

EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS IN PA

What a way to begin the school year. Council Rock School District of Richboro, Pennsylvania, decided it would cost a lot less if they rerouted Catholic school students who used public transportation. What this meant is that students who attended Villa Joseph Marie High School and Holy Ghost Preparatory School had to be routed through the public high school instead of going directly to their own school. Consequently, a trip that took fifteen minutes now took at least an hour and a half.

At a school board meeting, the educators got quite an education from outraged parents. They also got a chance to meet Arthur J. Delaney, president of the Philadelphia/South Jersey chapter of the Catholic League. The parents complained; Art said the league was contemplating legal action.

On September 10, Council Rock School District reinstituted the old schedule and everything was back to normal. Betting men said the school district would be sure to invite Delaney to its Christmas party. We hope he goes and let's us know if they have any nativity scenes besides those menorahs.

CHEAP SHOT CARTOONS

Three cartoons that were recently printed earned a letter of protest from the Catholic League.

In August, the *Valley Mirror*, a newspaper in the area of Sacramento, California, published a [cartoon of the Pope receiving a cross from a Nazi](#) with the inscription "Nazi Gold" emblazoned on it; the Pope answers, "Bless You, My Son." The

league shot back with a letter to the editor stating that “The suggestion that the Vatican was busy selling out Jews during the Holocaust is without historical foundation and is scurrilous on the face of it.”

The August 29-September edition of the *Jewish Star*, a weekly from Skokie, Illinois, showed a [cartoon of the Pope greeting Fidel Castro](#). On the Pope’s robe is printed, “American Tourists to Cuba,” and Castro is saying “Stay with me three more days, and I’ll throw in a free car rental!” The league objected stating that only someone with malice would suggest that the Pope’s interest in visiting Cuba is motivated by servicing American greed.

In the September *Esquire*, the men’s monthly magazine, there was an interesting piece on Dallas Cowboy Michael Irving. What wasn’t necessary was the [cartoon that showed Irving hanging from a cross](#) with two buxom women posed in a sexually suggestive manner next to him. The league labeled the cartoon “crude” and asked, “Don’t those of us who believe in Jesus as the Son of God (we constitute 86% of the population) deserve better than this?”

The league understands satire but it also understands bad taste. It would be refreshing if more cartoonists understood, and accepted, this distinction.

CLINTON RESPONDS TO LEAGUE

On August 8, William Donohue wrote to President Clinton asking him to respond to “Nothing Sacred.” On August 15, the President wrote to Donohue stating that “I share your concern regarding negative or irresponsible television portrayals that

send our children the wrong message.” He went on to say that “I assure you that my Administration remains committed to encouraging quality programming that both educates and entertains viewers.”

The league appreciates President Clinton’s letter. However, the league’s complaint about “Nothing Sacred” had nothing to do with protecting children from an irresponsible show. Instead, the league objected to “the exploitative and highly politicized depiction of Catholic priests in ‘Nothing Sacred.’” The league also wants “quality programming that both educates and entertains viewers,” but it also wants programming that doesn’t educate viewers to look askance at Catholicism.

APOLOGY WELCOMED

Advisor is the publication of the Ohio Association of Security & Investigation Services (OASIS). In a recent issue it ran an article entitled, “The Priest and the Priestess.” We did not object to the facts in the piece, but we strongly objected “to its obvious anti-Catholic tone.” Snide remarks about priests were interwoven with the story, forcing a negative stereotype.

We’re happy to say that Kenneth E. Romaine, chairman of the board of OASIS, wrote to us apologizing for what happened.

PUNDITS GIVE BUDDHIST FUND-RAISER A FREE PASS

On September 4, three Buddhist nuns gave testimony in Washington that not only raised serious questions about the sect's campaign finance practices, it raised serious questions about the refusal of political pundits to treat this issue as a classic violation of church-state relations.

