

No Friend of Democracy

(1941)

by

EDITH MOORE



Eugenio Pacelli, later Pius XII, signing a Concordat with Hitler's Germany (1933)

*A study of Roman Catholic politics --
their influence on the course of the present War
and the growth of Fascism*

With a Preface by

JOSEPH McCABE

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PREFACE

TO the student of History the struggle which now wraps the globe in the flames of war and hatred is not a tragic and mysterious revelation of new forces or new diseases. It is the inevitable further, perhaps final, phase of a struggle that has reddened Europe since it awoke from the slumbers of the Dark Age. First, the rights of man against the privileges of priests had to be vindicated, and freedom of conscience was at last born amidst the ruins of the Thirty Years' War. Then the rights of man against the usurped privileges of corrupt rulers and their hireling politicians had to be won; and from 1789 to the recent days, when we allowed or encouraged alien Powers to force despotism for the sixth time upon the people of Spain, more than a million men, women, and even children died to secure them. But the struggle was inconclusive. All privileges based upon the exploitation of others -- the privileges of wealth, of nobility, of royal or bureaucratic power -- must sooner or later be challenged.

The tragic irony of this phase of the struggle is that it was inaugurated by a group of rogues who, to their own amazement, successfully perpetrated the most colossal swindle that is recorded in history. The Hitlers and Mussolinis, meeting over slopping tables, had at first a hope that was modest in comparison with that of the Tammany politicians who once captured New York. They were astonished

when representatives of industrial wealth, of noble landowners, of high military commands, of palaces and churches, came whispering to them. They were to be the White Knights of Privilege: to be suitably rewarded and disbanded when " Bolshevism " was extinct. The crooks enlarged their plans until they had behind them an organised greed, a massive brain trust devising plans to restore half the world to serfdom and profitable service to themselves. England, France and America looked on for years, applauding their " efficiency," their " order and discipline "; and particularly their promise to make a final end of the churlish folk who talk about the rights of the people. Now . . .

What part had the Roman Church in this conspiracy? And how has it adjusted itself to wrest an increase of its power from the new form which the struggle has taken? We teach history in so emasculated a version in our schools today that now not one man in a hundred knows the ghastly part which it played in the bludgeoning of democracy in the last century, to say nothing of earlier centuries. We teach children that the Inquisition was a gentle tribunal demanded by "princes and peoples" for their own protection. We say that the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War were symptoms of social conditions which have passed away. We do not tell them one word about the savagery which the Church blessed in Italy, Spain and Portugal from 1794 to -- in the case of Spain --1941, though we tell them a hundred lies about the French and Russian Revolutions. And our organs of public instruction are so cajoled and intimidated by secretly working Catholic societies that we are honestly puzzled. Leopold, Petain and Weygand are fanatical Catholics, we learn. Strange that the worst traitors to civilization should be the most docile subjects of the Vatican. The Pope has forbidden the German bishops to publish the congratulations they have prepared for the wicked Hitler at his triumph. The Italian hierarchy talk about England in the language of Gayda. The Catholic weeklies in England admit sadly that one of the strongest elements of isolationism and Anglophobia in America is the Catholic Church. And soon . . .

Read this book. It is not a rhetorical outburst. It is not even an attempt to discover what is behind the veil. It is a cold statement of facts, mainly on Catholic Authority. Miss Moore has diligently, sagaciously, temperately brought together the scattered admissions which circumstances and events have at times elicited. You may draw your own conclusions.

Joseph McCabe.

INTRODUCTORY

IT is little more than half a decade ago that the Roman Catholic Church was closely collaborating with the Fascist forces of Italy and Spain, at a time when these systems had wantonly plunged their peoples into war. Prior to this, everywhere where Fascist States have emerged Catholicism had come forward as Fascism's ally. The knowledge that Catholicism could at the same time lay claim to supreme moral leadership and yet assist actively forces in the world whose aim was the destruction of all those values which make life tolerable, let alone just, brought the Church into disrepute in this country. Today, all that is apparently forgotten. Roman Catholic dignitaries and lay members occupy prominent positions

in the ranks of those who have a principled objection to the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini. We are told that even as fire and water cannot mix, so also Catholicism and Nazism cannot exist together. Christians who could not find terms odious enough to express their disgust at the pro-Fascist role of the Catholic Church in 1936 are now making common cause with Catholicism and planning forms of co-operation which will extend into years of peace.

Obviously, from the point of view of immediate national unity, this policy of letting bygones be bygones has its advantages. But it has its dangers too. The Church has in many countries operated as the ally of Fascism. Catholics have figured prominently among the defeatists of France. They have constituted the backbone of Isolationism in America. The Church has within her ranks today large numbers who, on the basis of their understanding of religion, are not on the side of Britain in this war. Surely, then, we have an obligation, and not merely a right, to know exactly where Catholics in this and other countries stand in relation to Fascism and the present war.

This booklet aims at helping to explain how Roman Catholicism as Church, Creed and Conscience has operated in relation to this war and the Fascist forces that brought it about. It provides a selection of material showing how Fascism and Nazism uprooted the free movements of civilisation and established their own authoritarian power with the Church at their side as ally. It tells how with the blessing of Catholicism dictators launched campaigns of aggression which so swelled the ambitions and inflated the self-confidence of the Axis Powers that their vision of world domination could be conceived in terms of practical politics. It alleges that the failure of the League and of non-Fascist statesmen to demonstrate the will to peace of the world can partly be explained by a reference to Catholic policy. It shows how in one country after another the Church bred Defeatism because she aspired to woo Fascism for the sake of State favours. It asserts that the concepts of Catholic Christianity are in large measure akin to Fascist ideology, and alien to the ideals which inspire Fascism's most fervent opponents.

This booklet is offered to all people, Christians and non-Christians alike, who are opposing Nazism because they want Freedom to live on and become a real force in the world. It is published as a warning, and in the hope that they will treat with due caution the overtures of Catholic representatives during the war. Otherwise they may discover that by their work they have strengthened a Church that will march under the banner of Freedom only to secure freedom for herself, and in order later to eradicate freedom of word, deed and conscience from the face of the earth.

AUTHOR

May, 1941

THE HOLY HELPMATE OF ITALIAN FASCISM



The *Völkischer Beobachter*, the Nazi party's official newspaper, headlines a speech by Hitler lauding the reconciliation of Catholicism and Italian Fascism

TURNING back the pages of history to the times when the Fascist regimes were establishing themselves we find that the active intervention of the Church and Catholic politicians on the side of the dictators helped Fascism to power. In Italy it was by direct orders from the Pope that Catholic democratic forces were weakened and thrown into confusion during the critical period of revolutionary instability. We cannot do better than quote a section of the very apt description given by George Seldes in his book *The Vatican: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, a book, it should be noted, which is far from hostile to the Church:

"In the spring of 1933, when clubs and headquarters of the Catholic Party and Catholic organisations were being burned and pillaged by the victorious *Fascisti* and when all the opposition parties were silent, the Popolari (the Catholic Popular Party, which organised the peasantry under the leadership of the Priest, Don Sturzo) held their fourth Congress, made an open defense of national and individual liberty, and re-affirmed their right to exist and their faith in the ideals of Christian Democracy.... Although Sturzo preached passive resistance, the South of Italy replied to every Fascist attack on a Catholic institution with an attack on a Fascist club or headquarters. In Calabria, in Sicily, in Naples, the Fascisti got the worst of most encounters. Mussolini then sent emissaries to the Vatican, asking that pressure he brought to check Don Sturzo, and warning the Church that the Catholic religion would be the worst sufferer if strife continued. The Pope's attention was called by Mussolini's envoys to the fact that Saint Peter's and other Church property had been protected by a special decree when the Duce took Rome, and that he was now willing to offer numerous concessions.... June 9th, 1923, Don Sturzo sent his resignation to the Pope. The next day he retired to the monastery of Atontecassino.... To the party the leader simply

said his duties as a priest were conflicting with his office of political leadership. Complete confusion seized the Catholic ranks; everyone knew the part the Vatican had played, and all good Catholics had to obey without questioning" (Pages 331f).



Mussolini signs the Lateran Accords

The subsequent record of events in Italy is the history of two institutions each jealously guarding its power against encroachment from the other, and anxious to secure all possible advantages from their decision to work as allies. State and Church had agreed to act in co-operation, the Church being entrusted with the spiritual affairs of the nation, the State with the politics. But this agreement to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's was only a rough and ready guide, and conflicts, sometimes of a very extreme nature, broke out between the forces of the Church and of the Fascist Party and State.

