

Clinton's Surgeon General nominee nailed for anti-Catholic statements

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's nominee for the post of Surgeon General, is on record as being anti-Catholic.

The Catholic League, in a July 22 news release, quoted several public statements by Elders indicative of her hostility towards the Catholic Church. (The full text of the League news release appears on pg. 2).

Bishop James T. McHugh, chair of the USCC pro-life committee, in a letter to Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, criticized Elders for her "bigoted and contemptuous remarks about Catholics and other Christians."



Msgr. William F. Murphy, in a *Boston Pilot* column, called Elders "an anti-Catholic bigot [who] advocates extreme positions regarding health care, sex education and abortion referrals for young people." Msgr. Murphy, secretary for community relations in the Boston Archdiocese, went on to note the American "double standard" which accepts anti-Catholicism

but condemns all other forms of bigotry.

The League's charges against Elders received national exposure during a heated exchange on CNN's Crossfire between former White House chief of staff John Sununu and Dr. Reed Tuckson, President of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science.

Tuckson praised Elders' "behavior, thought, word" as something "all Americans could be proud of."

Sununu countered: "The Catholic League disagrees with you. Catholic groups across the country disagree with you. These are the folks against which her language was directed. You certainly should understand from the history of the country that those are the kinds of things that divide and don't unite the country."

Later in the broadcast Catholic opposition to Elders was tied to the Church's stand on abortion. Kay Coles James of the Family Research Council quickly noted: "It is not politically correct to to be anti-black. It is not politically correct to be against women. It is not politically correct to be anti-Semitic, but in America today, it's totally acceptable to make the comments that she made about the church, not only the Catholic Church, but the comments she made about the Christian community as well."

A letter from League president William Donohue has been sent to all members of the U.S. Senate. In his letter, Dr. Donohue cited the blatantly anti-Catholic comments of Elders and pointed out that there is no place in public office for such bigotry.

Washington Post says League is right

In a lead editorial on Monday, August 2, the *Washington Post* called Catholic League criticism of Dr. Joycelyn Elders “right.”

The editorial dismissed opposition to Elders because of her stands on “sex education, abortion and contraception.” But when it came to the League’s criticism of Elders as anti-Catholic, the *Post* acknowledged there was a problem:

Over the years, Dr. Elders, as a state official, has given as well as got in controversies about her positions and her manner of advocacy. But she has a different charge as the nation’s highest ranking public health official. The federal post can be used to spur a national response to critical public health problems. It is not, however, a stage from which a surgeon general is free to put down, put off or trash segments of the American public with whom he or she disagrees. We have in mind the broadside that Dr. Elders leveled against the Catholic Church during a pro-choice rally in Little Rock last year. The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights said it smacked of ignorance or malice and that it was “a rank distortion of history to say that the Catholic Church was ‘silent’ or did ‘nothing’ about past instances of societal injustice.” The League was right. With all her professional accomplishments, that aspect of Dr. Elders’ approach to public discourse is troubling.

From the President's desk...

My children still play many of the same games that I used to play as a child. One of them is make-believe. The point of this game is to pretend, to make-believe that you are someone else. As such, kids can quickly become firefighters, nurses, detectives, teachers, and so on. All that is needed is some "dress ups" and a little imagination.

Just recently, while Pope John Paul II was in Denver, we saw how popular the game of make-believe is with some adults. For example, it was fashionable for some adults to pretend they were Catholics. When asked by the media if they were Catholics, they said yes. Though they had long stopped going to church, they pretended to be Catholics when asked by inquiring journalists. Tragically, the same was true of a few nuns as well.

Pretend-type Catholics have become alienated from the church for many reasons. But above all, they are alienated because the church has stood firm on its positions on human sexuality and its criteria for the priesthood. It would be a mistake, however, to think that even if the church were to reverse itself and become accepting of all that its critics want that that would make any difference. No, these individuals are just too far gone to bring them back.

