

DIVIDENDS PAID IN DRIVE AGAINST MTV

Last month's *Catalyst* included a story about the MTV show, "The Real World." We were troubled by the opening show of the season which featured several not-so-funny comments about Catholics. We wrote to the show's producers and to the sponsors. It looks like we might have had an impact.

McDonald's wrote saying that they cannot prescreen "The Real World" because the show is not scripted (this is true). They made it clear, however, that they "would never intentionally advertise on a show that negatively portrays or is offensive to any religion, race, or nationality." Knowing that, we'll be sure to hold them to this standard.

M&M/Mars said it would share our comments with its advertising agencies. The Department of the Army felt that overall the show did not violate its guidelines, however it denounced "the anti-Catholic bigotry" that marred some of the program. More important, the Army informed its agency buyers and MTV account executive that they would maintain "on-going scrutiny" of the show. The best news came from the Den-Mat Corporation: upon receipt of our letter, they immediately withdrew all advertising on the show.

Things may be looking up. Since we registered our complaint with MTV and the sponsors, the anti-Catholic element to the show has ceased. But no thanks to Michael Eisner: Disney, which sponsors the show, never responded to our letter.