The Lateran Treaty of 1929 represented an attempt on the part of Mussolini and the Pope to end the worst tensions between them. It laid down more rigid lines for a cooperation in which the Church was to become the spiritual arm of the State whilst the State was to become the secular arm of the Church. But the immediate effect of the Treaty was not to allay tensions but to intensify them. For Church and State both claimed to have achieved a total and glorious victory. There were anti-Papal demonstrations on the part of unofficial elements in the Italian Fascist Movement, who had not forgotten Mussolini's earlier anti-clerical protestations, nor the atheist pledges he had given as a young politician. Even Mussolini himself claimed to have sequestered more Catholic journals in the first three months of the Treaty than in the seven years before. (Presumably these confiscations were designed to assist the Pope to carry through the terms of the Treaty: Catholic organizations were to confine themselves to purely religious matters.) On May 14th, 1929, less than three months after the Treaty had been signed, Mussolini declared in order to allay the misgivings of his Fascist followers: " We have not resuscitated the temporal power of the Pope: we have buried it." In answer to the virulent press campaign that followed, the Pope demanded obedience to " the Church and its head " as proof of the Catholicity of Fascism. Cries of " Down with the Pope " again were heard on all sides. It took two years for Mussolini to calm down his following and make his final overtures to the Pope. In June, 1931, he declared:

" I wish to see religion everywhere in the country. Let us teach the children their catechism; let us send them to Church on Sundays, however young they may be, even in their swaddling clothes. All that I leave to the priests. It is religion. The rest is politics, and 'la politique, c'est moi'" (*Manchester Guardian*, June 19th, 1931.)

Catholicism responded by greeting the ex-atheist Mussolini as a man of God and by welcoming his work to reconstruct Italy on Christian lines. A speech by Cardinal Gasparri, as Italian Papal Legate, in which he poured praise on the Duce and the Italian Government can be quoted as typical:

"The Fascist Government of Italy is the only exception to the political anarchy of



Archbishop Pacelli, later Pius XII, with Mussolini and other fascist leaders after the signing of the Lateran Accords (1929)

governments, parliaments and schools the world over," declared Cardinal Gasparri, an Italian Cardinal speaking at a Eucharist Congress at Sulmona (Central Italy) as the official representative of the Pope."

"Mussolini is the man who saw first clearly in the present world chaos He is now endeavouring to place the heavy Government machinery on its right track, namely to have it work in accordance with the moral laws of God." (*Daily Herald*, September 15th, 1932)."

On February 11th, 1942, the Fascist dictator appeared in ceremony at Saint Peter's, was sprinkled with holy water, made the sign of the cross and prayed. That act was the outward symbol of the union of Church and State. From that date the destiny of the Catholic Church became increasingly interwoven with the fate of the Fascist State. Catholicism was granted a virtual monopoly in the educational and cultural fields by decree of the Fascist ruler. The opponents of Catholicism, religious and otherwise, were persecuted, hunted, imprisoned and silenced by other means with the aid of the State machinery. Beyond this the Vatican gained an economic interest in the stability of the State under Mussolini. The Lateran Treaty transferred in hard cash about sixteen million pounds from the State to the Pope. But more than half of this sum represented Italian Government stock, given under the specific pledge of the Pope not to sell it over a number of years. Thus the Pope became interested in the financial well-being of the new Italian State to the extent of about two billion lire. (The story of this period of Italian History is admirably related by Dr. Herman Finer in his book: *Mussolini's Italy*).

In Fascist circles great schemes were afoot which culminated in the Abyssinian war in 1935. Unquestionably, to the Fascist ruler, the value of Roman Catholic co-operation lay principally in the need to ensure that the powerful Church of Rome would give spiritual sanction to the State and its rulers at those times when brutal and unjust acts of aggression were being prepared or put into practice. If confirmation is needed, it is provided by the following statement made in 1926 by Signor Farinacci, General Secretary of the Fascist Party:

" He (Mussolini) cherishes the ambition to arrive at an amicable compromise with the Pope on the Roman Question in return for the moral support of the Vatican for his own foreign and internal policies in general and his Imperialistic programme in particular." (*The War and the Papacy*, Protestant Truth Society).

Thus priest and Fascist teacher, prayer and Fascist creed, State Dictatorship and ecclesiastical Authority worked hand in hand to prepare the Italian nation for conquest. Fascism taught the virtues of War and empire and Authoritarianism. Catholicism taught the Christian virtues of the Fascist State and its Leader, the Catholic duty of obedience to rulers, and the sin of rebellion. Every school was virtually a sub-branch of the Fascist Party. Text books in elementary schools devoted a third of their matter to religious texts, prayers, catechism and scripture and two-thirds to a laudation of Militarism and the Fascist State.

Of course there were rare appeals for peace by the Pope during the years preceding 1935. But beside the daily influence of Fascists and priests who taught the blessings of the Fascist State, an influence which made itself felt in school, press and society at large, the effect of occasional speeches dealing with the virtues of peace in general was negligible. When Mussolini thrust the country into war with the active assistance of the Italian Church and the silent acquiescence of the Pope, many democratic

members of the Church in this country, who had troubled consciences and worried minds, were told that the welfare of the State and Church were as one. As the *Catholic Herald* stated:

" . . . the cause of civilization itself is involved, for the present at any rate, in the stability of the Fascist regime in Italy.... The Fascist regime ... has done much good in Italy. In spite of the anti-clericalism of some of its members it has not attacked religion. On the contrary it has fostered the Catholic religion and befriended it, and given such terms to its head as satisfied him that the vexatious Roman Question could be ended. . . "

And Cardinal Hinsley told the faithful:

"To speak plainly, the existing Fascist rule, in many respects unjust . . . prevents worse injustice, and if Fascism -- which in principle I do not approve -- goes under, nothing can save the country from chaos. God's cause goes under with it." (*Catholic Times*, October 18th, 1935).

MISCALCULATIONS IN HITLER'S REICH



The signing of the Concordat between Hitler's Germany and the Vatican (1933). Seated on the left are Ludwig Kass, last head of the German Center Party, and Franz von Papen. Pacelli, later Pius XII, is in the center. Standing in the back, on the far right, is Msr. Montini, later Paul VI.

Similarly in Germany, Hitler came to power with the active assistance of the Catholic Centre Party and of the ecclesiastical forces of the Roman Catholic Church. The country was in a political ferment after repeated changes of government and months of rule by Emergency Decree. Hitler promised to end all that and bring stability to the nation. Above all he swore to destroy the disruptive forces of Communism. From street corner and platform Fascist orators proclaimed that the country must choose between the anarchy of Bolshevism and the order of National Socialism. The Church's representatives

took their cue and joined in the general outcry, proclaiming that Russian Communism was at the throat of the nation, and that the supreme task was to save the country from Red Ruin. With Catholic votes and Catholic ideological support, Hitler finally seized power and started his campaign of terror and murder to exterminate the social forces which stood opposed to Fascism. Was Catholicism amongst those forces? Did the Church or her representatives protest against the hideous and barbaric hooliganism which went by the name of politics and government in Germany, which violated the lives and most elementary rights of human beings? Did the holy keepers of human morality warn the world of the terrible fate in store, the outline of which existed in the pages of *Mein Kampf*? No. The Church's attention was focussed on the supreme task of enquiring what the bloody dictator intended to do about the Church and Catholic religion, and whether a suitable agreement might be concluded similar to that which regulated relations between the Church and the State in Italy. On accession to power Hitler assured the Church that:

"As we see in Christianity the unshakable foundation of moral life, so it is our duty to continue to cultivate friendly relations with the Holy See and to develop them." (From Hitler's speech to the Reichstag on March 23rd, 1933, in which he indicated the programme of his Government. See *Universe*, March 31st, 1933.)

The Church was further assured of the Fascist desire to find a basis for co-operation when Von Papen was dispatched to Rome to offer a Concordat covering the whole of the Reich, and to promise the Church State protection for its property and doctrine in exchange for the dissolution of the Centre Party. The Concordat was signed, and as George Seldes explains:

"Monsignor Kass went to Rome. To the surprise of an interviewer, who expected a strong denunciation of Hitler from the ancient chief of the Catholic Party, the prelate said: "Hitler knows well how to guide the ship. This man, bearer of high ideals, will do all that is necessary to save the nation from catastrophe . . ."

And Seldes sums up:

"The Communist and Socialist Parties had been conquered with fire and sword; the Hugenberg Nationalists by intrigue; the Catholics by agreement with the Vatican."

One should not forget that Article 16 of the Concordat between Hitler and the Pope obliged all German Bishops to take the following oath before the *Reichsstatthalter*:

"I swear before God and upon the Holy Gospels and promise, as becomes a bishop, to be loyal to the German Reich and the State. I swear and promise to respect the constitutional Government and to have it respected by my clergy."

The German Hierarchy expressed the readiness of Catholicism to co-operate with the Nazi State in the following terms:

"The Episcopate of all the German Dioceses, as is shown by its statements to the public, was glad to express as soon as it was made possible after the recent change in the political situation through the declarations of Your excellency its sincere readiness to co-operate to its best ability with the new government which has proclaimed as its goal to promote Christian education, to wage a war against Godlessness and immorality, to strengthen the spirit of sacrifice for the common good and to protect the rights of the Church." (From a letter of His Eminence Cardinal Bertram to Chancellor Herr Hitler after the conclusion of

the Concordat between the Vatican and the German Government. See *Universe*, August 18th, 1933.)

