

YAHOO! ENDS BIAS

Following a complaint by the Catholic League, Yahoo!, the Internet portal, deleted biased entries against Catholics.

Until recently, when the word "Catholic" was typed in the search engine site, the second of the Category Matches had a listing called "Christian History > Catholic Inquisition." By clicking on that category, the listings of "Torture" and "Witch Hunts" appeared. But when the words "Protestant," "Judaism," or "Islam" were typed in, no negative episodes associated with these religions were listed. No other Internet portal showed an anti-Catholic bias.

Just as disturbing, when "Catholicism" was typed in, the first listing under Web Site Matches was "The Case Against Catholicism." It consisted mainly of the work of "Joseph McCabe's Rationalist Encyclopedia." More accurately, it included some of the most remarkably twisted interpretations of the history of the Catholic Church ever produced.

The second listing was called "Gay and Lesbian Catholicism"; it was replete with criticism of the Church's teachings on sexuality. No other religion had a gay section listed on Yahoo!

Nothing we objected to was outside the control of Yahoo! Though they took their time in making the necessary changes, we are happy to report that the offensive treatment of Catholicism has ended. This is an important victory because so many people use the Internet to access information. That's why it's important not to have biased information.

STANDING UP TO BULLIES

William A. Donohue

On January 24, we received a call from a San Francisco Chronicle reporter saying a \$100 million lawsuit has been filed against William Donohue and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. The suit contends that I libeled a man who claims to be an artist and part Indian. He was upset that I criticized the Copia exhibit for featuring the work of Antoni Miralda (see our lead story on p. 1). It was an attempt at intimidation and it failed.

The full name of the Copia museum is the American Center for Wine, Food & the Arts. We objected to the figurines that showed the pope and nuns defecating. My first news release on Copia began as follows: "Artists. California. Alcohol. That's a bad mix." The guy who filed the suit claims to be an artist (note: he has no standing in the artistic community) and took this personally.

He also blew a gasket when I asked why Miralda didn't choose the Lone Ranger and Tonto instead of the pope and nuns. "Or better yet," I wrote, "just Tonto and a few of his Indian buddies." I then asked, "Wouldn't that be a more earthy statement of the kind we're supposed to believe Miralda wants to convey?" That, apparently, hit home. The no-name artist says he's part Cherokee and that "tonto" in Spanish means "stupid."

On what basis did the Indian artist sue? He says I exposed him to "hatred, contempt, ridicule, and obloquy." He also said he suffered from "hurt feelings." Now how about them apples?

I told our director of communications, Pat Scully, to tell the reporter that the whole thing is absurd. A lengthy story ran on January 24 and a shorter one appeared on January 25. But the funny thing is that I was never served by anyone from the

Superior Court of California, Sonoma County. So we called the court on Friday, January 25, to find out if a suit had been filed. We were told there was no record of such a suit.

However, on Monday, January 28, we were told by the reporter who covered the story that a suit had indeed been filed against me. It was filed on January 25; he even gave me the case number. When I called to confirm I was told two things: a) that a suit had been filed and b) it was then withdrawn. As it turns out, the same person who filed it withdrew it five minutes later.

In other words, the Indian artist misled the newspaper into thinking he was going to file suit. Once he accomplished what he wanted—getting into the newspapers—he withdrew it. Lucky he did before a judge fined him for filing a “frivolous lawsuit.”

This is hardly the first time I’ve run up against someone who hates us and uses the law as a weapon. Their goal is intimidation. But like all bullies, once they’re stood up to, they fold.

All of this is rather amazing. We exercise our First Amendment right to freedom of speech by protesting an anti-Catholic display and one of our critics seeks to silence us. It needs to be emphasized that we never asked the government to remove the figurines. In fact, we never even asked the museum officials to remove them. All we did was call attention to what was going on and seek to trigger a local discussion. We succeeded: the story was picked up nationwide by newspapers, television programs and radio talk show hosts. What was not covered nationwide was the attempt to censor our free speech.

Another aspect of this incident bears mentioning. We were repeatedly told that artists in Catalonia, Spain (home of Miralda) have a long tradition of displaying defecating figurines. In other words, we should “get over it” and start showing respect for their culture.

