the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, but has always maintained the same acronym. It is currently strongly involved in a series of attacks on Catholic hospitals for refusing “reproductive services” and has been fighting conscience clauses that would exempt Catholic organizations from being forced to provide abortion coverage in medical insurance.

CHRISTIE’S AND CATTELAN SEEK ANOTHER “SENSATION”

On May 17, Christie’s auctioned one of two versions of “The Ninth Hour” by Maurizio Cattelan. The installation depicts Pope John Paul II being crushed by a meteorite while clutching

his crozier. The Cattelan sculpture has been the source of controversy when shown in parts of Europe. This was especially true when it was featured in Poland where two members of the Parliament tried to destroy the artwork.

"Cattelan's 'The Ninth Hour' strikes us as being bizarre," said William Donohue, "but not necessarily anti-Catholic." What was of interest to the Catholic League was not so much the installation but all the hoopla surrounding it. We were also interested in the extent to which the artwork acted as fodder for anti-Catholics.

Donohue put his finger on one of the issues that did interest the league. "For example," he offered, "it is well-known that Christie's, which played an integral role in sponsoring the anti-Catholic exhibit, 'Sensation,' at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1999, has been hyping 'The Ninth Hour' in search of another fast buck." Donohue noted that Christie's featured the felled pope on the cover of its spring catalog. "As for Cattelan," said Donohue, "he admits to being disappointed by the lack of reaction to his work and is now tweaking reporters by saying that 'The Ninth Hour' is a 'little' anti-Catholic."

The other issue was how certain notables responded to the art. "To be sure," commented Donohue, "Cattelan's pope is attracting the crazies." He offered as evidence Norman Rosenthal, head honcho of England's Royal Academy. Upon seeing the art, Rosenthal was moved to blaming the pope for the spread of AIDS. Donohue remarked, "It remains to be seen if the Catholic bashers in New York can top this one."

Using sarcasm, Donohue said, "In fairness, Christie's has every reason to be ticked off at the Catholic League. Had we taken their bait and urged Catholics to protest, it might have been a lucrative deal. But now they're stuck with this pile of junk. Finally, we couldn't help but noticing that Cattelan's pope is shown surviving the meteorite. Talk about a bummer for the Christie's crowd!"

Donohue appeared on TV in New York on the CBS affiliate and nationwide on UPN discussing the issue.

ARTIST ALTERS OFFENSIVE DEPICTION OF CHRIST

This is a story all Catholic League members should savor. It involves a member who contacted William Donohue about some offensive artwork and how successful we were in getting the artist to alter her work. There's more: we handled this issue without going to the media but it wound up on page one of a major newspaper nonetheless. Here's what happened.

A carpenter who works at JFK international airport called Donohue saying that a mural featuring a totally naked Jesus Christ on the cross was part of a display about to open May 24 at Terminal 4, a new airport facility. League director of communications Patrick Scully immediately contacted Peter Boone, the public relations manager for the new terminal.

Boone verified the report: the artwork showed Christ with a penis and was part of a display including 20 murals. Mr. Boone was told that we are taking this very seriously and wanted to know what measures would be taken. On April 19, he said he was going to talk to the project's art consultant and that we would be very satisfied with the result.

On April 21, the worker who initially contacted Donohue did so again: he said that a loincloth had been draped around Christ's midsection, thus ending the controversy.

On April 22, Donohue mentioned this incident at a talk he gave at the opening of a new Catholic Studies Center at Nassau

Community College in Garden City, New York. Paul Moses of *Newsday* reported on this event and confronted Donohue after his talk about the JFK incident. Donohue followed up on the story and accurately reported what happened in the Long Island daily.

Donohue then issued the following remarks about this case:

“If only the officials at the Brooklyn Museum of Art were half as responsible as the officials at JFK, then we’d have nothing to complain about. Kudos, too, to Deborah Masters, the artist who agreed to slightly alter her work so as not to needlessly offend a large segment of the public. This is the way these issues should be resolved. Whether they will or not depends not on those offended, but on those responsible for the offense.” He got a chance to discuss this issue on the Fox News Channel show, “Hannity and Colmes.”

Newsday reported that airport officials did not want to get into a confrontation with the Catholic League. This is something that all our members can justly take pride in—it shows how far we’ve come and the clout we carry.

PICTURE THIS

Sometimes it’s not the written word that gets our back up, it’s a picture. Take, for example, the following.

On the Monday of Holy Week, the New York *Daily News* printed a big picture taken by an AP reporter of participants in a Holy Week procession in Spain. The byline was innocent enough—it explained that since the 15th century penitents adorn hoods to hide their identities. But the photo showed the persons wearing white hoods with cone heads. Any American looking at

the picture would easily mistake the hooded individuals as Klansmen.