Fritz Thyssen, the rich steel magnate who financed the Nazi Party for many years, has stated in the *Swiss Arbeiterzeitung* that the following were the plans for a new Germany which the Roman Catholics envisaged (the article is headed: *Pius XII, as Nuncio, Brought Hitler to Power*):

". . . the idea was to have a sort of Christian Corporate State organised according to the classes, which should be supported by the Churches in the west by the Catholic, and in the East by the Protestant -- and by the Army....', (*Cavalcade*, September 28th, 1940.)

The contention is that once again, in exchange for the promise of benefits to the Church, the Church betrayed the democratic forces inside and outside her own ranks, and used ecclesiastical influence and power to foster allegiance to Fascism.

This period of German history must be impressed on the minds of all those who are so fond of citing the subsequent attacks on priests, nuns and Catholic institutions as historical proof that the Roman Catholic Church takes its stand for progress against modern Reaction. Certainly no historian would seek to deny that Hitler scorned to fulfil all the pledges given to the Church as he has ignored every other pledge when it suited his convenience. A situation developed similar to that which had sprung up in Italy prior to 1929. The difficulties were even greater. For German Nazism was not a replica of the Fascism of Italy. Its creed is more exactly defined, and forms an ideology which is alien to many basic tenets of the Roman Catholic Church. The pillars of Nazi ideology are racialism and anti-semitism and aggression. Further, the Nazi Movement came to sponsor a sort of new religion in place of the old dead dogmas, in which the Universal God of Peace had to make way for a strong, national Aryan God of War. There was even talk in Fascist circles of a single German Church free from Rome as the ultimate aim. All this created tension and difficulties in excess of those which the Church had faced in her dealings with Mussolini. Hence the view held by some English Catholics that the hope that Nazism can be Catholicised is forlorn indeed, and that better hopes for Catholicism are founded in Nazism's destruction than in any attempt to remould the Nazi system in forms which would give Catholicism its due measure of influence and power. This view has been strengthened by the more recent partial alliance between Germany and Russia which has raised the question whether some permanent form of co-operation between Nazism and Stalinist communism might not emerge.

But neither the Vatican nor the German Church have shown signs that they accept that assumption. The German Church has been denied financial privileges which it enjoyed earlier. Priests and nuns have been intimidated and imprisoned and held up to ridicule in immorality and embezzlement trials. Under sterilization laws, the members of Catholic Orders were compelled to notify the Nazi Authorities of defectives and epileptics in their congregations, and arrange for the operations to be performed. Payment for mass was treated by the State as a commercial enterprise and taxed as such. Catholic schools have been closed down and Catholic children forced into Nazi Youth Organizations under Nazi pressure whilst Catholic Youth Bodies were closed down. In Hitler's purges Catholic prelates were among the victims. Yes, the German Church has suffered all this -- but in infinite patience and with dogged forbearance. There have been protests, official and unofficial, at these sharp excesses of the Nazi State and at the repeated violation of the German Concordat. But on all possible occasions these protests have been linked up with expressions of devotion to the Fascist State, with enthusiastic support

for all the anti-Bolshevik campaigns of Hitler, and with the plea that the Concordat be respected, thus making it possible for the Church to work faithfully at Hitler's side. The Catholic press in this country prior to this war has begged English Catholics to exercise the same patience and reserve in judging events in Germany. Regular readers of its pages could not fail to note that the Vatican and the Church were ready at all times to become the ally of Nazism if only Nazism would yield some of its totalitarian power in the spiritual and educational spheres to the Church. The following letter written by Father Bertram and circulated early in 1934 is only one of many documents which can be cited in substantiation of this point:

"There is yet another very heavy and serious anxiety which afflicts many thousands of loyal Catholic Christians. I refer to the anxiety that is felt on behalf of those who, under the former system of party government, followed those leaders whose aim it was as a matter of religious duty to combat Marxism and Bolshevism in a manner appropriate to the form of government then obtaining. These men, who did their best for the nation and the State, for religion and the Church, in dutiful obedience to those who were in authority at the time, are today no less ready to serve the new State loyally and uprightly for the nation's good, and to employ all their power and resources in the common task of rehabilitation in honourable harmony with the present government" (*The Persecution of the Catholic Church in the Third Reich*, page 15.)

The pamphlet *Nazi and Nazarene*, by Ronald Knox, the Catholic writer, stresses in callously frank terms the hopes of a compromise to which Catholics held fast:

"Whether because they remind him that there are cultures other than the German culture, or because they remind him that there was a pre-Nazi Germany, Hitler might be expected to view the Catholics of the Reich with distrust, and perhaps to harass them. But does either motive account for the vigour, the purposefulness, of the anti-Catholic drive? The Catholics of Bavaria, and perhaps of the Rhineland, might be suspected of sympathy with the old order of things; but not those of Prussia and of the other German States. There, you feel, the Lutherans might have been persecuted (as we know they have been persecuted), and the Catholics let alone; yet the suppression of Catholic influence has been nation-wide. Nor, when you come to look into it, was there much in the cry of Foreign influence! The German Catholics had no love for France; they remembered the anti-clerical laws, and they blamed France for the ill-success of Brüning's Chancellorship. Russia they hated like the Nazis; Italy, Germany's new friend, was endeared to them by the aid which it lent to the anti-Communist rising of General Franco. There was no reason in the nature of things why the new German Government should not have pulled well with the Church at first, if there had not been some more intimate ground of disagreement."

That more intimate ground is declared to be Hitler's aversion for Christianity.

To date, the unwillingness to enter into friendly relations lies not with the Pope or the German Bishops but with the Fuhrer. Nevertheless, despite all attacks on the Church, at all crucial periods which contributed to the tearing up of the Versailles Treaty and the severing of those slender threads of international law, Roman Catholic bells pealed as loudly as any in gratitude and thanksgiving for the liberation of the German people by the great Adolf Hitler.

Any talk of a Papal or Catholic struggle against Fascism in Germany is an historical falsification. The

rare statements, written and verbal, which have emerged from Papal quarters as rebukes to the Nazis and their doctrine came after Hitler's Regime had four years of life and growth behind it, and only when the Nazi system had inflicted serious injury on the German Church. As such, these rebukes had no greater value than that of a strategic move of self-defense.

THEOCRACY IN AUSTRIA AND SPAIN



The Spanish Catholic Hierarchy gives the fascist salute at Santiago de Compostella. Left to right: the Bishop of Lugo, the Archbishop of Santiago, the Canon of Santiago, General Aranda, General Dávila, the Bishop of Madrid (1937)

In Austria, the Dollfuss experiment in clerical Fascism (afterwards continued under Schuschnigg) was short-lived. It was nevertheless instructive. Compared with Nazism, Austrian Fascism was more humane. Cruelty was an end in itself, in the Germany under Nazi rule. This was not typical of the Dollfuss regime, although bloodshed, persecution and repression were used unstintingly where necessary to bring the new regime to power and keep it there. More important is the point that between Austrian Fascism and Catholic Clericalism harmony existed from the start because the Fascist leaders were themselves devoted sons of the Church (more devoted than Hitler who was and presumably still is nominally a member of the Church of Rome). These Christian leaders were resolved to use Fascist methods not only to defend economic privilege, but in order to expand and safeguard the power of their Church. Catholicism increased its influence by the aid of such decrees as the compulsory attendance at religious instruction for all children in primary and secondary schools; by the suppression of the powerful Austrian Freethought Union; by the allocation of 58 out of the 60 seats in the State Cultural Council to the Roman Catholic community which gave the Church a monopoly in all cultural matters; by applying an ecclesiastical test to the civil service, etc. In its social aspects the Austrian Fascist State bore a close resemblance to the Christian conditions laid down by successive encyclicals dealing with

the Social Order. As a prominent Catholic publicist, Mr. C. F. Melville, wrote in September, 1933, when the scaffolding of the new State was in the process of erection:

" Economically it will resemble to a great extent the Fascist Corporate State of Signor Mussolini. Its spirit will derive from the interpretation of Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical of May, 1931, *Quadragesimo Anno*, in which the principle of private ownership is acknowledged, but the right of the State to intervene ' for the common good ' is also admitted. Liberal parliamentarism is to disappear for good; industrial disputes prevented by the substitution of corporations for the existing trade unions and the employers' federations; and all political parties are eventually to be suppressed.... Above all, the Austrian Corporative State will be integrally and essentially a Catholic State.'" (*New Britain*, September 20th, 1933.)

In this way a Clerico-Fascist constitution was born which derived its inspiration and guidance from Papal encyclicals and its power from the violence of Fascism.

In Portugal a similar form of Catholic Fascism is in control.

