

GLAAD BARES ALL

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) announced in January the nominees for its 10th Anniversary Media Awards. If you guessed that the anti-Catholic play, "Corpus Christi," was nominated for Outstanding New York Theater Production for Broadway and Off-Broadway, you were right. If you guessed that the anti-Catholic play, "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told," was nominated for Outstanding New York Theater Production for Off-Off Broadway, you also guessed right.

This says two things: a) GLAAD not only does not object to defamation against Catholics, it supports it, and b) if the results had been different, we would have been surprised.

The winners won't be announced until the spring. You can state your concerns by writing to Joan Garry, executive director, GLAAD, 150 West 26 Street, Suite 503, New York, New York 10001. You might simply ask to for an explanation.

CLINTON'S VIEW OF HITLER IS FLAWED

On February 4, at the 47th annual National Prayer Breakfast, President Clinton said that "throughout history people have prayed to God to aid them in war." He also said that "No faith is blameless in saying that they have taken up arms against others of other faiths, other races—because it was God's will

that they do so.”

These comments by the president are, of course, true. But what was not true was his statement that Hitler preached a perverted form of Christianity. “I do believe,” President Clinton said, “that even though Adolf Hitler preached a perverted form of Christianity, God did not want him to prevail.”

We issued a news release explaining that the president had erred:

“In an otherwise excellent address, President Clinton made a remarkably ignorant comment about Hitler and Christianity at the annual Prayer Breakfast. If Hitler had invoked Christ in his writings or speeches, and had referenced Christ as the source of his crusade, then it could fairly be argued that he had adopted a ‘perverted form of Christianity.’ But anyone who has studied Hitler knows that this is pure nonsense.

“Hitler was a neo-pagan terrorist whose conscience was not informed by Christianity, but by pseudo-scientific racist philosophies. By asserting that Christianity, no matter how distorted by Hitler, can somehow be linked to the politics of genocide is irresponsible. Hitler hated the Catholic Church, made plans to kill the Pope, authorized the murder of thousands of priests and nuns, and did everything he could to suppress the influence of the Church.

“In 1933, Hitler said, ‘It is through the peasantry that we shall really be able to destroy Christianity because there is in them a true religion rooted in nature and blood.’ It is difficult to square comments like this with the president’s remark. He should apologize for his mistake.”

PRO-CATHOLIC OR ANTI-CATHOLIC?

In September, 1998, Eliot Spitzer, then a candidate for New York State Attorney General, held a press conference in front of a Catholic hospital in Buffalo to protest a decision by Independent Health that would exclude the area's Catholic hospitals from its coverage. Standing in front of Mercy Hospital, Spitzer said that "To simply exclude the Catholic hospitals from its coverage is heinous; it's irresponsible; it's wrong."

But on January 22, the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, New York State Attorney General Spitzer announced that he is forming a reproductive rights division that would, among other things, study the way the merger of Catholic hospitals with secular ones impacts on abortion rights.

The Catholic League had something to say about this to the media:

"Candidate Spitzer showed nothing but compassion for the right of Catholic hospitals to participate fully in the health care of communities across New York State. Such participation, he knew, meant that Catholic hospitals would be free to determine their own prerogatives, including decisions that bar doctors from killing their patients, born or unborn. But now that he has been elected, Attorney General Spitzer apparently believes that Catholic hospitals are a community liability, and not an asset.

"Spitzer needs to explain himself. If the 'new Spitzer' is the real Spitzer, then it is clear that the Catholic League will have to study his decisions—and mount an offensive against

him—should it mean that Catholic hospitals will be targeted for discrimination.”

A spokesman for Spitzer indicated that there was no new agenda

POPE TO BLAME FOR BAPTIST WOES

We sometimes have a hard time believing what we read. For instance, would you believe that the pope has now been blamed for the fact that many Baptist churches won't allow a woman to preach? That's exactly what Barbara Reynolds said in a recent syndicated column. Here's a sample of what was printed in the *Tribune-Review*, a Pittsburgh-area newspaper.

Reynolds tells us that “As a member of the clergy who is banned from preaching in many Baptist churches because I am female, I know firsthand how it is to be treated like an old shoe within the sanctuary.” So why blame the pope? Because “in Catholicism the sexism perpetrated by the church with the pope as a ringleader” has found its way into the Baptist church (no doubt a neo-trickle down effect).

“By this logic,” we answered, “if Reynolds goes to a restaurant on a Friday during Lent and finds that steak is not on the menu, it must be because of the pope.” On a more serious note, we asked, “What business is it of Reynolds what the Catholic Church teaches?”

We added that “If she doesn't like being a Baptist, and doesn't like the Catholic Church, then she is free to found

her own religion.” We closed with, “And good luck trying to find some women who will want to join.”

BALANCING BIGOTRY

On February 8, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* raised the following question: “What explains the Catholic church [sic] being so desperate for priests that it is trying to recruit them through billboard ads?” What caught our eye is that this wise-crack was placed as a box insert in a favorable editorial on Israel. The curious juxtaposition caused us to ask, “For the sake of balance, will you now take a stab at Jews and place it inside an editorial favorable to the Holy See?”

Items like this, while hardly of great magnitude, are nonetheless important: they prove to us that anti-Catholicism is a bigotry that can strike at any time.

TOLERATING ANTI-SEMITISM

Manhattan’s Riverside Church is so politically correct, so utterly pop-religious, that non-church goers like it better than those who attend regularly. Moreover, it fits in beautifully with the culture of New York’s upper west side: this is the area that once elected Bella Abzug to the congress and is known as the only district in the nation where one could not get elected if he were caught saying the Pledge of

Allegiance. No wonder Stokely Carmichael was honored there.

