

**RE: INCITEMENT TO HATRED AGAINST ATHEISTS
BY ROMAN CATHOLIC ALIVE! NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 2011**

The Catholic Church in Ireland issues an arrogant and nasty newspaper called Alive! It is distributed for free. The paper is paid for by donations and scandalously it benefits from the tax relief scheme. PAYE payers who donate a certain amount to this excrement can fill out a form. Alive! then receives income from Revenue as a result. Atheists contribute to the Tax cookie jar that Revenue kindly gives to the paper that incites hatred against unbelievers.

Excerpts:

Heading: They're losers and no-hopers

“Let's get straight to the point: atheists are losers and no-hopers. And most of them it seems cannot even attempt to defend their own irrational views. That's bad enough, but to hide God's love from your own children, to rob them of a sense of meaning in life, to bring them up with no hope of eternal happiness, is incredible cruelty. For them [atheists] death is the loss of everything, its when they discover that their bank shares are worthless, that the future is over. They're the ultimate losers, having missed out on the meaning of life. And yet some Christians are intimidated by atheism! How very odd!”

This diatribe is placed next a picture of a baseball cap that reads God loves you but I'm his favourite. The insinuation is that God loves Catholics best and is not as keen on atheists.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT ALIVE NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 2011

To this we can say that the language is nasty and confrontational and not concerned with helping poor atheists. And if atheists make themselves unhappy by their own atheism that is none of the Church's business. Yet it goes, "That's bad enough".

All atheists are presented as useless losers. This slanders all atheists. It implies that they are not people but losers. Being losers and misery makers is presented as their essence and identity and not just a part of them. It slanders religious atheists among the Hindus and the Buddhists. Some liberal Protestants hold that God is not real but just a metaphor for morality. They are happy well-liked people.

An atheist does not necessarily claim to be sure that there is no God. The atheist only believes that the evidence is against God or insufficient. Many atheists still hope there is a God and this helps them in life. Belief is not absolute certainty. You can believe in God and still not have the feeling of hope.

To clarify that all atheists are meant the diatribe goes on to attack most atheists.

It goes as far as to complain that most atheists cannot attempt to defend their irrational views. That is an outright lie for it has been found in surveys that atheists tend to know Christianity and religion better than most believers do. Also even if it were true how could the writer possibly know most atheists? And intelligent atheists can attempt to defend their views. They might be wrong but they make a good attempt.

Only 3.3% of the Members of the Royal Society in the UK and 7% the National Academy of Sciences in the USA, believe in a personal God. Fewer still believe in the Catholic version of a God who is three people one of whom has turned into a cracker. And we are called on to regard these people as retarded or stupid by Alive!

If the atheist is really a no-hoper, the important question is, is he or she right? Maybe there is nothing to give meaning to life and to give us hope. Hope is a vice if it is based on error and delusion.

The diatribe then implies that atheists harm their children and are cruel beyond belief. They are accused of promoting atheism out of a desire to hurt. The implication is that Catholics should not let atheists raise children and Catholic parents should try and have their atheist children declared unfit parents to take their own children off them for religious reasons. If atheist parents really rob their children as the diatribe says and this is “incredible cruelty” then clearly atheists are no better than child molesters. The implication is that atheists should not be allowed to be primary school teachers, playgroup assistants or be allowed any role at all as carers. If an atheist is so dangerous to children, the atheist should not be allowed

to work in a nursing home for example. Those who hurt children would hurt anybody.

The diatribe implies that Catholics who are disinterested in religion and who act like atheists should give up their children to Catholic foster care.

Children need no hope of eternal life. Is the person who wrote the article so old that he or she does not remember how as a child and young adult that death was not a realistic concern for him? Most of us that have grown up know death will happen but we feel and act as if it will not happen to us. And a child can hope there is an afterlife and still be an atheist. Hope is a feeling. Feelings do not always follow the head.

When I was a child, I did not feel comforted by God's love. I felt I was expected to condone this God having made viruses and cancers etc. That may have been an over simplification but that is the way children think. It led to me thinking, "I can be treated painfully and badly by a being that loves me". That would have made me game for a paedophile. The battered wife mentality "Oh my husband hits me because he loves me and I annoy him" was put into me.

Some atheists have sacrificed the benefits of believing in God (assuming there are any!) in order to acknowledge the utter deplorability of evil. They don't want to look at unjust human suffering and say that God is right to let it happen. They deserve praise for their sacrifice not dishonour.

The implication of the article is that the atheist who feels happy and is a productive person is lying about being an atheist or if he is a real atheist, he is lying about being a happy well-adjusted person.

If we substitute the word Muslims for atheists and Islam for atheism we will see the article for the incitement to hatred that it is. And we will see that it is at the zenith of such incitement.