In Spain the Roman Catholic clergy were so notorious for their reactionary economic, political and educational influence that a detailed treatment of the Spanish question is unnecessary. The Church possessed great affluence and such a monopoly in the sphere of Education that she committed the common error under such circumstances of becoming still more grasping, more unscrupulous and more arrogant. When Catholicism dominates in the political sphere it usually rouses an intense hatred of the Church, though it does not of necessity drive men from the Catholic religion. The Catholic intellectual, Jose Bergamin, said in 1936, when asked by a foreign journalist how it came about that the Churches were burned and clerics killed:

" When these poor barbarians kill priests and burn Churches they do it not out of hatred, nor out of indifference, but rather as a man may kill the wife he loves when he finds out that she has deceived and betrayed him."

This interpretation has certainly some truth in it. In the case of Spain a Republican Government came into being which, in the interests of the downtrodden and ill-educated masses, not only challenged vested interests that were purely economic but also attacked the powerful Jesuit Order and the system of subsidizing the Roman Catholic Church. It increasingly secularised the system of public education. At the subsequent polls the Church defiantly sponsored the cause of anti-Republicanism, declaring it to be a mortal sin to vote for the Republican ticket. But despite all pressure, the Spanish people once more returned a Republican Government to power in February, 1936. It was then that the Catholic Action Party led by the Jesuit-trained Gil Robles seized the initiative and with the help of Hitler and Mussolini planned and carried through the rebellion which led to three years of war and slaughter. To quote the brave words of Luis Companys who was elected President of the Autonomous Government of Catalonia and on October 17th, 1940, was executed by order of General Franco:

" We are not opposed to any religious creed. But we do not forget that those who rebelled against us were the dignitaries and officials of a syndicate of business interests who were trafficking in the religion of Christ, and whom the people met only in connection with masses, funerals, and the sale of dispensations These were the men who revolted. The clerical predominance in our country was like the militarist predominance, a predominance

of castes and privileges, that continually interfered in temporal and political affairs, that sowed the seeds of hatred, that propagated violence and civil disorder. In the elections of February 16th the Papal Nuncio extolled and exalted the Right-wing candidates, the *Accion Popular* (a reactionary political party) and the *Accion Catolica* worked together, the bishop of Barcelona was the promoter of the reactionary coalition with the Carlists and the followers of Lerroux, which started a wave of civil war here." (*Voice of Spain*, November 2nd, 1940.)

The outcome was a terroristic regime which reinstated Church privilege.

THE *DUCE* GOES TO WAR

ROMAN CATHOLICISM has no fundamental objection to war. It has no use for the pacifist tenet: Thou shalt not kill. Catholic moralists teach that the use of violence is legitimate when put to the service of a just cause. This theory possesses practical value only in so far as Catholic Authority defines the conditions of a "just war." Yet Catholic writers on the subject do not lay down any precise principles of guidance. They are usually content to speak in ambiguous terms and end up with the Golden Rule of "Trust your rulers." The following quotation from the words of Rev. J. Keating, S. J. represents the sort of instruction that is given:

". . . before a soldier can lawfully fight, he must be morally sure that his cause is just. He cannot presume that his country is always in the right, though, failing the means of full information and in the absence of clear inclinations to the contrary he may generally leave the decision to his rulers." ("A Catholic Survey", *Bulletin of the Catholic Council for International Relations*, Vol. 2, No. I.)

No wonder history is filled with records of unjust wars launched and prosecuted with Roman Catholic support. We need only recollect the World War. The appeals of Pope Benedict XV for the belligerent nations to make peace only served to conceal the fact that the Vatican refrained from placing upon the shoulders of any government or governments the responsibility for the war. The power of the Vatican over its international following was not placed behind a practical policy to check the war-makers. On the contrary, Catholic priests under Papal control were working, praying and recruiting for the victory in war of their respective countries. In the wars that have followed, Catholic policy has proved in this respect to be as changeless as the Church's dogmas.

In a previous section it was contended that Mussolini in his imperialistic attack on Abyssinia enjoyed the support of the Church. Here are vital facts in substantiation of that statement.

William Teeling, a devoted Roman Catholic who is, however, a democrat in politics and therefore critical of the manner in which the Vatican has thrown in its lot with Mussolini and other Fascist forces in Europe, has written a very interesting chapter in his book *The Pope in Politics*, entitled "From the Lateran Treaty to Abyssinia." He explains how Mussolini was quite clear about his intention to use the

Lateran Treaty and, indeed, the Pope himself, as useful means to his imperialist ends. For Mussolini valued the traditional use of organised religion to impart God's blessing to the cause of the Fatherland in time of war. But beyond this, the international influence of the Roman Church promised to be of great significance. Mussolini sampled the wares he had purchased when he sent his armies to Abyssinia.

"(Mussolini) brought all possible pressure to bear on the Pope to induce him to bless the Italian armies and come out wholeheartedly in favour of Italy. The Pope did not do this himself, but he raised no finger to stop Italian bishops up and down the country from going on Fascist platforms and doing everything possible to support Italian arms." (Page 129.)

As Teeling says, the fact must be faced that "practically without exception the whole world condemned Mussolini, all except the Pope." The Italian Hierarchy almost to a man gave frenzied support to Mussolini and his war aims. The historian, Professor Salvemini, has placed on record that the following Roman Catholic dignitaries were in favour of Italian Fascist aggression: Seven Cardinal Archbishops; 23 Archbishops; 44 Bishops; 6 Archbishops in partibus infidelium. Salvemini reports textually some of the speeches made by these ecclesiastics, as well as resolutions passed at congresses which they attended or at which they presided.

The following are selected as typical:

(1) On the very day that the League of Nations met to consider the Ethiopian-Italian conflict, a National Eucharist Congress was in progress at Terrano attended by 57 Bishops and 19 Archbishops. *Osservatore Romano* (August 22nd, 1935) reported that this congress sent a telegram to Mussolini which read:

"Catholic Italy thanked Jesus Christ for the renewed greatness of the Fatherland made stronger by Mussolini's policy."

(2) In his Episcopal letter to his diocese written on October 15th, 1935, the Bishop of Nocera declared:

"Ethiopia is but a mixture of uncivilised tribes. Its people have no true notion of the duties of man, of its rights of its freedom. It is a people which, having become detached from Rome, cannot get the full benefit of the Christian ideas, which has not been able, therefore, to produce those beneficial conditions to which the West of Europe owes its greatness. Roman Catholic Italy has the duty of bringing to populations deprived of them, its principle of equity, charity and fraternity. We pray God that He should use Italy as His divine instrument for the evangelization of the whole world."

(3) And on October 28th the Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan added:

"The Italian flag is at this moment bringing in triumph the Cross of Christ in Ethiopia to free the road for the emancipation of the slaves, opening, at the same time, to our missionary propaganda."

(4) The Archbishop of Taranto, after having celebrated Mass in a submarine, prayed too for the Italian victory, and laid down five points which gave him his justification, it seems, for supporting Mussolini's war:

(a) War had been declared by the legal government, and it was the duty of all citizens to

obey Rome.

(b) The Italian victory would open Ethiopia, a country of infidels and schismatics, to the expansion of the Catholic Faith; therefore the war against Ethiopia should be considered as a holy war, as a crusade.

(c) Italy was fighting in Oriental Africa a war of defense, and therefore it was a just war.

(d) As soon as Ethiopia was conquered there would be room there for Italian emigration, and Italy would get plenty of raw materials.

(e) Italy was fighting in Ethiopia a civilising war against barbarism and slavery.

(*New Times and Ethiopia News*, October 3rd, 1936.)

As for Pius XI, he made one, and only one, important announcement on Mussolini's campaign in Abyssinia, and in this the decisive passage ran:

"The mere thought of war makes us shudder, yet outside Italy there is talk about a war of conquest, a war of aggression. A war of sheer conquest and nothing else, would certainly be an unjust war. It ought, therefore, to be unthinkable, a thing sad and horrible beyond expression. We cannot think of an unjust war, we cannot contemplate its possibility, and we deliberately reject it. We do not believe in -- we do not want to believe in -- an unjust war."

In circles of Catholic democracies in this country it was popular to interpret this as Papal condemnation of Italian aggression on the grounds that the war was factually a war of conquest. But if one examines the statement as a whole it is surely obvious that the literal meaning is that Mussolini's war could not be a war of conquest because such a war was "unthinkable." This, at all events, was the interpretation placed on it by every patriotic Catholic in Italy. And the fact that Pius XI proceeded to recapitulate the numerous excuses made by the Italian aggressors (need to defend frontiers, teeming population bottled up within too restricted Italian boundaries) without passing any judgment on the validity of the same only strengthened that interpretation. As the Editor of the *Catholic Times* (July 17th, 1936) wrote in answer to the challenging words of the Bishop of Durham:

"I will grant you that throughout these months of crisis the Holy Father has said no word in favour of the League of Nations, nor in favour of that united stand against Italy which was so much desired in this country."

