

Officials of the nominally Jesuit Marquette University have scolded the Vatican, saying it "has to give up the notion that the university can be under control of the bishop."

That from Francis M. Lazarus, Marquette's vice president of academic affairs. Lazarus concedes the Vatican's right to publish guides with respect to a Catholic university's conduct, but obviously wants to leave it to the institution itself as to how far those guidelines would be followed.

Fr. David Haschka, S.J., vice president of religious affairs, states that "Marquette professors are guaranteed academic freedom in their contracts."

Lazarus picks up that lead by saying that the Vatican schema "causes problems with those who want to ensure academic freedom. We (Marquette) want to maintain autonomy over our programs. We have to be free to pursue truth and knowledge. The rights of faculty and academic freedom must be recognized."

The executive vice president, Quentin L. Quade, says the Vatican draft will not work in its present form for Catholic universities in the United States — on the basis it does not reflect the U.S. "realities."

Lazarus provides the bottom line: "We would be in danger of being cut off from all our sources of federal funding." (Whether he foresaw in his pre-election statement a possible movement toward the American Civil Liberties Union agenda by the federal government is not known.)

This misplaced fidelity to academic freedom and federal funding rather than to the Catholic Church becomes more interesting in light of the other developments. The October *Marquette Journal*, a student magazine, contains a page-long feature on "A Feminine Alternative" — a new female condom that "offers women a choice of protection." The article goes into detail as to how this contraceptive works, complete with a picture — courtesy of its manufacturer and seller.

Marquette Journal lets the chief developer of the device present its "four main advantages," including that it lets women take the initiative in "protecting" themselves, and with a device "much more sturdy" than the male condom. It is "less disruptive to the act of sex. . . ."

There is a complete absence of any reference to Catholic doctrine concerning the immorality of all contraception, as well as the act of fornication. Catholic doctrine certain-

ly hasn't interfered with freedom in academia in this area, and it would seem that Fr. Haschka's ministry of religious affairs hasn't had much influence on the editorial staff and writers of *Marquette Journal*.

A fiction piece in the same issue not surprisingly (in light of the condom piece) is laced with obscenities and blasphemies (or at least the misuse of God's name). If that is the best that Marquette's English department can inspire in the way of creative writing, perhaps the university officials should be less concerned with academic freedom and more concerned with academic competence.

It is evident here (as in many more places, I am sure) that the professionals who have taken over "Catholic" universities don't really believe that an institution of higher learning can be completely and unabashedly Catholic and at the same time be truly intellectual, scholarly, and "free." Rather, they see it as necessary that the university be only self-directed, that it choose its own standards of thought, that it have a subjective measure of achievement and learning. It is all very "enlightened," and of course it is all very bad philosophy, so that of necessity it is also all very bad theology.

The Jesuits of old would have known better, and would certainly have been the first to accept submission to both the Pope and the local bishop. Jesuits during nine-tenths of their Society's existence accepted a unity of Catholic faith and academic learning, so that the whole aura and soul of their universities were thoroughly and uncompromisingly Catholic.

It is clear from the articles in the *Marquette Journal* that what prevails at Marquette is license, not liberty, and that the university's name and facilities may be freely linked by its students to immorality, as well as mere immaturity.

I venture that truly Catholic institutions such as Christendom, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Magdalen, and a few others have no problem at all with the Vatican's proposals and their academic integrity. In that, they are what Jesuit institutions once were.

Not that they or any really Catholic institutions might be comfortable under the authority of Milwaukee's Archbishop Rembert Weakland. But that is accidental, not of the essence of the discussion. Are such distinctions still taught outside of the handful of Catholic colleges and universities still in existence in the U.S.?

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