

UNIV. OF MINNESOTA STICKS IT TO CATHOLICS

On March 1, the University of Minnesota's Department of Theatre, Arts and Dance will host the Dario Fo play, "The Pope and the Witch"; it will be performed through March 9. Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest round of controversy surrounding the play:

"Imagine an anti-Semitic play, written by a Hitlerian, being performed at the University of Minnesota. Imagine, too, that Jews complain and the president of the university justifies the play on free speech grounds. Imagine, as well, that the play is defended by non-Jewish professors in charge of the production. Now really let your imagination run: bowing to pressure from Jews, a panel discussion on the play is scheduled, but no one from the Jewish community is invited to participate. Well, exactly this has happened, except that it's not Jews who are being assaulted by the University of Minnesota—it's Catholics.

"When I challenged President Robert Bruininks on the propriety of having this bigoted play performed on his campus last fall, he offered a lame explanation why the show must go on. Following his collapse of leadership is Robert Rosen, the university's theater director, and Steven Rosenstone, dean of the school's College of Liberal Arts. According to a report in *The Catholic Spirit*, the local archdiocesan newspaper, 'Rosen, who is not Catholic, said he is not surprised by the strong reaction; however, he does not see the play as an attack on the Catholic faith.' Perhaps he thinks it's an attack on Islam, save for the fact that Muslims don't have a pope. Rosenstone confirmed that no Catholics have been invited to join the forum and that's because 'nobody was selected for the panel on the basis of faith or religion.' That's interesting—the play was purposely selected to bash

Catholicism and now Catholics are purposely being denied the right to be on the very panel they pushed for.

“This is what the University of Minnesota stands for: free speech for Catholic bashers and no speech for Catholics. Accordingly, I will notify all members of the Minnesota legislature about this development: this is state-sponsored hate speech, partially funded by the target of hate, namely Catholics.” *Contact Steven Rosenstone; rosen060@umn.edu*