Not only did the Pope refrain from condemning the peace-breaker in Europe, but as we have seen he did nothing to restrain the Catholic clergy, Bishops, Archbishops and Cardinals in Italy, who were under his influence and supervision, from granting the peace-breaker their spiritual and practical aid. Increased Catholic missionary activity in that part of the Black Continent over which Mussolini came to hold sway was part of the tangible reward which went to the Catholic Church. And in May, 1936, when the Fascist troops occupied Addis Ababa, the Pope was for obvious reasons not merely content to express his great happiness at the cessation of hostilities. He went further and referred to the:

". . . triumphant happiness of a great and good people for a peace that will further and will initiate the true European and world-wide peace." (*New Times and Ethiopia News*, October 31st, 1936.)

Was extermination by mustard gas in Africa, the weapon which had produced peace and victory, one of the "great and good" attributes of this "great and good" nation ?

The conquest of Albania followed later. And so the taste of blood, success and power was in the mouth of the Italian Dictator. Thus, with the sanction and connivance of the Catholic Church in Italy, Mussolini grew lustful, boastful and powerful enough to become the worthy ally of Hitler and help perpetuate one of the worst social crimes in the history of mankind.

The crucifix had not been reinstated in the Italian Schools for nothing. Mussolini had extorted a price, and dead Ethiopians and a ravaged country were part of that price. Mussolini's prostration before the Pope at Saint Peter's was not the outward symbol of a virtuous resolve on the part of the Duce to use his power to bring joy and contentment to the peoples of the world. It was the crafty, calculating act of an unscrupulous ruler who sought power regardless of the cost in life, liberty and happiness, and who needed "Divine" sanction and "Divine" inspiration to give authority to acts which were repugnant to human reason.

NAZI IMPERIALISM



Reichsbischof Müller and Roman Catholic Abbot Schachleitner are greeted by Hitler at the Nuremberg rally

Before Herr Hitler challenged the world by launching his attack on Poland, he had numerous successes to his credit in the international field all of which had played an essential part in preparing the German nation for the decisive battles which were to bring about the conquest of Europe and later, perhaps, of the world. There were campaigns such as the march into the Rhineland, the Saar Plebiscite, the seizure of Austria, the march into Czechoslovakia.

When the Rhineland was occupied by Nazi troops, Services of Thanksgiving were held in all Catholic Churches throughout Germany, and hymns of praise were sung to the Fuhrer and the Great German

Nation. Similarly the plebiscite result of 477,119 votes cast for a return to Germany of the Saar (90.8 per cent of the total) caused the great Church bells to peal forth their victory chimes once again. But more must be said on these events. The Saar population is almost entirely Catholic. The result showed clearly that the Catholic vote was almost entirely in favour of Germany. We are told that the Pope maintained an attitude of absolute neutrality. This was true as far as his public utterances were concerned. But the representatives of his Church in the Saar were permitted by him to explain the attitude of the Church in the following terms:

"Dear diocesans, -- On Sunday, January 13th next, the plebiscite will be held in the Saar to decide whether this German country and its inhabitants shall or shall not remain in that state of separation from Germany which was forced upon them by the dictated peace of Versailles. No Germans can regard with indifference a decision which will fall due in a few days and which will have such important consequences for the future of the Fatherland. As German Catholics it is our duty to uphold the greatness, the welfare, and the peace of our Fatherland. Our most important means to this end is prayer. We therefore ordain that on the given Sunday, after the usual services, Pater Noster and Alle Maria be said thrice in all the churches with the participation of the congregation, in order to pray that the Saar Plebiscite may have a blessed result for our German people." ("Appeal to Roman Catholic voters issued by the German Bishops of Speyer and Trier and read from the pulpits of the churches under their control." See *The Times*, January 18th, 1935.)

The Catholic Times (January 18th 1935), after the conclusion of the plebiscite wrote in the following vein:

"He (Hitler) owes this triumph, this vindication of Germany to the Catholics . . . The whole world has begun to ask whether Hitler and his followers know the meaning of gratitude. Time will give us the answer..."

Just a year later Germany held its " elections " whereby the German people were asked to " vote " on the whole line of foreign policy of the Nazi State. The Catholic Hierarchy of Germany issued its statement which was read out publicly in all the Catholic Churches of Germany on Sunday, March 22nd, and which was as follows:

"All we who know our faithful Catholic people, and their ideas and feelings, are aware that German Catholics, like everyone else in our Fatherland, fervently desire to proclaim to the world their patriotic feelings in hours of national decision. But we also know that the coming election puts many of you in a painful conflict of conscience, because it might appear that your vote meant the acceptance of measures and expressions which are antagonistic to the Church and to Christianity and which have filled us with grief and pain in recent years. In order, however, to open the way to a decisive ' yes ' the following declaration may be made in the name of all German Catholics, for whom the Catholic faith is their guiding principle. We give our vote to the Fatherland, but that does not signify approval of matters for which we could not conscientiously be held responsible. This attitude and declaration suffice to enable all Catholics of good conscience to vote ' yes ' on all questions which are voted upon, and to support before all the world the honour, freedom and security of our German Fatherland."

"This declaration can and will in no way prejudice the free decision of the voters; it is not intended to influence any attitude to purely political matters, but it is intended as its text

indicates, to clear up misgivings on matters affecting the Church. Liberty of attitude on the matters voted upon remains unaffected." (See *Catholic Times*, March 27th, 1936.)

It should be remembered that this declaration came after three years of Hitler's rule, years in which, to put it mildly, the Church had been increasingly snubbed and slighted. Many of the Catholic laity seethed with indignation at the attacks of Nazism on their religion and the seemingly spineless attitude of acquiescence on the part of their Church. The Hierarchy could do no other than permit Catholics to vote against Hitler if, in the circumstances, they felt the need to take that course. But the statement openly revealed how the Church wanted them to vote on this occasion. Under the conditions of terror the result showed such an overwhelming vote in favour of Hitler's aggressive policy that only a few Catholics could have given their vote in opposition.

Hitler's conquest of Austria was well prepared by a Roman Catholic Minister of the Interior who was at the same time a Nazi leader, Dr. von Seyss-Inquart. Hitler's troops entered Vienna to the pealing of the Church bells. Their ringing had been ordered by the leader of the Austrian Church, Cardinal Archbishop Innitzer, Primate of Austria. This gentleman hastened to assure the Nazis of the fidelity of himself and his Church. He issued a proclamation stating that Catholics must support without hesitation the Great German State and its Leader " whose struggle against Bolshevism and for power and for the honour and unity of Germany corresponds to the voice of Divine Providence." He ordered all Catholics of the Archdiocese to pray to God for a bloodless course of the great revolution, and instructed them to obey all orders willingly and gladly. No other expression of the Catholic attitude reached the ears of the general public in Austria. Papal neutrality once again was asserted. At the election, which gave Sanction to the *Anschluss*, 99 per cent of the Austrian people declared in favour of incorporation in the Reich. The *Gleichschaltung* of leading Prelates and a spirit of resignation due to the feeling that the Fascism of Hitler could not be materially worse than the Clerical Fascism of Schuschnigg were major reasons for Hitler's easy victory. For both of them Catholicism was responsible.

In a similar way Czechoslovakia was betrayed and dismembered with the connivance of leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, who were either Nazis at heart or willing allies of Nazism. The names of Herr Konrad Henlein (Sudetenland), Monsignor Hacha (Czechoslovakia) and Father Tiso (Slovakia) must not be forgotten in this connection.

In its internal policy German Fascism had nothing with which to appeal to the people. On the contrary, the work of the Gestapo, the atmosphere of fear, the dreadful uniformity of ideas, the long hours of work and increased repression in the factories, are all features of the regime which engender a rebellious feeling unless feelings are dead or so warped that no honourable sentiment can remain. Hitler has been able to keep in power and win over allegiance only on the basis of his successes in the international field, his appeal to Nationalism, and his claim to be the vital force which can rid the world of revolutionary Bolshevism. On all these issues he has had the Church at his side, faithful, energetic and sustaining. The Catholic Church of Germany has in this way actively assisted Hitler to create the conditions which made the present war possible, and must be held responsible for this fact.

FRANCO'S "HOLY WAR"

The consciences of some Catholics in the democratic countries were repeatedly troubled by these events which showed up Catholic ecclesiastics and Catholic politicians in a most unfavourable light. In contrast the war in Spain showed a united demonstration of Catholicism such as the world will only rarely witness. All the Spanish Bishops with the exception of Cardinal of Tarragona, the Bishop of Vitoria and the Bishops of Orihuela, signed a document in favour of General Franco's military rebellion and against the legally elected Government, and accused the latter of Communism, although not a single Communist was to be found in its ranks. The Vatican refused to support the French and British protests against the bombing of civilians in Catalonia, presumably in order to avoid "any association to which a political character might be imputed," as the *Irish Times* suggested. Such considerations did not prevent the Papal blessings being sent to Franco at a later date.



