

GORE WILL NOT DUMP TV SPOT WITH CHER

The Catholic League today asked the campaign headquarters of Al Gore to cancel tonight's ad with Cher that is scheduled to appear on BET. The league's request was in response to Cher's new song, "Sisters of Mercy," a track that defames the order of nuns by that name.

A Gore spokesman from the vice president's headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, Dag Vega, told Catholic League director of communications, Pat Scully, that tonight's spot was not a planned, public service announcement or advertisement. Rather, he said, it was an impromptu meeting that was taped by BET. Vega told Scully that the Gore campaign does not endorse all the views of those who back the vice president.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, found the explanation wanting:

"On May 26, Gore's press secretary, Chris Lehane, trotted out the George W. Bush stop at Bob Jones, charging Bush with 'embracing anti-Catholic Bob Jones University.' Now if Bush can stand accused of embracing the anti-Catholic views of Bob Jones, then it follows that Gore must stand accused of embracing the anti-Catholic views of Cher.

"The Gore camp is acting like there is no logical nexus between Cher's anti-Catholicism and his willingness to use her celebrity status to drum up support for his candidacy among African Americans. Yet if Eminem were to schedule the release of an anti-gay song the day after the election—and Gore had already cut a TV spot with him—there is little doubt that Gore would kill the spot in response to an appeal from gays. That he plans to go ahead with tonight's ad shows how defiant he is.

"We will be sure to let Roman Catholics know of the Gore camp's decision."