

BARBARA WALTERS : MADAM MEDDLER

ABC personality Barbara Walters seems to have a thing about matters Catholic these days. For some reason, she finds it necessary to offer her pronouncements about issues that don't concern her and about which she knows nothing at all. Our final straw came when she and her girlfriends sat around a table slamming the Catholic Church about sexuality. Here is Bill Donohue's letter to Madam Meddler:

*Ms. Barbara Walters
Executive Producer, "The View"
320 W. 66th Street, Bsmt. Level
New York, New York 10023*

Dear Ms. Walters:

It seems you have a problem with the Catholic Church. On the September 22 episode of "The View," you read a selection from the Catholic Catechism on homosexuality that you found disagreeable. To be precise, you wondered aloud what the Church meant by saying homosexuality was an "objective disorder." To the approval of your co-hosts, you further added that celibacy was "unnatural" or "supposedly" so. Moreover, co-hosts Meredith Vieira, Elisabeth Hasselbeck and Joy Behar piled on by speaking in the most disparaging way about the Catholic Church's teachings on women, celibacy and homosexuality. As the executive producer of this show, you watched approvingly.

You have crossed the line. You and your friends wouldn't dare read selections from the Torah or the Koran and then castigate Jews and Muslims. Nor would you ridicule the sexual practices of Orthodox Jews or Muslims during Ramadan. That's because anti-Catholicism finds a ready audience in this country today,

and it is because of people like you that the bigots are so fat. You feed them well, Ms. Walters.

Sadly, you are no stranger to this issue. On the July 20 episode of "Good Morning America," you dipped into America's ugly history of anti-Catholicism by trying to establish a nexus between John Roberts' Roman Catholicism and his ability to render an independent judgment from the bench. After noting his religion, you asked, "Do you think it might affect him as a Supreme Court Justice?" Yet when Ruth Bader Ginsburg was being considered for the high court, you never once cited her Jewishness as a possible impediment to clear thinking. No, it took a Roman Catholic to make you nervous.

I have asked our members to contact you about this matter.

In the next day's edition of the New York *Daily News*, gossip columnist Lloyd Grove did a piece on the controversy. Enough of our members contacted ABC (on the Internet, we posted all the relevant contact information) to force them to respond. Their PR man gave the predictably limp party line—"To assert that Ms. Walters and the other ladies of 'The View' have any bias toward any group is simply absurd..."

What's really absurd is that anyone would believe such propaganda.