Spanish Civil War Poster: How the Church sows the seeds of religion in Spain

Not only in Spain but in every country in the world the Spanish War was heralded by Catholics as a Holy War to save the Church from the onslaught of Red Atheism. Catholic men of Ireland formed their own Religious Brigade to fight with Franco. The Catholic press throughout the world opposed every attempt to give moral, financial or military support to the "Red Government." In this country every ghastly tale was told to turn public sentiment round to Franco. Especially in the Labour Party, Co-operative Movement and Trades Unions, a Catholic nucleus were actively engaged in protesting against any sort of help being given to the Republican forces. Where Catholics were powerful enough they stopped the sending of such funds. Decisions to display collecting boxes and offer Milk Tokens for sale in Co-operative Stores were in many cases rescinded thanks to the pressure of Catholic Co-operators. In the trade union branches, members were dissuaded from supporting the T.U.C. appeal for funds. Sections of the Irish trade unions even went so far as to threaten that they would dissociate themselves from the

T.U.C. unless the latter body ceased its policy of sending money and moral encouragement to the "Godless" forces. The Civil Service Clerical Association was also the scene of an organised, though unsuccessful, Catholic campaign on behalf of Franco. Unfortunately Russia's intervention in Spain at a later stage in the war was never decisive enough to prevent Fascism's triumph, and thus it lent colour to the fable that the Church was solely concerned to stop Spain from becoming the catspaw of a foreign Godless State, for which end she was in duty bound to take action.

With the war won by Franco and his Fascist and clerical associates inside and outside Spain, Pope Pius XII sent the following message to the victors:

"With great joy we address you, dearest sons of Catholic Spain, to express our paternal congratulation for the gift of peace and victory, with which God has chosen to crown the Christian heroism of your faith and charity, proved in so much and so generous suffering...."

the healthy Spanish people, with the characteristics of its most noble spirit, with generosity and frankness, rose decided to defend the ideals of faith and Christian civilisation, deeply rooted in the rich soil of Spain. As a pledge of the bountiful grace which you will receive from the Immaculate virgin and the apostle James, patrons of Spain, and which you will merit from the great Spanish saints, we give to you, our dear sons of Catholic Spain, to the Head of the State and his illustrious Government, to the zealous Episcopate and its self-denying clergy, to the heroic combatants and to all the faithful, our apostolic benediction.", (*Voice of Spain*, March 22nd, 1941.)

The admiration was mutual and General Franco paid open tribute to the devoted Spanish clergy " who efficiently collaborated in the victorious crusade and spiritualised the glory of the Nationalist arms." The Fascist Leader's tribute was not a matter of mere words either. For today the control of the Church over Education is complete. Franco re-introduced the financial subsidies of the State to the Church by re-establishing the last Ecclesiastical Budget under the Monarchy of 1931 (65,000,000 pesetas a year), and even augmented it with a special allocation for the repair of seminaries, libraries and churches. The property of the Spanish Jesuits was restored. Legislation which had been passed by the Republican Government excluding Roman Catholic priests from teaching in the schools was annulled. Divorce and civil marriage were both abolished. Laws for the protection of the family were passed which fixed severe penalties for abortion and which illegalised all establishments or centres devoted to birth control propaganda. In these ways, Catholic coercion once more became rife in many forms.

Whilst the relations between Fascism and Catholicism inside Spain are in general harmonious, a certain rivalry between Fascism and Catholicism exists here as elsewhere. A certain section of the Falangists do not want the children to be Church-taught longer than is necessary, and periods of conflict will almost unavoidably ensue. Also relations with the Vatican are, at least in one respect, not excessively cordial. A new concordat between the Vatican and Spain has now been under discussion over a lengthy period, indeed almost since the end of the Spanish war in February, 1939. The prime issue in dispute is the nomination of the Spanish Bishops. Both sides, Church and State, are jealous of this power and want the higher personnel of the Spanish Church to be composed of men to their liking. The Franco Regime did not hesitate to suppress the late Pope's Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* which represented a rebuke to the Totalitarian systems in so far as they were too concerned with State idolatry and not sufficiently concerned with respect for God and His representatives on earth. Franco is certainly not so devout that he pictures himself in the role of obedient servant to his Church, merely the head civil administrator to the Pope, as it were. Thus the tussle on the issue of real mastery goes on all the time, even though an extensive measure of co-operation allows both Church and Fascist State to grow stronger mutually at the expense of the opponents of either or both. Actually the Spanish Church is a real power in the land and her responsibility for the regime and its actions is as great as her power.

UNDERCURRENTS AT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Successive war-mongering on the part of Japan, Germany and Italy could have been prevented, checked or nullified had the League of Nations become more of an effective peace-preserving institution and less of a clearing house for the intrigues of nations and statesmen. The Covenant was not so deficient that it could not have been applied and revised in the interests of outlawing war. Few progressive people will be inclined to deny that Russia applied the "den of thieves" theory in a negative way too long, or that her eventual entry into the League as a means of exerting an influence over decisive international counsels was a step calculated to help in the preservation of peace. Today after the world has witnessed Russia in the role of a non-belligerent ally of the aggressor Powers, as well as an aggressor herself, it is perhaps not too easy to put oneself back into the conditions of 1934 when Russia joined the League. It can be granted that the menace of Japan to Russia gave the latter a strong subjective interest in League politics. After her entry into the League, Russian statesmen worked energetically for a time to tighten the provisions of the League Covenant and to make it a more efficient instrument against aggression.

When the entry of Russia into the League of Nations was up for discussion in that body, it was the representatives of Catholicism who publicly challenged the right of Russia to come in. On what grounds, then? Because she wanted war, for herself or others? This was not the point at issue. The objection was religious and concerned the internal regime in Russia, and above all the decision of the Russian Government not to allow children to be imbued with religious doctrines. M. Motta, the Roman Catholic spokesman of Switzerland, led the attack by stating that the persecution of religion in Russia had resulted in public opinion in Switzerland definitely and irrevocably being opposed to the admission of the Soviet State into the League. In Holland, too, it was Catholic pressure inside the Cabinet which led to the decision of that country to vote against Russia at this juncture. De Valera for Ireland and Schuschnigg for Austria did not vote in opposition to Russia's entry but they used the occasion of the debate for impassioned religious speeches which called on Russia to accept the standards of the West in order to fit herself for League co-operation. The comment of the Papal organ, *Osservatore Romano* ran:

"The opposition and abstention of ten States to the admission of Russia to the League of Nations has had salutary consequences -- firstly, in hindering that triumphal entry which the interested Parties were months in preparing on behalf of a Government which has so many sins to account for to the public conscience, secondly, in reminding the Soviet Government that in spite of the easy privileges gained in the past, admission to the League of Nations implies a series of obligations which must be satisfied, and the fulfillment of which will be under vigilant observation. Therefore, there has been no unanimity, no *carte blanche* for the future, hut simply a trust in an evolution towards the principles and methods of European civilization. M. Motta faced the problem of the admission of Russia with a clarity of vision, a nobility of sentiment, and a rectitude of Christian and civil conscience that finds a profound echo in the hearts of all for whom justice and right are still the unshakable bases of civil society." (*Universe*, October 5th, 1934.)

Most of the Catholic papers in the country supported the views expressed by the Catholic advocates in the League. Also, it should be remembered that:

"His Holiness Pope Pius XI, in 1922, immediately after his election to the Papal Chair, appealed to the representatives of the Powers assembled at Geneva to make united representation to Russia on this matter of religious persecution, and to lay down as conditions for the recognition of the Soviet Government freedom of religious worship and respect for ecclesiastical property." (My italics.)

The entry of Russia to the League did not mark the end of exaggerated Catholic hostility. On the contrary, Catholic influence was used year in and year out to force Russia to alter her internal affairs so that they accorded with religious principles she disavowed. Many were the occasions when urgent international issues were blurred by the introduction of religious controversy by Catholic statesmen. De Valera made numerous speeches for his Church. He proposed the laying down of a Declaration of Rights to which all member States must subscribe and in which the right to Christian teaching in the schools featured prominently.

It is not the place here to discuss the merits or demerits of secular and religious schooling. But what must be said is this. The League of Nations as a world institution covering peoples of all races, religions and philosophies, cannot legitimately sponsor the cause of Christianity or any other particular belief without impairing the essential unity against aggression which, as a body to outlaw war, it must have. Roman Catholics argue that the Godless principles of the Soviet State make international co-operation between Russia and Christian States impossible. It does, if the Christian States refuse to co-operate, as the Catholics wanted them to do. This is apart from the difficulty of deciding which is a Christian State and which is not. If one accepts the Catholic statement, surely Soviet Russia could with equal justification argue that compulsory Catholic education and the denial of divorce in Catholic Christian States also interferes with the building up of international law, and thus should be attacked by the League, or outlawed at its command. If the argument runs that the existence of persecuted minorities is a menace to peace, and thus international peace institutions should see to it that the elementary rights of free expression of opinion and the free practice of religion are generally safeguarded, there is everything to say in its favour. The claim that Russia and all other States should recognise the limits of the State and refrain from exercising State Authority in the realms of culture and the human conscience is valid. And Russia can well be criticised on the score that the Russian State leaders have worked to impose their ideology on others in the State. But this criticism comes ill from the mouths of Roman Catholics whose Church has never recognised the validity of the claim to civil and religious freedom, and whose Governments have been the worst offenders on that issue.