On Easter Sunday, the *Suburban Trends* newspaper of Northern New Jersey had a picture of a local homeowner's novel way of commemorating The Last Supper: on his front lawn was a representation that featured flamingos in lieu of the apostles. It was placed on the front page.

On April 17, the *Los Angeles Times* flagged a color photo of a black man dressed as a Catholic bishop. Below the photo it said "Archbishop Edmund Gilbert could face death by hanging." The headline of the story read, "A Man of the Cloth in the Dock," with a tag line below that said, "a prominent churchman stands accused of murdering a 15-year-old schoolgirl." Six paragraphs into the story we learn that he's a Baptist.

Peter Vallone is Speaker of the City Council in New York. He's running for Mayor. On April 12, the *New York Times* ran a story on Vallone with a photo. The caption read, "Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone goes to Mass every day, but he's not so charitable to his political opponents these days." One of our members, Eugene Biancheri, complained. And guess what? He not only was extended an apology, reporters were called in by the editors and told to be more sensitive to Catholics! William Donohue confirmed this story.

On May 8, when we saw on the website of Matt Drudge a picture of actor Robert Blake dressed as a priest—in a story about his alleged role in killing his wife—we asked why they didn't feature him as a detective. After all, Blake is mostly known for his role in "Baretta." The priest photo was quickly taken down.

Finally, a Catholic woman and some nuns from the Sisters of St. Francis in Fairmont, Minnesota, spotted a store selling a T-shirt they found objectionable. The shirt was a promo for a rock band called "Rage Against the Machine," and featured five

guys dressed as nuns carrying rifles. But they don't have to worry about anyone wearing them in their neck of the woods: the lady bought them all and quickly dumped them in the trash.

These examples are subtle reminders of how ideas are crafted in a culture. And how important it is that we challenge misrepresentations.

BIGOTS GONE BONKERS

Sometimes we can't quite believe what we're reading. In less than a week, we read that "The Catholic Church is tearing America apart with the abortion issue, so they can take over" (letter to the editor, *Southampton Press*, May 9); the pope might actually be "an accomplice to Palestinian violence" (Cragg Hines, columnist for the *Houston Chronicle*, May 9); Hitler was a "Roman Catholic" (Tyler Gray, columnist for the *Orlando Sentinel*); and Pius XII was "the main inspirer and prosecutor of the policy in Vietnam" (letter to the editor, the *Sun-Sentinel*, May 14).

Now when we hear conspiracy theories—like the one about Catholics planning to "take over" America—we recommend that the best response is to plead guilty. Not only that, but it's time we let the bigots in on the big secret: taking over America is only the first step toward the Vatican's goal of world domination. If that doesn't push them over the edge, nothing will.

Regarding Hines—he should be fired. No respectable newspaper should bankroll nuts or bigots. Gray is simply ignorant: Hitler may have been baptized a Catholic, but he spent his adult life implementing his pagan beliefs by trying to destroy the Church. As for Pius being blamed for the Vietnam war, it's

not easy to see how he could have masterminded JFK's commitment of troops unless he did so from the grave: Pius died in 1958.

Just another day at the office reading trash like this.

NYS SENATOR SCHNEIDERMAN LIBELS PRO-LIFERS

In a libelous statement made against those involved in the pro-life movement, New York State Senator Eric T. Schneiderman sent a letter to his supporters linking Father Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life, with those involved in criminal attacks against abortionists.

Schneiderman called on his friends at NARAL, Planned Parenthood and NOW to join him in a demonstration on April 25. It was on that evening that Father Pavone was honored at a National Right to Life dinner at New York's Waldorf Astoria. Confronting Schneiderman at the rally was Msgr. Michael Wrenn, pastor at St. John the Evangelist in New York.

In a letter of April 11, Schneiderman called attention to the recent capture of James Kopp, the person accused of killing Dr. Barnett Slepian. He mentioned how a recent court decision found it legal for a radical pro-life group, the Nuremberg Files, to post information about abortionists on its website. He then linked Father Pavone and the "enemies of choice" at the National Right to Life Committee to these extremists. He said that Father Pavone "openly advocates criminal activity to harass abortion providers," without ever providing evidence for this remarkable accusation.

William Donohue ripped Schneiderman in a news release. He began by acknowledging that there are “irresponsible people in the pro-life movement, some of whom are downright crazy.” However, Donohue said, “most of them are good, decent people who simply want to end the killing.” “On the other side,” he pointed out, “we have groups like NARAL, an organization that is on record saying that in instances when a child is born alive after an attempted abortion—and is fully separated from his mother—he should be allowed to die.”