It is known that since 1993 more than \$150,000 was laundered to Democratic politicians by the Hsi Lai Temple in Los Angeles and that money was sent to the Democratic National Committee (DNC). It is also known that the temple often reimbursed its members for contributions made to friendly politicians. Indeed, in the visit by Vice President Al Gore to the temple in 1996, temple monastics were told in planning sessions to ask those who wished to attend for a \$5,000 contribution to the DNC; the result was that \$100,000 was raised, of which \$65,000 was laundered through nuns and monks at the temple.

It is also known that the videotape of Mr. Gore's speech has vanished and that a list detailing the contributions made by temple devotees before the event was destroyed. In addition, the forms submitted by devotees requesting reimbursement from the temple for their donations were destroyed and canceled reimbursement checks were altered to make it appear that they were loans or had come from the devotees' personal accounts rather than from the temple's general operating account.

The league addressed its principal concern in a news release on September 5:

"To show the duplicity that is at work here, just insert the term Catholic Church each time the word temple is used. For example, on Wednesday, Senator John Glenn said 'I don't know whether there's anything illegal about having a fund-raiser at

a temple.' What is most astonishing about remarks like this is the incredible hypocrisy: if a Catholic priest dares to even address a public policy issue from the pulpit, pundits are quick to denounce him for violating church and state lines. Yet the Vice President can attend a fund-raiser for his party and Buddhist nuns can launder money, alter and destroy financial documents, and everyone treats it clinically. The double standard could not be more evident."

ANGLICAN PRIEST ATTACKS MOTHER TERESA

When Mother Teresa died, the media did not give her the coverage that it afforded Princess Diana, but generally the treatment was quite fair (see story inside). One of the few really nasty remarks came not from the media, but from an English Episcopal priest, Reverend Donald Reeves.

On September 8, on CBS "This Morning," Reeves had the gaul to call Mother Teresa "a very canny Albanian peasant" and a "bossy boots." He charged that "she was more interested in charity than she was in social justice, about why there was so much poverty and homelessness." He also said that "she espoused a former Roman Catholicism which, at least in Europe and I think in parts of America, people are trying to get rid of."

Because of the public outcry against Rev. Reeves, he was invited to return the following morning on CBS to defend himself. Chosen to debate him was William Donohue. Donohue agreed but was disappointed when CBS later reneged and said they weren't going to do the show.

The league was nonetheless heartened to know that CBS got the message loud and clear. They were flooded with calls, as was the Catholic League. As a result, we don't expect to see Rev. Reeves invited back by CBS. Members who would like to let this English gentleman know what they think about his observations can write to him at the following address: Rector, St. James Church, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V 0LL, England. Or give the chap a call at 011.44.171.734.4511. We're sure he'd be delighted to hear from the Catholic League.

ABC ALLOWS ATTACK ON MOTHER TERESA

Media coverage of the funeral Mass for Mother Teresa was generally quite fair. The lone exception came from ABC. During the consecration of the Host, ABC anchor Peter Jennings allowed author Christopher Hitchens to rant and rave against Mother Teresa; the *Vanity Fair* writer lambasted the late champion of the poor for her alleged "false humility" and "rabid fundamentalism."

Catholic League president William Donohue delivered the following remarks about this incident today:

"ABC stands in stark contrast to CBS, NBC, CNN and FOX, all of whom treated Mother Teresa with the respect she deserves. Inviting the embittered Christopher Hitchens to comment on Mother Teresa would be like inviting an educated David Duke to comment on Martin Luther King. Hitchens is a notorious anti-Catholic bigot and ABC was certainly well aware of this fact when they invited him. He is also the author of a slim book on Mother Teresa, *The Missionary Position*, a volume that is most

noted for its absence of any citations and its hate-filled commentary.