Secondly, during the period in question, the issue of preventing mass slaughter and the desperate conditions that go with it was so overwhelmingly important ♦ for the prevention of the existing war was what was involved ♦ that, for its sake, conflicts on issues bound up with the differing internal regimes of member States should have been ruthlessly excluded from League debates. Catholic bias against Russia on the religious issue so dominated the minds of certain delegates to the League that one got the impression they were not primarily concerned with ensuring that an overwhelming display of force should meet any attempt at aggression but rather with isolating Russia in the international field. When Russia was thought to be threatened by a possible Japanese attack, for instance, Catholic propaganda did not assail the would-be aggressor but, on the contrary, in great part it uttered sentiments on the lines of those which appeared in the *Catholic Times* (November 23rd, 1934) and which ran as follows:

"The Japanese are not anti-God. They have brought freedom from persecution to our missionaries in Manchuria and adjacent parts of China. They have consented to their settlers in Brazil being instructed in the Catholic Faith, and, whilst they dream of influencing the world by spreading Buddhism, they give freedom of worship to their own Catholic nationals. In the event of a war between Japan and Russia Catholics would sympathise with Japan, at least in so far as religion is concerned, so let us beware of an Anglo-American bloc against Japan involving us on the side of Russia."

Similarly in Europe, the policy of divorcing France from Russia and bringing about a bloc of this country and France with the Fascist Powers of Germany and Italy against Russia was the line which can be traced through the Catholic press. The *Catholic Times* wrote in April, 1935:

"Disarmament is dead.... We can, nevertheless, have thirty years' peace in Western Europe if France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain concentrate on Western Europe and its needs. We cannot have agreement about Russia, since Germany has lifted the veil which hides her ambitions. She wants Ukraine. Few Catholics in this country will approve a war against Russia, bad as her record is, but never still will be happy if our alliances draw us into a war in defense of the Godless. Russia must safeguard her own interests. We are not concerned to uphold her. The wretched Franco-German quarrel can be composed if France is willing to leave Russia to her devices. If France insists on allying herself with the Soviet, she should be told that Great Britain will have no part with her.... We must choose between two evils, and Russia's possible loss of the Ukraine is a much less evil than war-fires all over Europe, whilst many would say that the undoing of Gothes' Sovietism is no evil at all."

In short, although many are the forces which have contributed to the death of the League and the return to barbarism and lawlessness in international affairs, of which the present wars are the outcome, not least amongst these are the forces of Catholicism. Their antagonism to Soviet Russia so biased them that they were never prepared to co-operate wholeheartedly with Russia in the interests of international peace. When ultimately Russia herself became an aggressor and seized parts of Poland, Finland and the Baltic States, most Roman Catholics sat back with a feeling of self-righteousness, telling the world they had always said that Russia was a bad lot and that the idea of co-operation with her for peace ends was ludicrous. This argument actually holds no water. Disastrous as was Russia's later aggressive policy, it proves nothing about Russian motives in earlier years. One can with equal justification argue that if other States had shown the same readiness to co-operate with Russia in outlawing war as Russia showed in co-operating with them, neither Russian nor German aggression would have soiled the pages of history.

THE WAR AND THE GERMAN CHURCH

THE first fact which strikes those who study Roman Catholic policy in relation to the present war is that various and contradictory attitudes are sponsored in Catholicism's name. It is not merely the case that Catholics within this or that country differ in their calculations of what is expedient for the Church, but Church policy changes from country to country as well as do the public utterances of prominent

leaders and members of the Church.

Although war conditions prevent the gathering together of detailed information from German sources, as well as making suspect those statements which do filter through, it is now commonly recognised that the German Church is blessing the guns and bombs of Hitler just as energetically as Cardinal Hinsly here gives religious sanction to the British side of the war. A Pastoral Letter addressed to all Catholic members of the Army, Navy and Air Force by the German Army Bishop, Mgr. Franciscus Garkowsky, is indicative of the co-operation that exists. It reads in part:

"... the German people has a clear conscience, and is aware which people will have to bear the responsibility before God and history for the gigantic struggle now going on. The German people knows who primarily started this war. Just as certainly as God is the Father of all Peoples, He is also the judge of right and wrong, and of honour and deceit. He cannot be, however, the advocator of both right and wrong, of both honesty and dishonesty." (*Catholic Herald*, October 18th, 1940.)

A message from Frankfurt-on-Main was published in the *New York Times* which ran:

"The leaders of the Catholics in Germany . . . exhort their believers in and outside the Reich to do their utmost in the righteous cause of the German Nation under the leadership of Chancellor Adolf Hitler." (*Cavalcade*, September 28th, 1940.)

A diplomatic correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (May 24th, 1940) wrote the following regarding the attitude of German Catholics to the Nazi State:

"Among the higher ranks of the Catholic clergy a decisive majority desire to see the victory of the Reich or at least a peace that will leave Germany's political and military strength unimpaired. At the same time they still look to an eventual Catholic-Conservative restoration. The National Socialist State has, it seems, been able to reach an understanding with the Catholic leaders. Assurances have been given as to the status of the Church in the Bohemian-Moravian Protectorate and in Germany itself. The special position of the Catholic Church in Poland is also to receive due recognition. In spite of the persecution of laymen and priests by the Nazis, in spite of all the attacks upon the Christian religion, new hopes have been raised among the German Catholics as a result of these negotiations...."

On August 22nd, 1940, the Fulda Meeting of the German Bishops took place. Regarding what transpired at that Conference there are reports and counter-reports. From German official resources has come the report that the Fulda Bishops declared that:

"... after the completion of the final German victory special ceremonies of gratitude to the German troops and of loyalty to Hitler will be announced."

Whatever the German Bishops' statement contained, its general publication was forbidden by the Pope, to whom it was submitted. British United Press reports say that State and Church are drawing nearer together in Germany, that Hitler has, in fact, made a "peace" offer to the Pope, that the Pope with the aid of Cardinal Maglione is reported to have prepared a lengthy Memorandum on outstanding differences between the Church and the Reich for transmission to Berlin, and that negotiations are progressing favourably. (See *Catholic Herald*, August 9th, 1940.) *The Tablet* too (on September 21st, 1940) looked on the Fulda Meeting as marking a decided step forward in Nazi-Catholic co-operation. It

pointed out that all the Bishops of the Greater German Reich (45 in all) were present as against the 20 who attended in previous years. It also stressed the point that the final address was delivered by Monsignor Berning, Bishop of Osnabruck, who occupies an exclusive position in the new German Order because of his appointment in 1933 by Goering as the representative of the Catholic Church to the Council of the Prussian State. The *Tablet* concluded:

"The fact that this bishop was chosen to give the final word at the end of the Conference must be regarded as an indication of a new and positive evolution in the future relations between the German State and the Catholic Church . . . well-informed circles believe that very important and positive decisions have been reached, which will result in a much closer rapprochement between the Church and the Reich."

Pointing in the same direction is a *Catholic Herald* editorial (January 31st 1941) which reported that news had reached this country that " the German Hierarchy intends to meet next month in Berlin for an exceptional purpose, and it is suggested that the Conference will adopt a resolution profoundly affecting all Catholics in the Greater Reich." The editorial warns against rumours, but then cautiously prepares its readers for some pro-Hitler declaration on the part of the German Church. Of interest is the admission that:

". . . it must be remembered that Catholic doctrine necessarily plays into the hands of an unscrupulous ruler. For it is Catholic teaching that the presumption of justice is to be given to the State and that loyalty and fidelity to constituted ruler are Christian virtues. On the basis of these truths it is not hard gradually to push the Catholic on to false ground and to demand from him in conscience a practical obedience which he would not have given had the issues been clear from the beginning."

Exactly! This is part of the case against Catholic ideology, and it also helps to explain how it comes that, particularly in Catholic countries, the Fascist mentality so easily takes root.

On March 30th, 1941, the Vatican Radio announced in French to listeners in France that Mgr. Groeber, Archbishop of Fribourg, had issued a Pastoral Letter calling on German Catholics to oppose the threat of a State religion in Germany, and instructing Catholic parents not to "allow their children to be torn from their hearths and homes" by the Nazis. According to Catholic press reports, this letter asserted that Hitler was now going out of his way to give the death blow to Christianity, and it declared that " in the face of this attack Catholics cannot remain merely passive." The Vatican Radio comment concluded with the words:

"The threat of a national religion is looming increasingly over all religious life. This national religion is based solely on the Fuhrer's will, and is the only one wanted by him. In the countries which have been incorporated into the Reich, as for instance in Slovakia, a National Church has been formed. These tendencies have been forced to the extreme in Alsace, Austria and in Sudeten Germany. These countries are to be made an example for the spiritual structure of the others. What we demand is that Catholic Germany wakes up and sees clearly the pagan tendencies which are spreading everywhere." (*Tablet* April 5th, 1941.)