Pretend-type Catholics are not just alienated from the church, they are alienated from American society and, more generally, from Western civilization. These are the same people who, as Jeanne Kirkpatrick once said, like to "blame America first." On July 4th, for example, they are the type who blush in disgust with all the patriotic fanfare. Why? Didn't you know about the history of Native Americans? Or slavery? Or women? Or water pollution? Didn't you know that the West invented sin and America perfected it?

No one, of course, denies that these Catholics have a right to sulk or to bask in their alienation. But is it too much to ask them to stop playing make-believe? For beginners, could they at least stop lying and stop telling pollsters that they're Catholics?

The media, of course, love pretend-type Catholics. Dissent always makes for good copy, and it matters not a whit if it is real or contrived. That's why they fawn over Catholics for Free Choice (an oxymoron if there ever was one), Catholics Speak Out and other fringe groups. These "Catholics" continuously charge that the church is rigid and unbending because it won't change its mind on certain issues. Take abortion as an illustration.

It would seem only fair that the Catholic Church ought to be accorded as much right to decide the question of abortion as the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU, it should be noted, is flatly pro-choice on abortion. Indeed, it brags that it goes to court to defend a woman's right to abortion more than any other organization in the country. All, repeat *all*, ACLU officials in the national office and in the affiliates are pro-choice. They have every right to be. But interestingly, no one charges foul play or complains about the ACLU being too rigid and unbending in its policy on abortion. Why, then, should the Catholic Church be treated any differently?

Does anyone doubt what the ACLU response would be if an official of the organization took a public position against abortion? He or she would be gone tomorrow. Now it is as unfair as it is incongruous to charge that the Catholic Church ought to tolerate pro-choice persons in its leadership positions when secular organizations don't tolerate division within their own ranks. There are no pretend-type ACLU'ers in the ACLU. Everyone either accepts a pro-choice position or they're gone (just ask Nat Henthoff). Why the Catholic Church should be held to a different standard is not clear.

No one is forced to join the Catholic Church. And those who join are free to leave. Honest disagreement of the application of church principles can be expected and may in fact prove fruitful for everyone. But there is a distinction between dissent and heresy. Furthermore, it is not acceptable to pretend that there are two churches, the American church and the institutionalized church of Rome. No one in the ACLU who disagrees with the national office, for instance, could get away with pretending that there are two ACLUs, one made up of the rank-and-file and one that is institutionalized in the national headquarters. Again, what's considered fair for the ACLU should certainly be considered fair for the Catholic Church.

At bottom, what pretend-type Catholics really want is for the Catholic Church to stop being Catholic. That, however, is not going to happen and that is why those who play make-believe will forever be disappointed.

-William A. Donohue

An open Letter to Father Virgil Blum...

Dear Father:

If, from your place in Heaven, you give an occasional glance towards earth, I know you are pleased with the League you founded and with its strong new leadership. Even more you rejoice that people of every faith, and even nonbelievers, are now laboring all over the nation to achieve your goal of freedom of choice in education.

June 18 the Supreme Court took a major step toward that reality in its decision in the *Zobrest* case. I thought of you many times during the five years of that struggle – your clear vision of parental rights, religious liberty, and of the evils of state educational monopoly.

I fear there are some misunderstandings of the case. Many press accounts have called it a “five-four decision.” It was a five-two decision on the great issue which the case posed at the Supreme Court level – namely, whether government’s furnishing a sign-language interpreter to a deaf boy on the premises of his religious school violated the Constitution’s Establishment Clause.

Some, too, have said that, in spite of the Court’s ruling in favor of the *Zobrest* family, they might still have to fight in the lower courts to get reimbursement. Not so. On July 25 they got paid in full. The public school district had had enough of the fight – a fight which never should have been.