"For them [atheists] death is the loss of everything, its when they discover that their bank shares are worthless, that the future is over."

For many atheists death is only freedom from problems and suffering. Many of us are happy to die at the end of a long life. It is not true that we only care about money.

The things Alive says "are likely to stir up hatred" to borrow a phrase from The Prohibition of Incitement To Hatred Act, 1989. The word likely in the context of what Alive said is an understatement. What Alive said is intended to definitely stir up hatred.

The Catholics behind Alive know fine well that any suggestion that a person has harmed children will result in venomous hatred. The priests often dare not go out wearing their collars anymore. Alive is trying to take advantage of the media and society's rage.

Jesus and the Church say we must love God with all our emotions and our whole being. Our neighbour is to be loved as ourselves. The commandment orders feelings of love for God. There is no requirement to like or feel affection for the neighbour. That is why the Church says it refers to how we treat our neighbour. The neighbour then is only a means to pleasing God. Alive's piece breaks these commandments. It may be sectarian and bigoted but it still is humanistic. Its concerned about how not having God affects the children. Here is the piece rewritten to fit Catholic doctrine.

"Let's get straight to the point: atheists are losers and no-hopers. And most of them it seems cannot even attempt to defend their own irrational views. That's bad enough, but to have your children not knowing God and not having them hoping for eternal happiness not to please themselves but him is incredible cruelty towards God. He alone matters. For atheists their life is a waste to God. They're the ultimate wastes of space having refused to be devoted only to God. And yet some Christians are intimidated by atheism! How very odd!"

Its a lousy trick to change Catholic doctrine in order to pull on people's heart strings in the name of Catholic doctrine.

Teaching a child who has been baptised Catholic that he will go to Hell forever if he unrepentedly doubts the Church, if he listens to critics of the faith, or approves of those who live together without marriage is child abuse. The faith itself advocates this abuse. Many Catholics refuse to engage in this abuse and water the faith down or just sidestep anything nasty in it. The teachings of the Church use fear and hate (hating another is tormenting yourself over somebody else and is a sign that you hate yourself) to disable the child from thinking differently from the standard teaching of the Church. Children hate easily and if they are taught to fear atheists they will hate them. If adults find it hard to love those who they think are leading others to Hell and perdition imagine how hard it will be for a child! Alive is addressed to children as well as adults - children are even asked to help distribute the rag.

Harmless promotion of Catholicism is indirectly harmful in so far as the content of the faith is itself evil.

If Christianity is so wonderful why does the Christian USA have a far worse problem with underage pregnancy, abortion and STD's than the far from Christian Europe? (page 20, The Future of Atheism, Robert B Stewart, SPCK, London, 2008). The religion gets up so many people's noses that it makes sin attractive.

I propose that efforts be made to put the paper out of business. It is alarming that it gets hefty donations in order to peddle such hate filled garbage and for free!

Now let us consider:

Prohibition of Incitement To Hatred Act, 1989

“hatred” means hatred against a group of persons in the State or elsewhere on account of their race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, membership of the travelling community or sexual orientation;

2.—(1) It shall be an offence for a person—

(a) to publish or distribute written material,

(b) to use words, behave or display written material—

(i) in any place other than inside a private residence, or

(ii) inside a private residence so that the words, behaviour or material are heard or seen by persons outside the residence, or

(c) to distribute, show or play a recording of visual images or sounds,

if the written material, words, behaviour, visual images or sounds, as the case may be, are threatening, abusive or insulting and are intended or, having regard to all the circumstances, are likely to stir up hatred.

(2) (a) In proceedings for an offence under subsection (1), if the accused person is not shown to have intended to stir up hatred, it shall be a defence for him to prove that he was not aware of the content of the material or recording concerned and did not suspect, and had no reason to suspect, that the material or recording was threatening, abusive or insulting.

It has been argued that the law gives no protection to atheists who suffer incitement to hatred as it speaks of religion as being protected from incitement to hatred. But the law may see atheists as being a religion of their own. If so then Alive has broken the law on the basis that atheism is a religion in the eyes of the law. Atheism, however in reality, is not a religion.

Here is a stronger reason to hold that incitement to hatred against atheists is made illegal. The law states that if material is “threatening, abusive or insulting” then it is incitement to hatred.

Islam does not teach that God is Father. Thus the passage by implication condemns Islam. Would its author then have the courage to tell Muslims that they “hide God’s love from [their] own children”?

Conclusions:

Alive has provoked hatred towards atheists and in publishing this has broken the law. The Catholic priests of Ireland who distribute this paper also break the law. It is often to be found at the entrance of Catholic Churches. The answer is to have the paper shut down by the law.