

ATTACKS ON MEL CONTINUE

No sooner had “The Passion of the Christ” come out on DVD—breaking all records by selling 9 million copies in three weeks—when about 100 theologians attacked the movie for being anti-Semitic. Talk about dense! Guess no one ever told them that it is they who have been discredited in the eyes of the public, not Mel Gibson.

The ADL is just as dense. Its latest criticism is that the movie has a “negative characterization of Jewish *guards and leaders*” (our italic). This is beyond spin—it’s total denial. And it’s totally embarrassing to read.

HATE MAIL

The following is a sample of the hate mail and phone calls we received regarding our New York Times op-ed page ad that was run on September 20. We made no attempt to correct the spelling or grammar.

“A True Christian”:

Your ad in the NY Times whining about “Censoring Religious Speech” is telling about you. The only church to faithfully abuse (sexually) its children and censor speech is you, Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is the Inquisition, the hater of free speech; the Great Harlot spoken of in Revelation.

“Pater Familias”:

Your Catholic church has so thoroughly discredited itself by providing a haven for sex offenders—read

child molesters—read sodomizers and fellators—that it should stop posing as a moral force; it is a disgrace to religion.

Anonymous Male:

Said the ad was great but that the problem is not with the media elite but with the Catholic Church which “shelters those who have sex with little boys” and the Church will continue to have problems until they admit this and that we should read the book by Jimmy Breslin.

Michael (California):

He said that he only read the first few lines of the ad and that he was “incensed.” He said that he was “one of the cultural elites” and that what “they” want is the “exact opposite” of what was said in the ad. He also said that religion and church have no role in government and the US Constitution has no law in it about the church’s role. He said if anyone wants this “explained” to them please call and he will read them the Constitution. He said that the first lines of the ad are “slanderous, over the top and wrong.” He also said it is an outrage that the League states what the cultural elites want.

Gary (Los Angeles):

A “secular” society is what the Founders intended to build, not a religious one. The wall that separates you from us should be higher. No one is trying to undermine your absolute right of speech; we “liberals” merely want you to stop mendiling in our secular society. You also need to read a different history book other than the one the Church evidently publishes. There is very little evidence that the Judeo-Christian tradition did anything to promote the kinds of freedoms that you write of and that we enjoy in this country. In fact you may want to review how your Church

snuggled up to Franko, the Nazis and ever so many dictatorial governments in its very long history of censorship and authoritarian practice.

Richard:

Dear Dr. Donohue, Amazing that you believe Catholic bishops have the right to “threaten sanctions” against Pro-choice (not “pro-abortion” by the way). Who has given them such moral superiority? You? Your group? Where do bishops, not one of which came forward to protect or report children being sexually molested by priests, find the moral audacity to criticize anyone? The massive cover-up by the RCC, including the Pope who refused to read the initial reports of the molestation and rape of children, says far more about the ethics of the Catholic Church leadership than any ad you buy in the NY Times. Stop trying to minimize how priests and molested and raped children for many decades, how bishops and other supposedly spiritual figures did nothing to protect these children, instead protected the molesters and rapists, how Church officials have been involved in a cover-up for nearly 40 years on the rape and molestation of children, how the pope refused to read the early reports of the rape and molestation of children, how church leaders continued to preach the words of the New Testament while protecting those who raped and molested children.

Anonymous (“I’m afraid for my safety so I cannot submit this info. After all, your priests raped children under their care”):

re: Dr. Donohue’s op-ed in the NY Times: “To be blunt, were it not for our Judeo-Christian heritage, freedom would not exist. Not here, not anywhere.” I think close to one billion Indian Hindus would take exception to that comment. Such a comment merely puts your ignorance on a pedestal

for all to admire. I am a foe of religion. However, I am among the million atheists who are far more principled than the blind, godless religionists who claim a monopoly on morality. Yes, I say godless, since you have lost touch with any godliness. Religionists are responsible for many of the world's evils. Catholics and Protestants share the blame for Northern Ireland; Muslims and Jews for the Middle East; Hindus and Muslims for the India-Pakistani conflicts – the list goes on and on. The minute you shed your religion is the moment that the cataracts shall be lifted from your eyes. Your religion is a crutch, an excuse for evil. By the way, I have never met a person who is “pro-abortion” Who in God's name is pro-abortion? Abortion is horrible. There are some who are pro-choice. Why? Well, I suppose it has to do with thousands of years of Christian religious oppression, typified by your heinous Inquisition. I suppose people are just a wee bit suspicious of church doctrine- can you blame them?