Donohue continued saying, “If the letter written by New York State Senator Eric Schneiderman had been written by someone from NARAL, it would be considered par for the course. But when a sitting public official writes such an incendiary letter, it is outrageous.”

The rally had no effect on the evening’s events. Father Pavone thanked the league for defending him, something we will never hesitate to do.

BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB FLAGS CORNWELL

The Book-of-the-Month Club not only is selling John Cornwell’s book, *Hitler’s Pope*, it is hyping the book’s flawed thesis. Bob Lockwood took Club president William Byrnes to task for this outrageous slap at Catholics.

Lockwood commented that the book “was savaged by reviewers and historians alike for its poor use of history, exaggerated claims and false assumptions.” He offered as proof *Newsweek*’s esteemed religion writer Kenneth Woodward. Woodward noted that virtually every page of Cornwell’s book

includes misstatements and errors of fact.”

Worse, Lockwood said, was the blurb that the Book-of-the-Month Club used in its catalog. It described the book as the “explosive story of the Pope who helped sweep the Nazis to power.” Lockwood replied that this is not only defamatory, “it smacks directly of an anti-Catholic agenda.” He noted, “Even Cornwell in all his faulty anti-Pius rhetoric makes no such blatant accusation, particularly as Pope Pius XII was not elected to the papacy until six years after Hitler assumed power in Germany.”

Lockwood ended by saying that the Book-of-the-Month Club would do well to consider reissuing one of its previous best-selling titles, John Toland’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Adolf Hitler*. Toland had argued, “The Church, under the Pope’s guidance...saved the lives of more Jews than all other churches, religious institutions and rescue organizations combined.”

If you would like to write to Byrnes, you can do so at Book-of-the-Month Club, P.O. Box 6400, Indianapolis, IN 46206. You might ask him how a respectable organization like his could possibly advertise that Pius XII was responsible for sweeping Hitler to power when he wasn’t even pope at the time.

IRRESPONSIBLE JOURNALISM

We know there are bigots of every kind, those who hate Catholics, Jews, African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, et al. But when a bigot submits a column to a mainstream newspaper, we don’t expect it to see the light of day. Well, one did. On May 12, *The Desert Sun*, a Palm Springs, California daily, published a piece by William Edelen that was so unbelievable it had all the markings of a person gone mad. The biggest

problem we had with the article was the fact that it got published. Here is a sampling of Edelen's rantings:

"500 to 1000 [A.D.]: The church takes over and brings with it the cancer of the dark ages destroying almost everything that defined civilization. The Christian church all but wiped out education, technology, science, medicine, history, art and commerce. During this period the church amassed enormous wealth."

"1099: Christian crusaders take Jerusalem and massacre Jews and Muslims. In the streets were piles of heads, hands and feet. Millions were killed as a result of the Crusades."

"1231: Pope Gregory IX establishes the Inquisition. Inquisitors were given license to explore every means of horror and cruelty. Victims were rubbed with lard or grease and slowly roasted alive. Ovens built to kill people, made famous by Nazi Germany, were first used in the Christian Inquisition of Eastern Europe... Gruesome tortures used on hundreds of thousands of non-Christians in the Inquisition were so repugnant and horrible that I cannot even describe them to you."

"John Paul does not have enough days left in his life to say "For my part ... I am sorry" to all of the millions and millions of human beings slaughtered by the Christian church, to all new discoveries of truth slaughtered by the church, or to a legacy that has promoted sexism, racism, the desecration of the natural environment and the intolerance of other world spiritual traditions from Buddhism to the American Indian. Maybe the next Pope can be joined by others in continuing to say, "we are sorry" and showing it by deeds rather than only empty words."

And this is the "Religion" column of the newspaper!

William Donohue wrote the following to Julie Shirley, managing editor of *The Desert Sun*:

In the eight years that I have been president of the Catholic League, I have never read a more irresponsible article in the mainstream press attacking the Catholic Church than William Edelen's diatribe, "Many horrors perpetrated on the world in name of Christianity" (May 12). The article is not only hate-filled, it is riddled with preposterous claims. Indeed, some of the charges are so absurd that it appears Edelen is mad.

The problem, however, is not so much Edelen, but *The Desert Sun*. Surely crackpots write to your newspaper all the time. Would you dare publish a piece that was racist or anti-Semitic?

I will let our members across the country know about your collapse of standards. Perhaps you can explain to them why your newspaper welcomes Catholic-bashing columns.

Here is the address. Ask her for an explanation: Ms. Julie Shirley, Managing Editor, *The Desert Sun*; P.O. Box 2734; Palm Springs, CA 92263.