But this misses the point. I really don't care a fig about Catalan traditions. What matters is that in this country we don't honor someone by depicting him defecating. As I said on a Los Angeles radio show, would those who argue that we should respect this particular form of artistic expression not object if the defecating figurine were their mother?

Miralda brought his scatological contribution to our shores. Therefore, he is the one who must show respect for our culture, not vice versa. And just like beer, some art doesn't travel very well. Which is why his little defecating statues belong on the other side of the Atlantic.

Oh, yes, a reporter from the *Napa Register* ran a concluding article on this incident on February 2. The artist who filed the lawsuit said he was still waiting for me to apologize to him. Here's what I was quoted as saying in response: "He can wait until hell freezes over and he'll never get an apology from the Catholic League. We do not apologize to people who sponsor gag rules."

That's the only way to treat a bully.

BIGOTRY'S NEW LOW: THE NEW REPUBLIC'S TAUNT

The government of the United States, George Washington wrote to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport in 1790, "gives to bigotry no sanction." But now *The New Republic* does.

"The anti-Semitism of the intellectuals," Peter Vierek once shrewdly remarked, "is anti-Catholicism." In its January 21 issue, *The New Republic* has sunk into the swamp of bigotry as low as it could go. It gave 25 pages to Daniel Jonah Goldhagen

so that he could offer Catholics a theological interpretation of what their faith entails, and hint broadly that the Church deserves destruction as an ally of the anti-Christ and enemy of humankind.

In Goldhagen's fevered view, the startling uniqueness of Adolf Hitler's totalitarian racial hatred, a uniqueness that preoccupied a generation of philosophers of history, has been diminished until Hitler for him is only a later "chapter" in the long history of Catholic perfidy and nefariousness toward the Jews.

The calm and objective assessment of wrong—with due regard for every circumstance—was not Goldhagen's aim, neither as moral judge nor as historian. His tirade is theological in form, making an argument about the theological nature of Catholicism, its doctrines, its criteria for martyrdom and for sainthood, its proper relation to Judaism, its conception of what its mission as Church is (its ecclesiology), its relation to truth and its ideal relation to other religions.

In its title (chosen perhaps by his editors, but well justified by his closing questions), Goldhagen opens with a theological taunt: "What would Jesus do?" There is no evidence in Goldhagen's work, nor in the recent history of *The New Republic*, that such a question is one he himself or the magazine for which he writes takes seriously. Nor is there any sign that he, or the magazine, has examined the life, work, and words of Jesus to see just what Jesus in fact did in the circumstances of his day closest to those of today. In other words, not a serious question but a taunt.

Regarding Roman imperialism, the subjection of the Jews, the Roman practices of slavery and torture (such as Jesus was made to suffer himself), according to the New Testament Jesus was, well, silent. "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were of this world, do you doubt that my Father would send legions of angels to my aid?"

His silence infuriated his accusers.

Unlike Jesus, Pius XII was not silent regarding the Jews. As secretary of state to Pius XI, he almost certainly had a determining hand in the letter condemning Hitler, *With Burning Concern* (*Mit Brennender Sorge*). Through the broadcasts of Vatican Radio, regularly amplified for the English-speaking world through *The Tablet* of London and the British intelligence and broadcasting services, Pius XII was the first to tell the world about the sufferings of Jews (by name) and other minorities, including during the war years more millions of Catholics than Jews. Much that the New York Times and the London Times published about the plight of Jews, Poles, and other civilians during the early war years came from the Vatican, through its radio broadcasts, papal statements, and the Pope's newspaper (totally dependent on Mussolini for newsprint and less free than Vatican Radio) *Osservatore Romano*.

Although I have not read them myself, I am told by people I trust that the sworn depositions for the evidentiary process of beatification and canonization of Pius XII contain testimonies by persons well-known for their efforts to help the Jews, who affirm that they received specific instructions from the Pope to do so.

Even those scholars who minimize what the Pope did have had to admit that his personal efforts saved scores of thousands of Jews (in Hungary, Goldhagen admits)—too little, too late, they say. Was not what Schindler and Raul Wallenberg did also too little, too late, and yet altogether noble?