Robert:

He said the League should deal with the issue of pedophilia and how the Vatican is sheltering pedophiles and also how during the Bush administration money is being taken from the middle class and given to the rich (which is against the Catholic Church's teaching on social justice). He said if the League does not address these issue he will never set foot in a Catholic Church again or give any money to the Church.

Carlos:

He said he is not with the media and that he is a practicing Catholic and was offended by the ad and that the ad was “disrespectful” in many aspects. He said that your mention of “The Passion of the Christ” had nothing to do with this and that no one stopped it and that that was a false claim. He

also said that you have made a new enemy and that he never worked against the Catholic Church before but now he is going to work against the mentality of this "horrific" letter that was "bizarre and backwards."

Joe:

your ad in the new york times was ridiculous. "were it not for our judeo christian heritage, freedom would not exist" thats simply laughable please keep your church out of the peoples state.No one elects the bishops, so they should have absolutley no influence on public issues such as abortion. Your church is in a sad withering state.

Tony:

Just imagine if your advertisement (in the NYT) had read as follows: "For all the talk of diversity, over 80% of Americans are white and over 90% believe in the superiority of the white race. And that is why attempts to integrate our society in the name of diversity are intellectually and morally indefensible. To be blunt, were it not for our European heritage, freedom would not exist. Not here, not anywhere." You are just another bullying majority. Keep your religion private.

Steve:

Re: New York Times ad, September 20, 2004 I couldn't care less what percentage of Americans are Christian and / or believe in God. Your belief in the "Judeo - Christian heritage" relative to our freedom is psychotic delusion. Your speech, in effect stating that the beliefs of us who don't believe as you do are "intellectually and morally indefensible", is truly the obscene speech.

Gil:

Hi William Donahue: Don't worry so much about free religious speech. Worry about your pedipheliac priests and your dying and morally bankrupt church. You are all but extinct you pompous, self-righteous a—.

Fran:

To Mr. William A. Donahue: RE NYTimes Ad..We 'leftist elites' don't give a damn about what you believe or don't believe. What we care about is that you use your tax-free status as a church or religious institution to campaign for a candidate who claims to share your beliefs. I don't want my tax money to be a contribution to the Bush/Cheney '04 campaign. Try using it for something that will help rather than destroy the world and America's place in it.

Laura:

I am a Roman Catholic and was thouroughly dismayed to see your advertisement in the New York Times. I do not believe that the term under God needs to be in our pledge of allegience and it upsets me to see your insinuation that if you believe in God then you believe that "under God" should be put int he pledge of allegiance. It is organizations like yours that push me away from God. Your claim that freedom would be not exisetent without our Judeo Christian heritage is completely erroneous and biased. There is a history of freedom throughout the world and our Judeo Christian heritage has a history of repressing freedom as well as selectively bringing it to areas. Please stop your bias and become more emcompassing; stop driving people always from Catholicism.

Joe:

Your ad is silly. You can ignore whichever statements that state-church separation groups say, and then claim they didn't say it. And yes,

religious speech IS obscene speech, to a great many people. An American Voter

Paul:

I am giving you feedback to your rather preposterous ad in Monday's NY Times. The Catholic Church decrying censorship!!!! Perhaps you should read your own history if you want to learn about energetic and ongoing censorship against anything that weakened your hegemony over thought, including objective science— Gallileo and Darwin for example. Of course the cultural elite is against you. Your business is delusion, your tactics heavy handed, and your hypocrisy breathtaking. The specialists in pedophilia, who systematically shifted child rapists to new places without telling anyone and thus who deserve to be thrown in prison for procurement of child sex slaves, spewing morality. I have profound contempt for the catholic church, a contempt I have earned through many, many years of direct exposure to the lies and hypocrisy that accompany and delude the many well-meaning and decent human beings who are a part of your corrupt institution.