Father, the old enemies of justice – in particular, Americans United for Separation of Church and State – are now trying to downsize the *Zobrest* decision. They say it is a very narrow ruling simply allowing a sign-language interpreter to serve a deaf boy on the premises of a religious school. Oddly enough, some supporters of school choice are saying the same thing. But they are both failing to recognize the *principle* involved in the case – namely, that *public aid may be given to individuals qualifying for it, on religious premises, where the aid is made available to all and where it is religiously neutral in character.*

I realize that, in subsequent cases where freedom of religious choice in education is sought, the narrow view will be pressed and secularist judges may buy it. But our job, following your great example, will be to fight *for the principle*. We now, in *Zobrest*, have a beachhead, and we must and can push from there to full victory for the cause you championed.

We know we have your prayers. Thanks again.

-Bill Ball

Ed. Note – William Bentley Ball is the distinguished constitutional lawyer and former member of the League's Board of Directors who represented the Zobrest family in *Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills School District*.

Catholic League News Release

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is unalterably opposed to anti-Catholicism whenever and wherever it occurs. That is why it views with alarm the public statements of Dr. Joycelyn Elders, presidential nominee for Surgeon General.

When Dr. Elders was serving as Director of the Arkansas Department of Health, she made several statements that demonstrated an animus against the Catholic Church. To be specific, on January 18, 1992, Dr. Elders made an address to the Arkansas Coalition for Choice charging that the Catholic Church was "silent" and did "nothing" about slavery, the treatment of Native Americans, the Holocaust and the disenfranchisement of women.

Now such a statement smacks either of ignorance or malice. It is a rank distortion of history to say that the Catholic Church was "silent" or did "nothing" about past instances of societal injustice. Worse still, however, is Dr. Elders' demagogic characterization of the clergy and the Catholic Church's position on abortion.

At the 1992 pro-choice rally, Dr. Elders made the following

statement:

“Look at who’s fighting the prochoice movement – a celibate, male-dominated Church.” More recently, on January 11, 1993, Dr. Elders referred to people who oppose abortion as “non-Christians with slave master mentalities.” Both statements evince a disposition toward the Catholic Church, and to Catholics in general, that is inimical at best, and downright hostile at worst.

If Dr. Elders has legitimate differences with the teachings of the Catholic Church, she should say so in a professional manner. What we at the Catholic League find deeply troubling is the cant and calumny associated with Dr. Elders’ remarks. There is simply no place for bigotry in public office.

League protests Russian religious freedom limits

In the wake of new restrictions on religious activities adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, Catholic League president William Donohue has written a letter to the Russian delegation at the United Nations calling attention to League concerns about limitations on religious liberty in Russia.

“It is our belief,” wrote Dr. Donohue, “and we believe it is the belief of President Yeltsin as well, that society is best served by not restricting the beliefs and practices of organized religion.”

President Yeltsin has not yet signed the bill, which amends the 1990 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious

Organizations, but final approval is expected. Under the new law, foreign religious organizations may only operate under the authority of a Russian religious organization and will be subject to state accreditation procedures. There are also provisions in the law prohibiting foreign religious organizations and non-Russians from engaging "in missionary-religious, publishing, or advertising-propaganda activity."

Dr. Donohue concluded his letter to the delegation by wishing President Yeltsin every success and expressing hope that "religious liberty takes root in Russia in a way that men and women the world over will come to admire."

Other Russian republics are also passing laws which curtail religious liberty. For example, the Russian Republic of Klamyk proclaimed in July there would be two state religions, Buddhism and Christianity. The Catholic League will continue to monitor the developing situation.

Ruth Ginsburg's Role With the ACLU

By Bill Donohue

Editor's Note: The following article by Catholic League president William A. Donohue, Ph.D., appeared in the July 3, 1993 issue of Human Events. In it, Dr. Donohue, a nationally recognized authority on the ACLU, offers some very enlightening background on Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, whose nomination hearings were compared to a canonization by more than one observer.

Ever since President Clinton selected Ruth Bader Ginsburg to

fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, the media have repeatedly referred to Judge Ginsburg as a centrist. Perhaps her writings from the bench suggest that she is, but there is other evidence that suggests otherwise.

