

A&E OFFERS BIASED SHOW ON POPE PIUS XII

On August 11, A&E (Arts and Entertainment) aired a production entitled "A&E Investigative Reports: The Pope and the Nazis" that portrayed the Pope as guilty of passive acquiescence with the Nazis during World War II. Though the program began with a statement indicating impartiality, the outcome was anything but fair. The conclusion of this "investigative report" was that Pope Pius XII was a failed pope who did little or nothing to thwart the Nazi onslaught.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, watched the program and issued the following statement today:

"A&E has an ugly track record of bashing Catholics. But this production, the creation of Bill Kurtis, is by far the worst. Tendentious and contrived, this broadcast is a thinly disguised attempt to substitute ideology for scholarship. If everything that 'The Pope and the Nazis' said was about Pope Pius XII, then it would make inexplicable the praise that the Pope received—during and after the Holocaust—from the likes of Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, the *New York Times*, Pinchas Lapide, Jeno Levai, Emilio Zolli (the chief rabbi of Rome who converted to Catholicism after the war), the World Jewish Congress and many others.

"Just as there are revisionists who argue that the Holocaust didn't happen or has been grossly exaggerated, there are revisionists who maintain that the Catholic Church did nothing while evil advanced. It is one thing to claim that the Catholic Church could have done more, quite another to suggest that it acquiesced in the slaughter of Jews.

"Unfortunately, A&E is not the only agent of disinformation on this subject, and that is why the Catholic League is

determined to set the record straight whenever this problem arises. There are many sources, including the Catholic League's book, *Pius XII and the Holocaust*, that provide a useful corrective to the A&E version of history, and we will be only too happy to disseminate them to as wide an audience as possible."

The Catholic League is the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization. It defends the right of Catholics—lay and clergy alike—to participate in American life without defamation or discrimination.