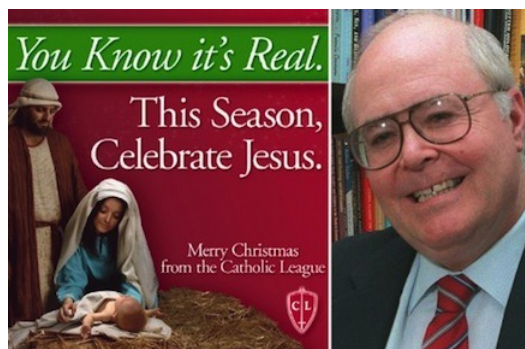


# “WAR ON CHRISTMAS” TACTICS VARY



Catholic League president Bill Donohue looks at the various strategies being used by anti-Christmas activists:

“If we can’t censor, then compete.” That’s the preferred *modus operandi* of many atheists out to smash Christmas. Their first instinct is to ban nativity scenes wherever they can. If that doesn’t work, then they lay claim to the same spot seeking to display their anti-Christmas message.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) is the most active atheist group using this two-prong strategy. In the Mississippi State Capitol, FFRF is displaying a sign mocking religion; it is trying to do the same in the Wisconsin State Capitol. No town is too small for FFRF to infect, which is why it is waging war in places like Athens, Texas and Prineville, Oregon. Sometimes the efforts of radical atheists yield really ugly fruit: in Santa Monica, city officials used a lottery system to sort out all the requests for display on public property, the result this year being that atheists won most of the spots.

We have no problem with the tactics of the American Humanist Association: it does not seek to censor or compete—it simply posts its inoffensive message on billboards. But FFRF is cut from a different cloth, and so are the zealots at American Atheists.

Unfortunately, some government officials have taken the easy way out by electing to ban all displays. For example, last

year the Catholic League protested the display of the menorah, a religious symbol, and the banning of a nativity scene, also a religious symbol, at the St. George Staten Island Ferry Terminal and in Boca Raton, Florida. This year the courageous souls who run things in both places chose to ban all displays.

There are two ways government can practice neutrality: the tolerant way, which is to allow all world religions a limited period of time to display their wares in the public square; and the intolerant way, favored by liberals, which is to censor everyone. We vote for the former.