On April 12-13, 1975, the board of directors of the American Civil Liberties Union passed a new policy on "Homosexuality" (Policy #257). In doing so, the board accepted the proposed revision of its existing policy that was forwarded from the Due Process and Privacy Committees. One of the persons who played a key role in the revised policy was Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Indeed, the most controversial suggestions came from her.

Before considering the new policy, and Ginsburg's role in framing it, mention should be made of the earlier ACLU policies on homosexuality. The ACLU issued its first policy on homosexuality on January 7, 1957.

At that time, the board stated that it was not the business of the ACLU "to evaluate the social validity of laws aimed at the suppression or elimination of homosexuals." Homosexuality constituted a common-law felony, argued the ACLU, and "there is no constitutional prohibition against such state and local laws on the subject as are deemed by such states or communities to be socially necessary or beneficial."

Homosexuals were regarded by the ACLU as belonging to a "socially heretical" and "deviant group." As such, homosexuality may be regarded as a "valid consideration in evaluating the security risk factor in sensitive positions."

On December 13, 1965, the board met to reconsider its policy on homosexuality. It now declared that it "supports the idea that this kind of sexual behavior [homosexuality] between consenting adults in private, as distinct from acts in public and improper public solicitation, should not be made the subject of criminal sanctions."

It still maintained, however, that homosexuals were members of a “socially heretical” and “deviant group” and continued to argue that gays could be screened as a security risk in “sensitive” employment .

Eleven months later the board met to draw up another new policy on homosexuality. Like the policy of 1965, it stated that what consenting adults do in private was not the business of the state. Although it stopped labeling gays as “socially heretical” and “deviant,” it nonetheless said that the public had a right to be protected from “solicitation, molestation, and annoyance in public facilities and places”; minors, in particular, deserved protection against “adult corruption.”

As for government employment, the ACLU maintained that no person should be disqualified because of private sexual conduct. But there was this caveat: “in certain jobs there may be relevancy between the job and a person’s private sexual conduct, including homosexuality.”

In 1975, the ACLU issued its most absolutist policy on homosexuality. “Homosexuals,” the policy stated, “are entitled to the same rights, liberties, lack of harassment and protections as are other citizens.” In every respect, discrimination was condemned whether in employment, public or private (“sensitive” jobs or not), housing and the like.

And in a major departure from previous policy on the subject, the board voted to oppose criminal sanctions for “public solicitation for private sexual behavior between or among adults of the same sex.” Joining her colleagues from the Due Process and Privacy Committees in this unanimous decision was Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

The evidence shows that Ginsburg did more than vote with her colleagues. She led the fight by introducing two controversial motions. She objected to the words “in great detail” in the following statement: “The government practice of inquiring *in*

great detail into the sexual practices and preferences of its employees or prospective employees and of disseminating such information to other government and non-government agencies is an unconstitutional invasion of privacy."

Ginsburg objected to the phrase "in great detail" because she did not want the ACLU to imply that the government had any right to make such an inquiry. Her motion carried.

Most alarming, however, was Ginsburg's motion to delete the following sentence from the proposed revised policy on homosexuality: "The state has a legitimate interest in controlling sexual behavior [sic] between adults and minors by criminal sanctions." The minutes of the board state that Ginsburg "argued that this implied approval of statutory rape statutes, which are of questionable constitutionality. "

As a result of her effort, David Isbell offered a new statement, which was approved by a vote of 18 to 7: "The state has an interest in protecting children from sexual abuse, an interest underlying some laws concerned with sexual conduct between adults and minors. Such laws may not properly discriminate on the basis of the sexual preference involved in the conduct."