Stokely, a.k.a. Kwame Ture, was the black activist who popularized the term “black power” in the 1960s; he was also the honorary prime minister of the Black Panther Party. He died last November and was the subject of a quasi-political rally at Riverside Church in January. What made the memorial service so interesting was who was leading it—Louis Farrakhan.

Farrakhan is known for many things, and among them is his virulent anti-Semitism, to say nothing of his anti-Catholicism. Stokely’s record on this score is similarly tarnished, making it rather puzzling why a church that is known for its “progressive” leanings would host such an event. Just as startling was the sight of respected civil rights leaders like John Lewis embracing Minister Farrakhan.

But Farrakhan’s bigotry, and Riverside’s dishonesty, is nothing when compared to the silence of our elites. Why didn’t the *New York Times* sound off on this? Why didn’t the Anti-Defamation League? We can just imagine what would have happened if Cardinal O’Connor had welcomed Farrakhan to St. Patrick’s for his memorial bash. Just goes to show that anti-Semitism can be tolerated even by those professed against, just so long as its origins aren’t Catholic.

WE’RE ON THEIR MINDS

Larry Flynt, prince of pornographers, now gets his jollies by “outing” Republicans in the House who have had affairs. The shameless publisher of *Hustler* has decided to release his findings in a “Flynt Report,” hoping to make a small fortune

selling salacious gossip to the public. Curiously, when *Hustler* editor Allan MacDonell was asked if the report would offer graphic descriptions of the sexual affairs, he replied, "According to *Hustler* standards, no." But then he added, "According to the Catholic League, yes." It would be more accurate to say that we have standards and he has none.

The Empire State Pride Agenda, which is the lobbying group for homosexuals and lesbians in New York State, recently got 50 activists to attend a strategy session on how best to advance their agenda in 1999. All kinds of ideas were thrown on the table, most of which will fortunately never leave the table. The one we liked best was, "Where is the counterbalance to right-wing groups like the Catholic League?" Forget the attempt to demonize us, what we enjoyed best was the idea—absurd though it is—that the Catholic League is in need of being counterbalanced. But as the sociologist W.I. Thomas once said, perception is reality, so we'll take it and run with it.

John McLaughlin of the "McLaughlin Group" TV talk show, ended 1998 by broaching a discussion on the 17th annual McLaughlin Group Year-End Awards. When it came to the award for what was the "Fairest Rap" of the year, Pat Buchanan said: "The denunciation by the Catholic League of Terrence McNally's play, 'Corpus Christi.' This is the one that features Christ as in a nest of homosexuals. They denounced that as a hate crime by America's cultural elite and they were dead right."

Thanks, Pat. Your comment provides a much needed counterbalance; we hope our critics took note.

SETON HALL DEFENDED

The Seton Hall University administration did the right thing by nixing a proposal to give New Jersey Governor Christie Whitman an award; her enthusiasm for abortion-rights, including partial birth, makes her unsuitable for recognition on any Catholic campus. But no sooner had school officials acted responsibly when the chorus of busy-body critics began.

The *New Jersey Lawyer* editorialized that university organizations ought to be able “to invite to the school, to debate with, and to recognize the achievements of any person of good will.” But as we pointed out, “the latter is not parallel to the former.”

The publication printed our reasoning: “It is one thing to invite persons who sharply disagree with a university’s mission to speak on campus, quite another to give them a trophy. That is why Seton Hall University acted soundly by objecting to a proposed award to Gov. Christie Whitman: She should be given the chance to debate the legal and moral right that allows doctors to suck the brains out of children who are 80 percent born, but the university is under no moral obligation to honor her for her position.”

We added that “There are well over 3000 colleges and universities in the nation. In this light, it is important that attempts to pressure homogenization of philosophies should be resisted, no matter what the source.” After all, isn’t this what diversity means?

Congratulations to Seton Hall for sticking to principle.

1998 ANNUAL REPORT—HOT OFF THE PRESS!

The Catholic League's 1998 Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism is now available. The biggest annual report ever published, the report offers a comprehensive look at anti-Catholicism in 1998. It records Catholic-bashing incidents that emanated from the activist organizations, the artistic community, business, education, government and the media; a sample of some of the more outrageous cartoons is also included.

The purpose of the report is to educate the public as to the nature and uniqueness of anti-Catholicism. We especially want to affect leaders in business, education, government, law and the media. But it is also designed to embolden rank and file Catholics; we want to make them more aware of the challenges we face and the need to combat anti-Catholic prejudice.

For \$10, we will mail you a copy of the report, postage and handling included. This is a great resource, a learning instrument that you, your family and your friends can turn to for hard evidence of the reality of anti-Catholicism. We're sending copies to every bishop and congressman in the country, as well as to many in the media. But to get your own copy, please order now while supplies last.

NO TO HORMEL—AGAIN

We thought we wouldn't hear of James Hormel again, but we were wrong. Last year, the league opposed his nomination as U.S.

Ambassador to Luxembourg because he refused to dissociate himself from his earlier embrace of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a west coast anti-Catholic group. We were delighted when his nomination failed to go anywhere in the Senate and the Clinton administration withdrew his name. But now President Clinton has reintroduced his nomination.

When Hormel's name was resubmitted, the league sent letters to all members of the Senate asking them not to affirm his appointment. Whether Hormel's name will ever surface for a vote is uncertain; in today's political climate, anything is possible. But it just goes to show the tenacity of the Clinton administration, and it is no surprise why: Hormel is one of the most generous donors to the coffers and causes that this crowd has ever seen. Naturally, this means nothing to us, and that is why we will not let up on him.

For the record, our objection to Hormel does not center on his sexual orientation; our concern is purely related to his prejudices. Remember, Sen. Tim Hutchinson gave Hormel a chance to clear his name, and he failed to do so.