One may argue with Pius XII's principles, but one cannot argue that they marked out the course from which he did not waver: (1) neutrality as between the belligerent powers, in the case that papal mediation might one day be sought; (2) timely and clear enunciation of relevant moral principles (platitudes, as Goldhagen calls them; the timeless moral law); and (3) the

denunciation of egregious abuses of moral principles, such as mass murders, the imprisonment of civilians solely for racial or religious or ethnic reasons, and mass bombings from airplanes of civilian populations in cities.

The Pope did not lack courage, and he did not lack clarity of mind. Mistaken he may have been. Open to criticism like any other mortal he certainly is. He prayed much and suffered much internally under the pressure. But he did not waver. After the war, he received immense plaudits from the citizens of Italy, including the Jewish community of Rome, the nation of Israel, the Israeli Philharmonic that traveled to the Vatican in 1955 to give a concert in gratitude, and Jewish and other groups throughout the world. The rabbi of Rome became a Catholic, in large measure through being stirred by the assistance given Jews by the Pope and friendships formed in the process.

Though I am not a professional historian, I have read enough on Pius XII—and have a sizable personal library on the period—that I see the transparent tendentiousness of nearly every historical point that Goldhagen raises. In every case, he selects accounts or facts that set the Pope in the light he wishes to put popes into, and ignores facts, testimonies, and accounts that sharply contradict his version of events.

Yet let us suppose for a moment that every accusation Goldhagen makes against Pius XII is true. So then we had, as publisher Martin Peretz has it, a “wicked man” as pope. Well, it wouldn’t have been the first one. Indeed, Goldhagen says there is a danger in concentrating on Pius XII, because his personal behavior isn’t the issue. What is wrong with Christianity runs through all the popes. It infects the core of Christian theology itself. It corrupts the very essence of the Church. What Goldhagen calls for is nothing less than the extermination of the Church as it now is and has been since the beginning. *Ecrasez l’infame*.

The great sin of which Goldhagen accuses the Church is its

“supersessionist creed,” namely, its clear teaching that the New Covenant supersedes the Old Covenant. Even to speak of “New” and “Old,” Goldhagen quotes a soulmate, “is inherently supersessionist.”

As John Paul II has made clear, however, the Jewish Testament remains valid; God can no more become unfaithful to His covenant with the Jews than He can to His covenant with Christians. The relation between Jews and Christians, therefore, is asymmetrical. Christians must understand and accept Jewish faith, in order to accept Christian faith. Their God is also the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Apart from the background, principles, and prophecies of the Jewish Testament, the Christian Testament does not make sense. Christians, in order to be Christians, must be Jews in belief (though not in circumcision and ritual), in a way that, in order to be Jews, Jews need not be Christians. That is the asymmetry.

To put this another way, in order to go deeper into their own faith as Christians, it is both common and altogether necessary for Christians to go deeper into the Jewish Testament and plumb all they can of Judaism, the Judaism of serious reflection today, as well as of yesteryear. For this reason, Christians today need a vital, believing Jewish community that will lead them into the depths of Jewish faith. The reverse can scarcely be said of Jews, many of whom feel no need whatever, in order to be Jews, to study Christian doctrine or history.

The reason Goldhagen is quite guilty of the charge of anti-Catholicism lies in the breadth and passion of the smears he spreads across a broad history, the distortion and hysteria of his tone, the extremity of his rage, and the lack of proportion in his judgments—dwarfing Hitler and making Pius XII a giant of evil, and then diminishing Pius XII so as to indict the whole of Christian theology down the ages. It is disingenuous of him to stop at Christ, the good and gentle

Christ of his parody, and at the edges of the Christian Testament, which is our main source for knowledge about the character and teachings of Christ.

Goldhagen went over the top in disqualifying Catholics from any moral standing, so long as they hold to Catholic faith as it is. He wants a new type of Catholicism to supersede the old. In this, he reminds me not a little of Voltaire and other haters of the Church. The Enlightenment, too, was supersessionist in its self-conception, its light triumphing over the darkness of Rome—and not just of Rome, but of Jerusalem as well.

We have all had to learn that we must accept one another's reality as we are, without trying to make others over into our own image of what they ought to be. We can appeal to one another in argument and in debate, in mutual searching, and even in mutual fraternal correction of one another's oversights and errors. But mutual honor and respect are the first preconditions of dialogue. It is sad that The New Republic went over to the side of a bigotry that makes dialogue impossible. After many centuries of woe, we need every moment of dialogue that we can get.