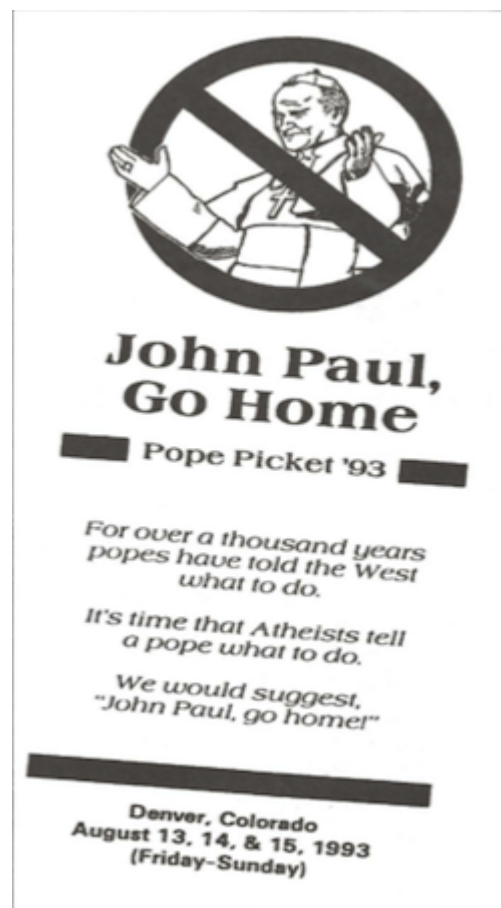
The senators on the Judiciary Committee will now have to decide whether someone who opposes the laws on prostitution, thinks that statutory rape statutes are of dubious constitutionality and has a problem with criminalizing all sexual conduct between adults and minors is qualified to be on the Supreme Court.

Furthermore, Mr. Isbell's substitute motion arguing that the state has an interest "underlying some laws concerned with sexual conduct between adults and minors" suggests that some laws should be stricken. It would be instructive to know which ones Ginsburg thought should have been deleted – and to what extent, if at all, she still holds such views.

Since Clarence Thomas was almost denied a seat on the Supreme Court because of unsubstantiated charges of “talking dirty,” it seems that simple justice calls for a more severe judgment regarding someone who finds fault with the state’s banning all sexual relations between adults and minors. But fairness also dictates that Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg deserves the opportunity to explain herself.

The Ugly

American Atheists, based in Austin, Texas, organized “Pope Picket ’93” in order to defend “freedom of choice for women ... rights of gay men and women ... freedom of expression ... separation of government and religion.”



Their slick brochure informs its readers that “The pope of Rome has no business trying to dictate politics, finance and life-style behavior to the American people.” It goes on to say that “Catholic brainwashing has corrupted young people through religious indoctrination, sexual repression, ritualized

absurdities, and foolish beliefs.”

The mailing included an offering of assorted anti-Catholic books including a few gems of the genre. You can phone or fax your order and they accept Mastercard and VISA!

We’re not sure how many atheists showed up in Denver, but we hope they weren’t disappointed.

“Opinion-Poll Catholics” and Their Church

*[box type="shadow"]This piece by Don Feder appeared in the New York Post on August 16, 1993. We thank Mr. Feder for giving us permission to reprint this piece. Mr. Feder is the author of **A Jewish Conservative Looks at Pagan America**, published by Huntington House. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of this excellent and very readable collection of his columns can call the publisher at 1-800-749- 4009 for information.[/box]*

The news media will never be guilty of originality. In preparation for the pope’s third visit to the United States, which ended yesterday, it resorted to a timeworn tactic – opinion polls of American Catholics, so-called .

Two days before he arrived in Denver, a front-page story in *USA Today*, America’s comic-book newspaper, trumpeted the divergence between John Paul II and his flock.

According to this survey of Catholics ages 30 to 49, one can use birth control (89 percent), have sex outside marriage (57 percent), divorce with- out an annulment (71 percent), have an abortion (57 percent) and not go to confession annually (71

percent) and still be a “good Catholic.”

We’re so subtle. The pleading fairly leaps off the page: “See, see, even his own people disagree with him on every controversial issue. How many loyal divisions does the pope have? His views are quaint ecclesiastical anachronisms, representative of nearly no one.”

As an accompaniment, we heard from the habitual harping chorus of “disaffected Catholics” the media invariably deploys to pre-empt papal sojourns – feminist Catholics, homosexual Catholics, those who think the priesthood should be a 9-to-5 job (off with the vestments, back home to the wife and kiddies), trendy theologians and proponents of cafeteria Catholicism.

