

MAHER, CATHOLICS AND THE HOLOCAUST

During a recent episode of “Real Time with Bill Maher” on HBO, host Bill Maher introduced Gerald Posner, author of a critical book on the Catholic Church. Posner commented on those who administered the concentration camps, saying that “three-quarters of the Nazis were Catholics. Several were also Lutherans. But the hierarchy was all Catholic.”

Posner, who has been accused of serial plagiarism, needs to walk back this malicious charge. Consider the following: “It should never be said that Christians were responsible for the Holocaust—Nazis were. Blaming Christians would be as unjustified as holding Jews accountable for the death of Jesus.” Here’s another chestnut for Posner to ponder: “The fundamental responsibility for the Holocaust lies with the Nazi perpetrators. Not with Pope Pius XII. Not with the church. Not with the teachings of the Christian faith.”

The author of the first comment was New York City Mayor Ed Koch; Marc Saperstein made the second one. These Jewish men knew the difference between those who were nominally Catholic, and those who were committed Nazis. Moreover, Hitler was no more a Catholic than Koch was: he was excommunicated *latae sententiae*, which is the penalty that automatically follows acts of a very serious moral nature.

According to Posner’s reasoning, Jews should also be blamed for working with Hitler. Bryan Rigg found a German army personnel document listing 77 high ranking officers “of mixed Jewish race or married to a Jew.” Two were generals, eight lieutenant generals, five major generals and 23 colonels. Hitler personally approved the “arianization” of the 77 Nazi officers of Jewish descent. But as Rigg points out, these “Jews” did not consider themselves Jews. Ditto for “Catholics”

who served Hitler.

Maher, of course, is not interested in a serious discussion about this issue. He is content to simply smear Catholicism.