Michael Novak holds the Jewett Chair in Religion and Public Policy at the American Enterprise Institute. He also serves on the Catholic League's board of advisors. This is an amended version of an article that first appeared in the National Review and is reprinted here with permission.

Novak's latest book is: On Two Wings: Humble Faith and Common Sense at the American Founding (Encounter). \$23.95. To order call (800) 786-3839. We highly recommend it.

PALM BEACH POST JUSTIFIES ANTI-CATHOLICISM

A cartoon by Don Wright that appeared in the January 16 edition of the *Palm Beach Post* led to a flurry of complaints by local Catholics. Many called us or faxed us the cartoon. The cartoon, available on the newspaper's online site, shows a woman sitting in a chair pondering what is a cruel caricature of Catholic Church teachings on sexuality. Here is what she says:

"For women, sexual conduct is always closely monitored. The Catholic Church tells me what I can or cannot do with my body. Truly unforgiving. Absolutely no compromises. Unless, of course, you're a pedophile."

At the behest of Catholic League president William Donohue, the league's director of communications, Patrick Scully, called Randy Schultz, editorial page editor of the Florida daily, asking for an apology. "There will be no apology because there is nothing to apologize for," said Schultz. He added that the cartoon was simply a "critique" of the Church's "policies." When asked by Scully whether he knew of any Don Wright cartoons that looked critically at Judaism or Islam, Schultz said, "I find your question repulsive."

William Donohue sent the following remarks to Schultz's colleagues in the media all over Florida:

"So Randy Schultz finds it 'repulsive' to ask whether his newspaper merely looks critically at Judaism or Islam, but finds it perfectly acceptable to justify anti-Catholicism. In doing so, he makes a point the Catholic League has been making for years: many of our cultural elites, who consider themselves absent of even a trace of bigotry, have a tolerance for anti-Catholicism that is rivaled only by their intolerance

for anti-Semitism. Schultz digs himself in even deeper when he pretends that the Wright cartoon was simply a 'critique' of Church 'policies.' It would be more accurate to say it was a vicious attack on Catholicism. But to admit that would be to admit to bigotry and that is not something Schultz has the courage to do."

The same cartoon was picked up by other newspapers, including the *New York Times*. We are happy to note that Bishop William K. Weigand, Bishop of Sacramento, registered a strong complaint with the *Sacramento Bee* for its decision to reprint the Wright cartoon. We followed suit. Now it's time that Schultz heard from you. Write to him at:

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Tell him that he and his boy Don Wright are doing such a good job that we've decided to honor them with an entry in next year's *Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism*.

NEBRASKA STATE SENATOR MUTILATES ROSARY BEADS

On January 9, the opening day of the new Nebraska legislative session, state senator Ernie Chambers distributed a packet of unusual Rosary beads to his colleagues. All of them had the crucifix chopped off. Chambers justified his decision to disfigure the Catholic devotional object by arguing that

people of many religious beliefs find peace in what he termed the "counting beads."

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed this issue in a news release:

"Two months ago we called for the Nebraska legislature to censure state senator Ernie Chambers for the anti-Catholic remarks he made when a voucher bill was being debated. Now he's moved from anti-Catholic rhetoric to anti-Catholic behavior. Yet he remains undisciplined. Chambers' bigotry is also directed at whites and Jews. Consider this:

- On December 30, 2001, one of Chambers' constituents publicly charged that the state senator's recent memo on lead paint and children 'reeked of racism and hatred.'
- On December 21, 2001, the *Omaha World-Herald* published a bigoted letter by Chambers who wrote of 'Pampered, snooty white men such as George Will.'
- On March 8, 2001, Chambers' habitual references to 'the white man' got him tagged as 'one of the biggest racists in Omaha.'
- On January 13, 1996, Rabbi Aryeh Azriel of Omaha's Temple Israel openly criticized Chambers for his 'anti-Semitic remarks' and for his association with Louis Farrakhan.
- On Christmas Eve, 1992, Nebraska state auditor John Breslow, who is Jewish, accused Chambers of making a 'Hitler-like caricature' of him.