What qualifies opinion-poll Catholics to have an opinion on a faith from which they are alienated and of which the majority are clearly ignorant?

Now, if *USA Today* had run a survey of adults who had a Catholic education, were steeped in the works of Thomas Aquinas, Cardinal Newman and Fulton Sheen, attend Mass weekly, go to confession, take Communion and are active in Catholic life, their perspective might be significant.

However, for the media’s purposes, it is enough to be born into a Catholic family to be counted in these studies. That’s far too much deference for a tenuous connection. Opinion-poll Catholics will be found in church only for weddings and baptisms. (The average evangelical has a better understanding of Catholic teaching.) Their affinity for the ancient faith is essentially nostalgic.

One of the conscientious Catholics quoted in the *USA Today* piece is Fred Ruof of Baltimore, who – while proclaiming his opposition to the Vatican – insists: “It’s a church I love.” But what precisely does he love – the music, the candles, the stained-glass windows, bingo?

These are to Catholicism what bagels and cream cheese are to Judaism. To love the Catholic church on this basis is like saying one loves America because July is his favorite month and red, white and blue his preferred colors.

Say you met a man who said he “loved” America but it was the Constitution, representative government, our history and heritage he couldn’t stand. (Besides which, the American Revolution was a tragic mistake.)

Having rejected the essence of Americanism, his profession of devotion would be a travesty.

When we say that someone is a good whatever – Jew, Baptist, Rotarian, Republican – we usually mean the individual is loyal to a creed, understands and accepts the tenets thereof, is willing to sacrifice for that with which he identifies, is committed to making his actions conform to certain norms.

But language has become so twisted that words have lost any semblance of meaning. Thus academic liberals can consider themselves champions of free expression while seeking to suppress opposing views. Democrats are paladins of the people while raising taxes. Gay right proponents label immoral those who refuse to condone immorality.

Hence the notion of good, anti-papal Catholics. At what are they good? Ignoring the dictates of their faith? Uncritically absorbing the values of their culture?

In the final analysis, even assuming opinion-survey Catholics were knowledgeable and committed, would it really matter? To be a Catholic is, by definition, to submit to authority. Doctrine isn’t determined by the temper of the times but is validated by a more venerable source.

The idea of democracy, while fine in its realm, isn’t universally applicable. Religions are based on revelations, not plebiscites.

No one elected God. Once dogma is subject to popular opinions, what will be sacred? Perhaps all of the Gallup Catholics should get together and vote on the concept of the Trinity – (“let’s see a show of hands”) or the Christian doctrine of atonement and redemption.

There’s nothing more sobering than listening to the theologically unwashed lecturing a 2,000 year-old church.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 1993

by Karen Lynn Krugh

Editor’s note: Karen Lynn Krugh recently joined our national office staff as an executive assistant. She attended World Youth Day in Denver and submitted this report for our readers.

Our nation has experienced division in many ways and for many years. Each generation, it seems, endures a period of tribulation and suffering when peers become foes and battles erupt. America’s young people today are no exception. We have witnessed and perhaps participated in social and spiritual battles across the country, from the streets of Los Angeles to the classrooms of New York City, from abortion clinics to scandals in our own churches. Our generation, Generation X, the Lost Generation, has given birth to phrases such as “Can’t we all get along?” and songs like “Cop Killer,” “I Want Your Sex,” and “Papa Don’t Preach,” among many others.

Yet, despite the recent crime wave in the city of Denver, despite the groups organizing to protest the Catholic Church and its stand on controversial issues, despite the inherent bias which would cloud the coverage by the mass media, despite the difficulty some experienced in explaining this

journey to friends and loved ones back home, despite all circumstances which were against us, nearly 200,000 youth from every corner of the globe came together for five days as one body in Christ in Denver, Colorado for World Youth Day (WYD) 1993.

