

MAHER IS WORSE THAN BASHIR



Bill Donohue compares the reaction to Martin Bashir's comments about Sarah Palin to Bill Maher's comments about the pope and priests:

MSNBC host Martin Bashir recently made an obscene comment about Sarah Palin that he has apologized for. The silence coming from MSNBC, however, is disturbing.

At least Bashir apologized and is not likely to offend Palin again. Much more offensive than Bashir is Bill Maher: he has relentlessly, and intentionally, insulted the current pope, his predecessors, the nation's bishops, 40,000 priests, and 70 million Catholics. Over and over again, he brands them as child rapists, and no one at HBO/Time Warner does anything about it. To read some of Maher's comments, click [here](#).

It is time we had a national discussion about the moral right of political satirists to engage in vicious assaults against individuals and demographic groups. There are those on the right, and those on the left, who have gotten away with deliberately insulting people for years. That they smile while doing so, hiding behind their comedic mask, is not exculpatory.

So as not to be misunderstood, I am not calling for a new round of political correctness where pundits, comedians, et al. are forced to walk through a linguistic minefield: hard-hitting commentary is integral to robust free speech, and attempts to curtail it must be resisted. But there is a difference between a strident exchange and an obscene attack. There is also a difference between scripted commentary and spontaneous outbursts. Finally, there is a difference between those who rarely offend and those who are recidivists.

It's time HBO/Time Warner acted responsibly and sat Maher down.

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