

TNT SHOW, "WITCHBLADE," SMEARS CATHOLICISM

Last night's episode of the TNT show, "Witchblade," smeared Catholicism with an historically unfair portrayal of the role of Pope Pius XII during the Holocaust.

The script dealt with a New York City Policewoman, Sara Pezzini, who exercises special powers given to her by the magical witchblade (an instrument originally possessed by the Vatican). In the course of her investigation, it is revealed that there was "an unholy bargain" between Pope Pius XII and Hitler. Under the alliance Hitler agrees to leave the Vatican alone as long as the pope remains silent about Nazi atrocities. As a symbol of the deal, Hitler is given the witchblade.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, spoke to this issue today:

"It looks like the top brass at AOL Time Warner want a fight with the Roman Catholic Church. Otherwise, why would they stand behind TNT's malicious lies about the Catholic Church?

"The two most damnable untruths told about Pope Pius XII are that (a) he was silent in the face of Jewish persecution by the Nazis and/or (b) he actively cooperated with Hitler. Neither accusation can withstand an honest reading of history. Indeed, two editorials during the war by the *New York Times* explicitly singled out Pius XII for *not* being silent. Moreover, as Israeli diplomat Pinchas Lapide found, as many as 860,000 Jews were saved as a result of the Holy Father's actions. That is why noted historian John Toland has written that no person—from any religion—did more to help Jews than Pius XII.

"The truth is that Pope Pius XII should be praised for what he

did. He was a Righteous Gentile who did what he could, absent an army, to help Jews. That is why it is so despicable for AOL Time Warner to allow this attack to go forward. One more show like this and we will pull out all the stops."