"If Chambers were white, he would have been censured long ago. But it's not too late to treat him as an equal. That's what we will request."

Unfortunately, Chambers' colleagues refuse to censure him. Like many state legislative bodies, it's an old boys club in Nebraska. Which means that the longer you're in office, the more you can get away with things. And it doesn't hurt if you're black.

ALBANY HEALTH BILL FRAUGHT WITH PROBLEMS

The New York State Senate approved a bill on February 5 requiring all health insurers to cover contraceptives. It made an exception for those religious institutions where most of the people who work there and most of the people it serves share that religion. This was considered a compromise measure to appease the objections of New York bishops. But it did not succeed: Edward Cardinal Egan criticized the bill for trampling on the First Amendment rights of Catholics.

Our first response to the media was to question the validity of the so-called compromise:

“It is not easy to understand how it can reasonably be said that the Senate has worked out a compromise with Catholics. Either the lawmakers believe in conscience clauses or they don’t. It will not do to say that Catholic organizations can practice their doctrinal prerogatives save when most of the people who work there or are served by them are non-Catholic. As everyone knows, Catholic schools in the inner city provide a quality education to a largely African American population. Should school administrators lose their religious rights because too many of these kids are Protestant? This would never pass constitutional muster.”

We then drew attention to implications of the bill that the lawmakers may not have considered. “For example,” we said, “it is well known that some Catholic colleges employ a mostly non-Catholic faculty. One way around this bill would be to institute a quota system that gives preferential treatment to Catholic applicants, thus ensuring a Catholic majority.”

A more serious implication is this: Catholic institutions could opt out of providing prescription coverage altogether and instead offer a cash grant to employees to pay for prescriptions of their choice.

We asked the lawmakers to rethink this bill and, failing that, for Governor George Pataki to veto it. "If he doesn't," we said, "it will set the stage for forced coverage of abortions—the goal of NARAL, this bill's prime backer. This, in turn, may lead to the elimination of all health care coverage by Catholic institutions. Then cash grants will be extended even further. Is this the legacy our officials want to be tagged with?"

And that is exactly what will happen unless our lawmakers rediscover the meaning of religious liberty.

THE NEW REPUBLIC PUBLISHES GOLDHAGEN'S ASSAULT ON CATHOLICISM

It will be remembered as the most irresponsible frontal assault on Roman Catholicism to be published by a mainstream magazine in years. To be specific, we are referring to the New Republic's lengthy diatribe by Daniel Goldhagen that appeared in the January 27 edition of the magazine.

The article, "What Would Jesus Have Done?", is an excerpt from a book that will appear in the fall, *A Moral Reckoning: The Catholic Church During the Holocaust and Today*. Ostensibly about the alleged failure of Pope Pius XII to defend the Jews during the Holocaust, in reality the work is an indictment of

the history of the Catholic Church. There are so many omissions of fact, historical inaccuracies and deliberate twisting of the evidence as to put it in a class all by itself. This is not the work of a scholar. It is the work of a bigot.

The editor of the *New Republic* magazine, Martin Peretz, was quoted in the January 13 Sunday Times of London as saying Pope Pius XII was "an evil man." William Donohue replied to Peretz and Goldhagen in the following news release:

"Ask any American who were the evil men of the last 100 years and the names of Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao and bin Laden roll off their lips. Ask Martin Peretz and he answers Pope Pius XII. Never mind that this pope has been credited by Jews all over the world (e.g. Pinchas Lapide, Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, as well as dozens of Jewish organizations) with saving more Jews than any other person, Peretz, following Goldhagen, is convinced he was 'evil.' Could it be that he came to this conclusion because he is riddled with guilt? After all, he inherited a magazine that bowed to Hitler. Dorothy Wickenden, a writer who previously worked for Peretz, has written that '*The New Republic* counseled fatalism and restraint in the face of Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco.' Now had the magazine's editors followed the lead of the Catholic Church, perhaps more Jews would have been saved.

"As for Goldhagen, he finds incredulous the idea that without anti-Judaism in the Church, Nazism would never have existed. This shows his naiveté: the pseudo-scientific racism and exterminationist policies of Hitler were born of a particular set of historical conditions having nothing to do with Catholicism. But to those engaged in witch-hunts, a careful examination of these factors is nothing but a distraction.

