

PENN & TELLER EXPLODE; CBS AT FAULT

The August 27 episode of Showtime's Penn & Teller program will go down in history as one of the ugliest assaults on Catholics, or any other group, ever to air on television. Indeed, we know of no other show in the annals of television history that has even come close to this one-half hour of unrelieved hatred and bigotry. Because CBS owns Showtime, the subscription-based cable station, it must ultimately be held accountable.

It was right out of the Nazi playbook. The show, which was the season's finale, was defamatory, obscene and outrageous. Because we want as many people to watch it—just to see for themselves that we are not exaggerating—we put the video on our website. We also made a huge number of copies and sent the DVD to every bishop in the nation, as well as to other Catholics. Many non-Catholics, and select members of the religious and secular media, were sent the DVD as well.

The lies about the Catholic Church, to say nothing of the vile language used by Penn Jillette (the talking member of the duo), were positively astounding. Moreover, they never attempted to be comedic—from the beginning they advertised the show as payback for 2,000 years of alleged crimes. This was Julius Streicher, the Nazi propagandist, back from the grave.

The show blamed the Catholic Church for every evil in history. Jillette said the “intolerance, greed, paranoia, hypocrisy and callous disregard for human suffering” was the hallmark of the Catholic Church. Others on the show branded the Church an “amoral” and “power hungry” institution that is just worried about its “cash flow.”

The show was strewn with incredible lies about the Catholic

Church. For a detailed debunking of these lies, see p. 7; see p. 13 for the ad we posted in *Variety*. We couldn't help but notice that many of these same lies were first aired on the ABC Show, "The View."

Spokesmen for Catholics for Choice and Dignity—two anti-Catholic groups that lie about their Catholic status—were in the show, as was a representative of the sue-happy professional victims' group, SNAP. All of them ridiculed the Catholic Church.

Bill Donohue spoke to a high-ranking CBS official about this matter. While the spokesperson was courteous and took the call seriously, it is not enough: CBS has to sever its ties to Penn & Teller once and for all.

Please write to Mr. Leslie Moonves, Chairman, CBS Television Network, 7800 Beverly Blvd., Rm 23, Los Angeles, CA 90036-2112. This cannot go unanswered.