By today's standards, what we did was unusual, perhaps even weird, if you were to ask some friends back home. A speaker at a catechetical session I attended quoted a confused friend who had said, "You're going *where*? To do *what*? To see *who*? **WHY?**" The uproarious laughter which followed confirmed that many had experienced similar questioning.

We came together to show the world we had faith, and the Catholic faith at that. At a time when it seems our church is still an acceptable butt of jokes, when many think young people incapable of serious commitment, when "the church" is considered by some to be outdated and out of touch, we stood tall and we stood together. We defied convention.

"A great multitude which no man could number," as our Holy Father quoted from Revelations (7:9) came together from North, Central and South America, from Asia and Africa, from Pacific rim nations and from Europe. We were greeted in fifteen languages. There were catechetical teachings in eight languages. For five days, we were a sign for one another, for the church and for the world, of the universal and unified church.



But all that power and love, all that conviction and the very message of World Youth Day is not what the national media chose to portray. Over and over again, in talking with friends and family back home, I heard about the protesters who were on TV, or the interviews with young people who were participating despite their disagreements with or disapproval of the Pope, or how the rain dampened our spirits and caused everyone to flee during the opening ceremony or how the heat caused numerous medical emergencies and even deaths during the closing mass.

Because of my Catholic League connection, I was keeping an eye out for anti-Catholic sentiment, protests and literature. I repeatedly came in contact with and was referred to one organization – the Loving Way

United Pentecostal Church of Denver. No other organization – if there were any – was readily identifiable.

We encountered a few individuals along the way who shouted "Go! Worship your pope! Worship Mary! You're all going to hell!" They held signs proclaiming "Beware False Prophets! (Mt. 7:15)" Members of my youth group responded "We'll pray for you" and "We love you." I don't think this found its way into the news.

After mass on Sunday we encountered a silent, grinning man wearing a tilted foam miter who handed out "Wanted" posters

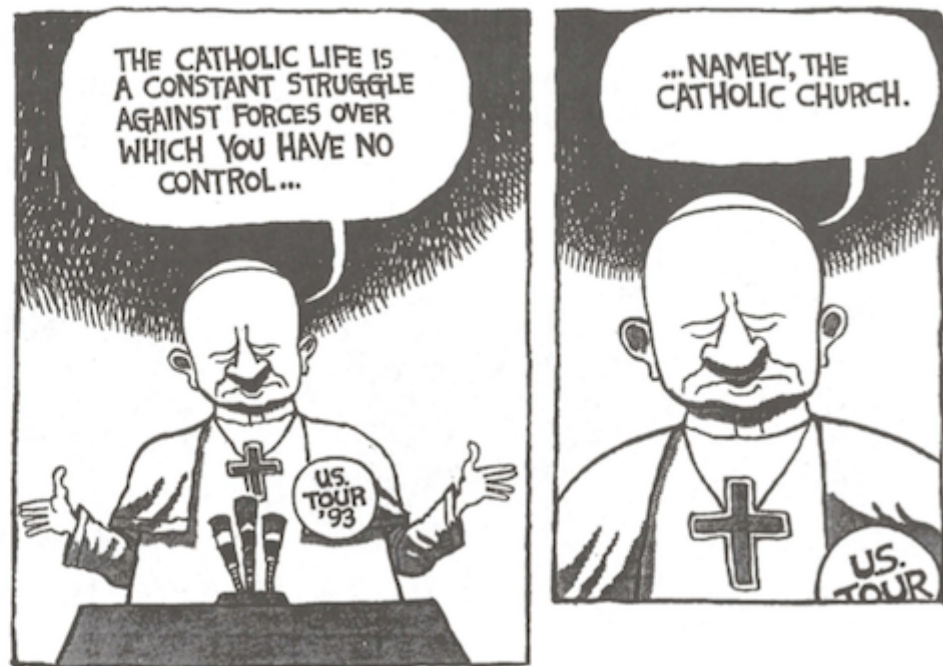
with a picture of Pope John Paul II. Among other things the pope was wanted for being the Anti-Christ, for mutilating and murdering thousands during the middle ages, and for stockpiling an arsenal of weapons donated by cooperating countries. The man was unwilling to talk with us.