"Goldhagen likes his history black and white. His previous work, one that was widely discredited by serious scholars, sought a wholesale indictment of the entire German nation. His

new scapegoat is the Catholic Church. But what separates him from the cottage industry of Pius' critics is his thinly veiled hatred of Catholicism from top to bottom. Indeed, his enfeebled attack on the Catholic Catechism demonstrates that it is the theology he despises most. Which is why Goldhagen is nothing more than a Jewish version of Bob Jones."

HERE'S WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT GOLDHAGEN

"I was struck by the title of Goldhagen's article, 'What Would Jesus Do?' That is, what would Jesus have done if he had been in Pius's shoes, or if he were in John Paul II's position today? But Goldhagen is Jewish, as are half the chief editors of *The New Republic*. It is disingenuous for Jewish journalists to pretend they care what Jesus would say about these matters.

"They should ask instead, 'What Would Maimonides Say?' Goldhagen holds today's Catholics responsible for the deeds and words of other Catholics who are long dead. Who does he remind you of? The Church once held all Jews responsible for the death of Jesus. Now, the fact that individual Jews were involved in what happened to him is indisputable. Maimonides, in his famous 'Epistle to Yemen,' speaks frankly of how Jewish leaders 'meted out punishment to [Jesus].' By Goldhagen's logic, Catholics were right to blame the Jews, down to the present, including those who had nothing to do with that event." – *Rabbi Daniel Lapin, president of Toward Tradition.*

"[Mr. Goldhagen] has an unconcealed antagonism against the Catholic Church, and it shows." – *Rabbi David Rosen, international director of inter-religious affairs at the*

American Jewish Committee.

“Goldhagen’s article is based on no original historical research. It is entirely dependent on recently written, secondary sources that are in English. This contributes to what can only be judged an inexcusable number of sloppy errors. Several of the dates he provides relating to the establishment of European ghettos are wrong (most by only a year or so, but one by more than 50 years). He is also wrong (by three decades) about the beginning of the process for Pius XII’s beatification; he is wrong about the date the so-called ‘Hidden Encyclical’ was made public; and he seems to misdate the beginning of the Holocaust. He is certainly wrong in calling the Holy See’s concordat ‘Nazi Germany’s first international treaty.’

“He is wrong to say that the Belgium Catholic Church was silent; it was one of the first national churches to speak out against Nazi racial theories. He is way off base to suggest that German Cardinals Bertram, Faulhaber, and Galen were insensitive to or silent about Jewish suffering. Goldhagen says that Pius XII ‘clearly failed to support’ the protest of the French bishops, when *he actually had it re-broadcast on Vatican Radio for six consecutive days!* He also misidentifies the role of Vatican official Peter Gumpel (who is the *relator* or judge, not the *postulator* or promoter, of Pius XII’s cause for sainthood). And he is wrong to say that Gumpel was designated by the Vatican to represent it at a meeting with the recently disbanded Catholic-Jewish study group.

“He seems unaware that Catholic scholars on that committee disassociated themselves from statements issued by their Jewish counterparts following the collapse. He identifies Christian II as the king of Denmark during the war when it was actually Christian X. In what is perhaps a typographical error, he refers to Pope Pius XI as having been Cardinal Secretary of State; it was actually his successor Pope Pius XII. As bad as these are, other errors are much more

troubling.” – *Ronald Rychlak, professor of law at the University of Mississippi and the author of Hitler, The War, and The Pope.*

“This is a remarkably uninformed piece....He lives in fantasy land and he is making this up. It’s a sad case and he ought to see a psychiatrist.” – *Eugene Fisher, associate director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington.*

“Goldhagen is, as usual, quoting the egregious James Carroll here, but he endorses this ridiculous and badly-expressed sentiment: ‘The German people [during the Holocaust] maintained their ostensible Christian identity – which is why the question about . . . acquiescence in genocidal crimes is a question about the content of that identity.’ In other words, Christianity leads inexorably to the Holocaust – it caused it.

