

# VIRGINIA TV NEWS REPORT DRAWS LEAGUE RESPONSE

In a news report on February 21 on WJLA in Virginia, it was mentioned that an abortion clinic was bombed. But the anchor woman also just happened to mention that the clinic "is down the street from a Catholic church."

The Catholic League, struck by this gratuitous association, sent a letter of protest to the station manager of WJLA TV. The league wondered why it wasn't said that the abortion clinic was across the street from a palm reader's office (which it is). The Washington, D.C. law firm that represents the station responded immediately, denying that any negative inference was intended.

In reply, the league contended that "the average viewer comes to conclusions based on innuendo as well as factual content." Explicitly, the league was incensed about "the suggested nexus between the crime and the proximity of a Catholic church." Subliminal messages, to the extent that they exist, can leave impressions, and that was the point the league was trying to make.

The timely and responsible answer provided by the law firm was reassuring. It is the league's hope that our very non-subliminal message was not lost on the parties involved.