“There was an Episcopal priest who slammed Mother Teresa on CBS ‘This Morning’ on September 8, but the reporter was obviously shocked by Rev. Donald Reeves’ statement and did everything she could to calm things down. On September 7, NBC’s ‘Meet the Press’ invited Hitchens to comment on the royals, but Hitchens was not allowed to stay for the next segment on Mother Teresa; Tim Russert handled the situation with professionalism.

“Against this backdrop we have ABC’s irresponsible and calculated decision to allow Christopher Hitchens to bash Mother Teresa; the decision by Peter Jennings to let Hitchens continue his diatribe during Holy Communion was particularly offensive. Princess Diana had many detractors, yet none surfaced on TV. Mother Teresa had one person who hated her and the Disney-owned network found room for him to vent.

“The league will convey its outrage directly to Preston Padden, President, ABC Television Network.”

KUDOS TO CHRIS MATTHEWS

On the September 12 edition of the CNBC show, “Hardball,” former Clinton advisor, Dick Morris, made an offensive comment about Christ that was immediately challenged by host Chris Matthews. In an aside, Morris remarked “that’s like the guy who gets himself crucified and starts his own religion.” Matthews didn’t find the humor in this and stopped the interview right then and there.

This isn’t the first time Morris has stepped in it, but at

least this time he wasn't given the chance to resign—he was fired, right off the show. Kudos to Chris.

TUFTS SATISFIES LEAGUE

In last month's *Catalyst*, we reported on the league's objections to a play that was to be performed at Tufts University. "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?" is a play that contains some lines that are offensive to Catholics and we thought it was inappropriate for the university to host it.

As it turned out, the play was performed, but it did not receive the support that its admirers wanted. Originally scheduled during Orientation Week, the play did not get the sponsorship of the Orientation Committee (it voted not to sponsor the play after initially voting yes) and it refused to list the play in its calendar. In addition, the Orientation Committee published a letter in the student newspaper at the time the play was performed explaining its objections. This was reported to Dr. Donohue in a letter from Tufts Dean Bobbie Knable.

In a letter from Tufts President John DiBiaggio, Donohue was told that Tufts respects free speech, but "We also, however, have a strong tradition of respect for one another and will use this occasion of controversy to help our students better understand the issue of bigotry." Donohue wrote back thanking Dean Knable and President DiBiaggio for their letters, saying that "your interest in free speech is balanced by your interest in combating bigotry."

The league understands that college administrators must give wide latitude to student expression. All it asks is that the

administration do what it can to register its official displeasure with objectionable student speech.

BOB JONES TEXT EARNs COMPLAINT

The Catholic League responded to a complaint made by one of its members to a Bob Jones 4th grade history textbook, *Americans: People From Many Lands* (1993 edition), writing to the press director of Bob Jones University Press. The characterization of Roman Catholicism was inaccurate and encouraged students to view Catholicism with a biased perspective.

On page 184 of the book, it says that “There is little stress on reading the Bible in Roman Catholic churches” and adds that “most Catholics do not know what the Bible says about how to be saved.” It then editorializes that “Only those who trust in the Lord Jesus alone as Saviour will have their sins forgiven and go to heaven when they die.”

The league protested, commenting as follows: “This is amazing. It not only disparages Catholics, it has the effect of teaching students that Catholics may not be saved because they do not believe that salvation can be achieved through faith alone...It is bad enough that Catholics are portrayed as badly educated about the Bible, but it is even worse to move from misinformation to indoctrination.” We also objected to a statement regarding the Pope.

We stressed that we would not normally register a complaint about a book used by other religions, but in this instance it

was different: the book is being used in non-denominational home schooling groups. The league asked that in future editions "a more accurate presentation of Roman Catholicism will be offered."

Unfortunately, the response from the publisher gave no reason to believe that they would make any changes. It shows that the anti-Catholicism of Rev. Bob Jones (he said in 1928 that he'd rather "see a nigger in the White House" than the Catholic Al Smith) is alive and well in the 1990s. We only hope that his racism hasn't infected his successors the way his religious bigotry has.