

U.S. HOLOCAUST MUSEUM LIBELS CATHOLICISM

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, located in Washington, D.C., has come under fire by several Jewish intellectuals for its unfair depictions of Christianity. Most of the criticism focuses on a 14 minute-movie, "Antisemitism," which seeks to establish a direct link between the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Holocaust. In the movie, Hitler is identified as "Austrian born and a baptized Catholic," and is quoted (in a voice-over) saying, "The difference between the Church and me is that I am finishing the job."

William Donohue recently visited the museum and then released the following comment to the press:

"The Jewish leaders who have protested the Holocaust Museum movie, 'Antisemitism,' have done so with courage and conviction: they are also right on the money. The movie is a disgrace. It not only fails to distinguish between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, it erroneously credits Catholicism with the Nazi genocide of the Jewish people. Yet as George Washington University professor Marc Saperstein has written, 'Nazi texts provide no evidence that the antisemitism of Hitler or Himmler was informed by the Christian characterization of the Jews as Christ-killers, condemned by God because they refused to recognize the messiah. Nazi rhetoric is drawn from different realms.

"Some Catholics have defended the movie, arguing that despite some flaws, it is balanced by a section of the museum that bears tribute to those Catholics who rescued Jews. This is pure nonsense. The section on rescuers in no way singles out Catholics for tribute.

"There are other problems with this museum as well. One would

barely know how viciously anti-Catholic the Nazis were. That is why it is irresponsible to try to stitch a knot between Hitler's baptism and the Holocaust. We are relating our objections to the director of the museum."

Because the museum director refuses to cooperate, the Catholic League will now join with others, Jewish as well as Catholic, to register our complaints with other parties. This is not an issue that we are prepared to drop. We'll keep you posted.