

# MAHER SET TO APOLOGIZE FOR POPE-NAZI QUIP

Catholic League president Bill Donohue received a phone call today from an HBO executive regarding the league's news release of April 14 on Bill Maher. Here is what Donohue had to say about it:

"On Monday morning, we issued a news release on Maher's vicious attack on the pope and the Catholic Church that occurred the previous Friday night on his weekly show. Subsequently, many media outlets picked up on our release and pounded Maher for his bigotry. *Investor's Business Daily*, Mike Gallagher, Steve Malzberg, Les Kinsolving of WorldNetDaily, Newsbusters, Newsmax, Bill O'Reilly, Bill Cunningham, Cybercast News Service, Culture and Media Institute, Relevant Radio's Drew Mariani and others were justly outraged.

"Today, I spoke to an HBO official and he told me that Maher is expected to apologize tomorrow night for falsely accusing the pope of once being a Nazi. As I said on Monday, 'Like all young men in Germany at the time, he [Joseph Ratzinger] was conscripted into a German Youth organization (from which he fled as soon as he could).' I went on to say that 'Every responsible Jewish leader has acknowledged this reality and has never sought to brand the pope a Nazi.'

"After researching this matter, HBO concurs with this assessment. Apparently, now Maher does as well. Ergo, the apology.

"Will the Catholic League accept Maher's apology? Assuming it comes across as genuine, the answer is yes. But I hasten to add that what we would really like to see is for Maher to stop with his hateful diatribes against the Catholic Church. So this is a start, but it hardly puts to rest our concerns.

After all, there are plenty of factually accurate things Maher could say about other groups that would insult its members, but he chooses not to go there. Perhaps he can add Catholics and the Catholic Church to that protected list as well."