“Never mind that Hitler and his minions despised Christianity and plotted against it, never mind that there was a deeply anti-Christian impulse in central German government since the founding of the German state, never mind that Pius XII told his people that Hitler was the Antichrist. In the view of Goldhagen and the wacky Catholic Carroll, there’s something inherently Christian in being a Nazi. As Garry Wills likes to say in his risible book *Papal Sin*, the Nazis who conducted the holocaust were ‘persecuting Christians.’

“Why is Nazism Christian? Um, well, because Nazism occurred in Germany, which was a mainly Christian country. And look – the only people through history to oppose the Jews were – people who weren’t Jewish! And the Pope – he’s the boss of all the Christians, isn’t he? And Pius XII was Pope when the Holocaust took place.

“It looks ridiculous put this way – but that, in essence, is Goldhagen’s argument.” – *Sam Schulman, New York writer and former Boston University professor of English, in the Jewish*

World Review.

“For Goldhagen, the cross and the swastika are interchangeable. This strikes me as not only offensive, but deeply dangerous. By regarding the Catholic Church as morally indistinguishable from the Nazi Party, Goldhagen disturbingly undermines the uniqueness of the evil Hitler represented.”
– *Andrew Sullivan, syndicated columnist.*

BUSH SETS RIGHT TONE AT PRAYER BREAKFAST

President George W. Bush spoke of the need for tolerance and community service at the annual National Prayer Breakfast held on February 7. He took particular note of those New York firefighters who risked everything to save people inside the World Trade Center on September 11. Bush said they “were not confused about the difference between right and wrong.” He also called the nation to prayer by emphasizing the “good that has come from the evil of September 11.”

William Donohue not only praised the president for his comments, he took the opportunity to send another message as well. Here is the text of his remarks:

“The only people who will find fault with the President’s National Prayer Breakfast speech are those who have a phobia about religion or those who are hostile to it. Catholics have a special reason to be proud of what President Bush said because the overwhelming majority of firefighters who lost their lives in the Twin Tower bombing were Catholic. Make no mistake about it, it was their Catholic upbringing that allowed them to be neither confused about the difference

between right and wrong nor phobic about religion.

“While these Catholics are deserving of no special attention—those who risked their lives and had no religion were just as heroic—it is high time their religious roots were at least acknowledged. After all, every time some ex-altar boy gets arrested, or some Catholic is arrested for spying, or some ex-Catholic becomes a Muslim and then a traitor to his country, his religion is given high profile by the media. Yet all we learn of the firefighters’ religion is that they were buried in a Catholic church. What we should be learning is what made these Catholics tick. This would make a great piece for ‘60 Minutes’ but somehow we doubt it would interest them.”

MUSLIMS GO CALIFORNIA DREAMIN’

After 19 Muslim extremists bombed America on September 11, the first thing many educators did was to teach students on the glories of Islamic history. This was especially true in California.

Following the air strikes against the United States, the Byron California Union School District instituted a three-week intensive course on Islam that drew criticism from many parts of the country. According to one report, students had to “learn the tenets of Islam...wear a robe, adopt a Muslim name and stage their own jihad.” They also had to “memorize many verses in the Koran” and were taught to pray “in the name of Allah.” The chant “Praise to Allah, Lord of Creation” was also taught and students were asked to dress as Muslims. As one outraged parent said, “We could never teach Christianity like

this.”

Perhaps worse than this is the textbook used in the school district. *Across the Centuries* was first published by Houghton Mifflin in 1994 and is still widely used in many of the nation’s middle schools.

In the book, Christianity is unfavorably contrasted with Islam and the treatment of Roman Catholicism is strewn with inaccuracies and tendentious remarks. For example, in a chapter on the English monarchy, students learn—falsely—that Elizabeth I did not make Catholicism illegal. They are also asked to write a speech on what they would say if they were brought up on charges of heresy during the Inquisition.

The intellectual dishonesty is evident in the book’s treatment of Islam, as well, except that a positive spin is put on the religion. For example, students do not learn that jihad is a holy war justified by the Koran; instead they are taught that jihad means “to do one’s best to resist temptation and overcome evil.” Similarly, students are subjected to propaganda about the alleged equal rights afforded women under Islam.

The problem, then, is not peculiar to California. But it remains true that for Muslims in the Byron school district, *California Dreamin’* is much more than a snappy lyric.