

October 22, 2009

## **DEFEND THE HONOR**

**Dear Defenders of the Honor,**

There is plenty of anti-Latino sentiment on English-language television networks -- but usually you expect it from Fox news talk show hosts. [Of course, there is also a scant amount of programming about Latinos/as and a small number of Latino/a individuals on network TV in general -- ever check out the Sunday morning public affairs shows? Or count how many Latino/a guests you see on late night talk shows? or The View? We look forward to George Lopez' late night talk show in November on TBS.]

But there is one exception to the Fox rule: CNN, which is considered a more middle-of-the-road news source, carries Lou Dobbs. Dobbs' perspective is firmly anti-immigrant. He often talks about the "Reconquista" effort, an imagined Mexican effort to reconquer the southwestern United States.

So when CNN announced many weeks ago it would carry a two-part series on Latinos, many Latinos/as across the country cried foul: You can't have it both ways. If CNN really respects the Latino community, it can't continue to carry Dobbs, who repeatedly demonstrates contempt for Latinos.

From the "Basta Dobbs" website [<http://www.bastadobbs.com/>]: "Lou Dobbs uses his platform on CNN to spread myths and misinformation about Latinos and immigrants, even as his network is wooing Latino viewers. It's time we said enough (that's 'basta' in Spanish). Join us in calling on CNN to get rid of Dobbs!"

Basta Dobbs represents a coalition of several other organizations that are organized around this issue. Roberto Lovato, a respected journalist and one of the key organizers of a petition drive demanding that CNN cut its ties to Dobbs, this week was invited to appear on the Lou Dobbs Show. Lovato said he would do so-- but only if Jon Klein, CNN's president, also appeared with him (from the Huffington Post [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/roberto-lovato/bastadobbs-responds-to-in\\_b\\_329161.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/roberto-lovato/bastadobbs-responds-to-in_b_329161.html))

"Over the years, you have time and again perpetuated myths and stereotypes about immigrants and Latinos, promoted the most extreme voices of xenophobia and hate, and refused to acknowledge your pattern of inaccuracies," Lovato wrote to Dobbs. "At this point, the only question remaining is whether Mr. Klein and the rest of CNN's management want you to remain associated with their network."

Lou Dobbs, like Ken Burns, has every right to say and write what he wants to say and write. But we also have a right-- a duty, in fact -- to speak out against racism. And CNN, like PBS, must be better than the programming it sometimes carries. They must uphold of principles of inclusion, accuracy and fairness.

Read more at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/roberto-lovato/bastadobbs-responds-to-in\\_b\\_329161.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/roberto-lovato/bastadobbs-responds-to-in_b_329161.html)

Stand up and be heard now!

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