I had heard that Civic Center Park – renamed Celebration Plaza for the week – was the place to find protesters. But their presence was either greatly exaggerated by the media or else I managed to consistently miss them. Most of those I spoke with had neither seen nor heard any protesters . A few recalled some background noise during the opening mass but knew of nothing since that time.

The slogan printed on the straps we wore around our necks proclaimed “The Pope and young people. Together.” And anyone who witnessed the deafening welcome which the Holy Father received at his every appearance would be hard pressed to question his universal appeal and approval.

Yes, the American church appears to have more dissension in its ranks than other countries, but the majority of this great crowd was comprised of American youth and they were clearly in approval of their charismatic leader. The youth in Denver actively stood behind the Pope’s call to respect life. Some traveled to abortion clinics where they prayed. Still others volunteered to help Habitat for Humanity build housing for the poor. And we stood behind the pope’s call to be pilgrims, traveling first to Denver itself and then from site to site assisting our brothers and sisters along the way. And we became one body as we met other believers from around the world, worshipping and celebrating together, trading crosses and rosaries, stories and addresses.

This cheap shot originated with the Pittsburgh Press Gazette but was widely reprinted. The Chicago Tribune was among the many papers which saw fit to give it space and even wider circulation. In a strongly worded letter to the Press Gazette, League President Bill Donohue made it clear that this cartoon had overstepped the bounds of good taste.



For those of you who observed World Youth Day via the mass media, did you see: the different reactions received by the Holy Father and the president upon their arrivals at Stapleton International airport and again later when videos of their arrivals were shown at Mile High Stadium; the appearance of a huge rainbow over the stadium when the pope began to speak to the crowd gathered for the welcoming ceremony; the Italian group who, though sleeping in a parking garage, were still happy and excited enough to sing and dance for over an hour before their first catechetical; the Spanish group joined by youth from other nations who played guitars and tambourines and sang during the entire pilgrimage to Cherry Creek park; the enthusiastic participation of young people from war-torn, impoverished and former communist states -including Bosnia-Herzegovina – and the vast number from Vietnam; the tears of joy shed by Pope John Paul II and many, many of those who attended the Saturday evening prayer vigil; the crowd total given by announcers at the mass – between 500 and 750,000; the Holy Father's excitement during the closing mass as he repeatedly went "off script" and reached for a microphone to ad-lib some heartfelt sentiment to the vast crowd; the generosity of the people of Colorado; the smiles of the pilgrims which accompanied each participant back to their own

homelands?

Were you privy instead to: the protesters at Civic Center Park; excerpts from Clinton's speech at the airport and details of his vacation; the dampened spirits caused by the rain and the quick exit of rain-soaked young people from Mile High Stadium; too much live "reporting" and not enough live tele-casting; the lack of adequate accommodations and the long food and restroom lines; the difficult pilgrimage conditions including cold, damp nights and oppressively hot days; the lower counts given of those attending the closing mass – 350,000; regular tallies of those fallen sick from Sunday's heat?

I realize that the news media have time and space constraints on their reporting and that it's impossible to be everywhere at once. But I do feel that I can legitimately object to the manner in which the media reported the event that was World Youth Day. If an event is 95% positive and 5% negative, is the media absolutely duty bound to seek out and cover the 5%? Must they look with such earnestness for that "other point of view," or can they share an entirely positive story just once?

Did you hear the chant which followed the pope throughout his trip? It made its way onto banners and t-shirts and a host of other things. But did you see it on television? Or read it in the paper? For five days, everywhere he went, it was there, sometimes quietly, sometimes rocking an entire stadium: "J.P. II, we love you! J.P. II, we love you! John Paul II, we love you! John Paul II, we love you! JOHN PAUL II! WE LOVE YOU! JOHN PAUL II. WE LOVE YOU!"

If you listen, very carefully, you may still hear it echoing in your neighborhood.