

THE EISNER AND IGER TAG TEAM

Disney's top executive, Michael Eisner, along with ABC's president Robert Iger, are hearing a lot from Catholics these days, the results of which are quite interesting.

This spring, Eisner nixed a deal between Disney and Warner Brothers (WB) because of the seamy past of a young actor. Disney had pledged to produce "Zoe Bean," a teen sitcom, for WB, but when Eisner learned that the lead actor, Simon Rex, had done porn movies four years ago, he put his foot down. Rex is out of a job. Is there anyone who doubts that Eisner's reaction was based on the resistance that Catholics and others have shown to his gambits?

Also, in the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*, Eisner wrote an op-ed piece arguing that the First Amendment doesn't mean "anything goes." William Donohue answered him in a letter that the newspaper printed on May 7. This is what Donohue said:

"Disney CEO Michael Eisner makes a good case why it is wrong for those in the entertainment industry to hide behind the First Amendment as justification for promoting irresponsible fare ('A Little Restraint, Please,' April 24). What makes Eisner's statement so astounding is that it appeared just a few weeks after the Disney-owned network, ABC, aired the most anti-Catholic show of all time, namely the April 7 edition of 'That's Life.'

"The show trashed Christ's crucifixion, the Host, transubstantiation, Holy Water, Catholic prayers, Midnight Mass, salvation, Catholic rituals, the Vatican, the New Testament, the Stations of the Cross, Confession, nuns, priests and laypersons. That it was shown during Holy Week, with specific reference to Easter, was all the more incredible. And unlike 'Ellen,' it wasn't even marginally funny.

"If Eisner wants to turn over a new leaf, most Catholics would embrace him. But he'll have to do more than write a good op-ed piece."

Iger is also getting the message. In a recent poll conducted in Pittsburgh, 86% of those interviewed agreed that ABC is anti-Catholic. Iger felt the pinch of Catholics again when they reacted with a furor over "That's Life." Indeed, bishops, as well as TV reviewers, who normally don't side with the Catholic League, came down heavily on our side. Adding to the chorus was NBC chief Robert Wright who exclaimed that ABC "made a mistake" by airing "Nothing Sacred."

Given all this, perhaps we will live to see the day when the Fabulous Eisner-Iger tag team earn their belt the fair way.