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## **Letter to the Editor, Sunday Times**

On 6 September 2009 the Sunday Times published an article containing a ridiculous description of Saint Josemaria Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei. Two days later the information office sent the following letter to the paper for publication the following Sunday.

18/09/2009

Date of Letter: 8 September 2009

Sir

It is ridiculous and historically false to attribute pro-Hitler sentiments to Opus Dei's founder St Josemaría Escrivá ("Joffe sparks row with Opus Dei film", 6 September, p.24, main section). St Josemaría was speaking out against the Nazi system as early as the summer of 1941. This was when Hitler was still admired by many in Spain, and before the worst crimes of Nazism had been revealed.

Of course Pope Pius XI had already condemned Nazism in his 1937 Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*. St Josemaría would not be a canonised saint today if he had been sympathetic to Hitler.

With respect to the unfounded statement that "in later life he became close to General Pinochet's junta in Chile", St Josemaría did not know Pinochet and never even met him. No member of Opus Dei

occupied any senior administrative post in the military government.

Yours sincerely

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The Sunday Times did not publish the letter. Instead it sent a response to the information office attempting to explain why they thought the original article was balanced. It seems curious for a newspaper to embark on a lengthy (and failed) exercise to justify its own biased article rather than simply publish the letter and let its readers decide.

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