

An Open Letter to the President of the United States

Dear President Clinton:

Today begins the second half of your term in office. I would like to take this opportunity to register with you some of the concerns of the Catholic League.

It is indisputable that we live in a time when attacks against the Catholic Church are in vogue. Regrettably, your administration has contributed to this problem, and that is why I am asking you to vigorously denounce attacks against the Catholic Church.

During the past two years, Catholics watched in amazement the elevation of Dr. Joycelyn Elders to the post of Surgeon General. Though she has resigned, her strident anti-Catholic remarks should have been enough to disqualify her in the first place.

In the summer of 1993, it was disturbing to learn that an anti-Catholic front group, Catholics for a Free Choice, was invited to the White House. Similarly, Catholics felt abused when they heard Faith Mitchell of the State Department make anti-Catholic statements during the Cairo Conference. And we certainly took note of your own Ambassador to the Vatican's comment that there is an "ugly anti-Catholic bias" in the administration.

To be fair, your White House Chief of Staff, Leon Panetta, has acted responsibly to quell this anti-Catholic bigotry. But we ask you to do more.

Anti-Catholicism rages in the culture more than in government. For example, just recently, Planned Parenthood made a vicious, demagogic attack on Cardinal O'Connor and Cardinal Law, blaming them for the killings in an abortion clinic in Brookline, Massachusetts. Going beyond McCarthyism, it even called into question Cardinal O'Connor's life of prayer and his contact with God.

You are the first president to have graduated from a Catholic college. We ask that you marshal the moral resources of your office to combat anti-Catholicism and thus contribute to an honest dialogue on the serious issues of our day.

Sincerely,



William A. Donohue
President



Catholic League

for Religious and Civil Rights

1011 First Avenue • New York, NY 10022 • (212) 371-3191