

Boston cardinal knowingly kept priests accused of abuse

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simply didn't have that as part of our response to these cases."

He testified that the policy continued until the scandal erupted this January. The cardinal said he stuck to that policy in 1993, when he said he learned about abuse accusations against Shanley, but did not inform the suburban parish where Shanley had previously been pastor. Law testified he had promoted Shanley to head the parish in 1985 without asking anyone to check church records about the priest. Those records would have revealed several complaints against Shanley starting in 1966, when another priest wrote that Shanley had been accused of molesting a boy.

The deposition, taken June 5 and 7 and released yesterday as part of a court order, was especially compelling because at least some of the questions the cardinal was required to answer would probably not be allowed if the case were to go to trial.

LEGAL EXPERTS said it is unusual for depositions to be videotaped, and for the tape to be made public. But the extraordinary public interest in the scandal motivated the judge's decision.

Local television stations broadcast the cardinal's deposition almost in its entirety yesterday. As the tape was airing, Law was being deposed for a third day in the Shanley case. Transcripts and tapes of that session will be released in about 30 days, and the cardinal will be deposed again today.

The cardinal, the senior Roman Catholic prelate in the United States, appeared sober and sometimes weary on the tapes. He occasionally jostled with the plaintiffs' lawyer, Roderick MacLeish Jr.

At one point, the cardinal said, "Mr. MacLeish, I thought I answered that question previously," and added, "You indicated to counsel a moment ago that this was not the trial, that this was a deposition."

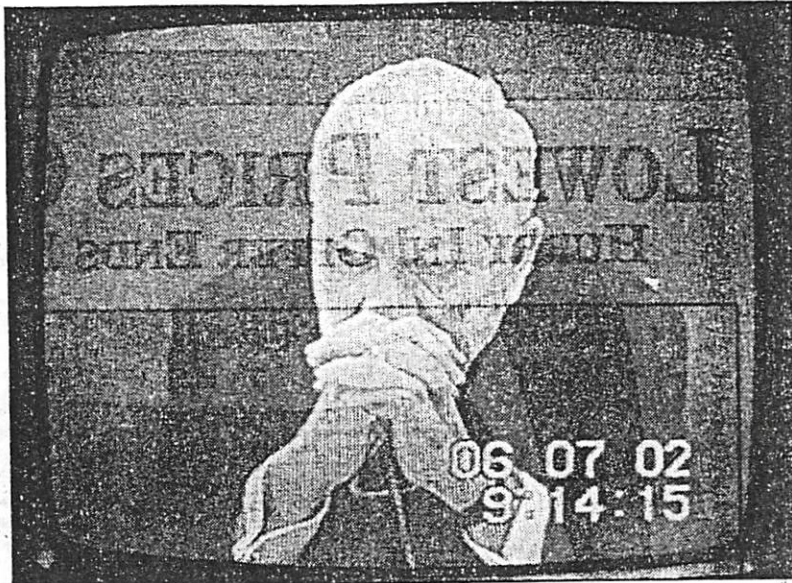
MacLeish said, "It is, in fact."

"Sometimes I feel you're conducting it as though it were a trial," the cardinal said.

One of the archdiocese's lawyers, Wilson Rogers Jr., said yesterday the cardinal was "totally forthcoming."

Rogers said, "He's here to participate in the process and respond to appropriate questions and he's doing that truthfully and fully."

Several of the plaintiffs have been present during the deposition. MacLeish and his firm represent four young men who are suing the cardinal for negligence, saying Shanley molested them. Three of them say they were pulled out of Christian



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOS

Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston said in a videotaped deposition in June that he relied on advisers in approving appointments, including that of Father Paul Shanley, whose records detailed abuse complaints.

doctrine classes and abused repeatedly for as long as six years. Shanley, 71, faces criminal charges of child rape involving four children.

THE DEPOSITIONS were released against a background of legal maneuvering by both sides. Although settlement talks broke down late last month, archdiocesan lawyers said yesterday that discussions were continuing, and that as recently as Monday night lawyers for both sides mentioned the idea of a settlement.

But the lawyers are also conducting aggressive litigation. Archdiocesan lawyers on Monday filed notices that they intend to depose several witnesses, including the mother of one of Shanley's accusers. And yesterday, MacLeish said plaintiffs' lawyers plan to seek church records on 72 other priests in an effort to show a pattern of archdiocesan negligence.

Cardinal Law said he was never told about complaints the archdiocese received about Shanley before the cardinal's tenure began in 1984. Some of those complaints involved Shanley's participation in what was apparently the formative meeting of the North American Man-Boy Love Association, and after those complaints in the late 1970s, Shanley was removed from his job as a "street priest" ministering to "alienated youth," and placed in a parish in Newton, Mass. He is accused of molesting several boys at that parish.

Many of the Shanley complaints in the 1970s and early 1980s were fielded by Bishop Thomas Daily, now head of the Brooklyn, N.Y., diocese,



Roderick MacLeish Jr., an attorney representing four abuse victims, will try to show a pattern of archdiocesan negligence.

who was second-in-command in Boston when Law arrived.

"LOOKING BACK on it now, Cardinal Law, as you sit here today," MacLeish asked, "do you believe that you at least, regardless of what other events had occurred, should have had the benefit of all of this information in a report from Bishop Daily, your personnel board or anybody else that you were relying on?"

The cardinal replied, "I would agree that the record-keeping and the institutional memory has to be improved. That was insufficient."

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Cardinal knowingly kept abusive priests

Law, of Boston, testifies he didn't reveal allegations

By PAM BELLUCK
The New York Times

BOSTON — Hours of videotaped testimony of Cardinal Bernard Law were released yesterday, detailing his responses to sexual abuse accusations against numerous priests and questions about actions he failed to take to prevent further abuse.

In seven hours of deposition as a defendant in a lawsuit over accusations against the Rev. Paul Shanley, Law testified that

he had allowed priests accused of sexual abuse — and even those who admitted the abuse — to return to parish ministry without telling parishioners of the accusations or admissions.

"I did not, as a matter of policy, in 1984, '85, '86, '87, '88, '89, '90, '91, '92, '93, '94, '95, '96, '97, '98, '99, 2000, 2001, go to parishes on the occasion of dealing with a priest against whom an allegation of sexual abuse of a child had been made," Law testified. "I see now that that should have been done, but we did not do that."

He added, "Did I think that I should have informed the parish and then not done it? No. I

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