This does not sound like conciliation on the part of Hitler, or the Vatican. All the same it would be wrong to assume that German Catholics are in any way challenging the Regime in Germany. They are

protesting against certain aspects of the system which affect themselves. Mgr. Groeber stresses his general loyalty to the Government and his support of the war when he speaks of the "glorious brotherhood of arms at the front," and says in his Pastoral Letter:

"Far be it for me in this terrible struggle to say anything that would turn aside the energies of the people or prejudice their devotion to their country. Everyone who thinks as a German desires to secure for his country a lasting peace with honour." (*Catholic Times*, April 4th, 1941.)

If reports are true, Hitler is still increasing his pressure on the Church. He may conceive his power to be great enough to carry through to completion the *Kulturkampf* which Bismarck started and abandoned. Or he may reckon with conciliation at a cheaper price if the Church is cast further back as a preliminary. Obviously no one can predict with any degree of certainty what trend Fascist-Catholic relations in Germany will take. Both State and Church are steeped in opportunism when it comes to the question of strategy. Hitler certainly does not want to share his Herrschaft with anyone, least of all with an institution which does not blindly acknowledge his supremacy or adopt his dogged views on the splendid superiority of the German Nation and the Aryan Race. On the other hand, one would think that Hitler is not in such a happy situation at the present that he can afford to be completely indifferent to the attitude of a body with wide influence inside and outside Germany. Amidst all uncertainty and conjecture, however, one thing is as certain as the rising of the sun each morn. If Hitler were willing to share his power with the Church, the Vatican and the German Hierarchy will be more than willing to come to terms with him. The German Concordat of 1933 was the expression of Catholicism's willingness to be the spiritual arm of Fascism in return for certain privileges for the Church and for Catholic Education. Hitler has not respected his side of the bargain, perhaps because experience has shown him that the Church's bark is worse than her bite, and that he can get from her what he wants without pandering to the Pope. Or perhaps under pressure of war and with the increasing despair and misery of the German people, he will deem it wise to revise his anti-clerical course. An alliance with the Pope would at least be no more startling than Hitler's "friendship" with Stalin. It would contain similar seed of dissention. Only one consideration would weigh in the balance should Hitler show an outstretched hand to Pope and Church. That consideration would have nothing to do with principles and human decency, and the need of the German people to live and talk and act unmolested in freedom and peace. It would be an estimate pure and simple of the Fuhrer's chance of victory in this war.

The Church can exist and work at the side of barbaric secular forces, if needs be. She does not want to share, however, in their doom.

CAPITULATION IN FRANCE

The collapse of resistance in France created rather a delicate situation for Catholic commentators in the and-Nazi camp. De Gaulle, Weygand and Pétain are all Catholic statesmen. So one might naturally expect to find pro-Fascist Catholics supporting the Pétain line with those who adhere to the democratic wing of opinion feeling themselves more closely allied with De Gaulle. Actually such a distinction is

too crude. The Catholics with Fascist sympathies are split up into those whose Fascism comes first (i.e., before their patriotism) and others whose patriotism is dominant, apart from the issue of religion. And almost throughout Catholic democratic circles any criticism of the Government at Vichy has been cautious in the extreme. Why? Although capitulation to the Nazis was a difficult thing to justify in this country, at a time when prominent Catholics were busy preaching the virtues of the British cause, nevertheless Roman Catholics had to take account of the fact that the Pétain Government was preponderantly Catholic, and that Pétain himself was certainly showing a will to push through pro-Catholic legislation. To date his record as Leader of France shows the following results on behalf of his Church. The industrial measures conform closely with Papal encyclicals as well as with Fascist ideology.

(1) The Vichy Government has announced that its new regime is to be a Corporate State which will guarantee the rights of the Family.

(2) A new charter of labour has been published whereby workers' organisations will be under State supervision, and wages are to be governed by the size of the family.

(3) The Government adopted legislation under which a certain number of posts in commercial and industrial establishments must be reserved for fathers of families with at least three children.

(4) At the beginning of November, M. Belin, then Minister of Industry and Labour, announced a forthcoming law severely restricting the employment of women. Under this, married women will be forbidden to work in Government offices, municipal services, public works, colonial services, the railway system, shipping and aviation (apart from specified exceptions). In private industry and commerce the percentage of married women who may be employed will be fixed for each industry.

(5) The Vichy Government has promulgated a decree which abrogates the law of July 7th, 1904, according to which members of Congregations were forbidden to teach in Schools or Universities.

(6) It was decided to allow the abbot and monks of the Grande Chartreuse monastery to return after their 37 years exile. They left France in 1903 after the passing of the law separating Church and State.

(7) On July 29th it was announced that the new Minister of Education, M. Mireaux, formerly editor of *Le Temps* had abolished the teachers' consultative committee in primary schools, which had a vote on the compilation of lists for the removal or appointment of teachers. In future, educational policy is to be adapted to the motto: *travail, famille, patrie* (work, family, fatherland).

(8) The *Ecoles Normales d'Instituteurs* (teachers' training colleges) have been suppressed. They have been replaced by special courses for intending teachers at *Lycees*, followed by a specialised course in pedagogics.

(9) Catholic schools have now been placed on the same footing as the State schools and will draw the same State subsidies. Textbooks are being re-written under the personal supervision of Marshal Pétain. Some of those previously in use had been denounced by the Catholic Hierarchy as containing anti-religious propaganda.

(10) A film censorship decree has been passed which aims at preventing the showing and production of films which are liable to have a "bad influence on the youth of France."

(11) M. Peyrouton, Minister of the Interior, announced on November 10th that all Prefects of departements would have "moral control" over their subordinates and would be assisted by local *chefs de cabinets* whose recruitment would be based on "moral and social" qualities.

(12) Marshall Pétain has announced the introduction of the Family Vote which would involve the disfranchisement of everyone except the heads of households.

(13) The securing of divorce has been made more difficult.

(14) A law suppressing secret societies has been passed. It is intended primarily to crush a particular enemy of Catholicism, Freemasonry.

(15) We have it on Vatican Authority that conversations are now being held between the Holy See and the Pétain Government for the purpose of drawing up a concordat on lines similar to that which was recently concluded between the Holy See and Portugal.

The knowledge that the Pétain Government can be so useful an instrument to the Church quite naturally causes Catholic opinion to be very moderate in dealing with the French catastrophe. From many quarters the Vichy Government gets whole-hearted Catholic support. In this country, when France fell, Kobert Sencourt, Special Diplomatic correspondent of the *Catholic Herald* showered praise on Pétain and vituperation on Reynand in the following words:

"When Paris fell, the Nazis may well have thought that they saw the final ruin of a country which had been laid low by three mortal diseases: freemasonry, demo-plutocracy and Bolshevism. It was the peculiar quality of M. Reynand to personify all three. The policy of M. Reynand was what might have been expected. It was to support Moscow's moves in Spain, to urge an entente with Moscow; to talk in a bellicose tone before armaments were ready. His dictatorship was one long disaster.... The new men who form the present French Government have always sought a reasonable, dignified and honest understanding with both Franco and Mussolini. A new France could be a true friend to Italy and Spain.... At any rate, this much is clear: all that is vital in the soul of France, purified and glorified in heroic suffering can look out once more on Europe with a clear Christian purpose."

True, the subsequent issue of the *Catholic Herald* showed obvious signs of ecclesiastical rebuke at this too frank comment. It contained a prominent article in more tactful vein over the signature of Cardinal Hinsley, and on its front page appeared the notice that:

"No one has any right to infer that because any view is held in this newspaper, that is the view of the Church, the Bishops in this country or the Catholic body as a whole."

Mr. W. Horsfall Carter in his excellent correspondence in the *New Statesman and Nation* has stated with every justification that after reading all issues of the *Catholic Herald* since the end of June up to November, his impression of Catholic support for Pétain France was only confirmed. He quoted an

editorial from the July 12th issue as reading:

"We shall not deny that we believe the true prosperity and welfare of our country to be linked up with the influences making for this Catholic bloc rather than with America, Russia and Prussia (sic), but we must recognise the fact that this is not the prevalent view here, especially in political and commercial circles."

Finally, as the *Tablet* explained, many who sympathise with the Pétain Government do so "because they feel surrender saved France from a new Communism," from civil war and the danger that French Communist forces, which were always against the war, would make peace with full Nazi support. Perhaps some readers will remember the publicity given to Memorandum 20 of the Imperial Policy Group, in which the collapse of France was dealt with sympathetically and interpreted as a welcome alternative to the Communist Government which, it was alleged, would otherwise have emerged. This Manifesto declared that in the considered opinion of the Imperial Policy Group "Pétain's action represented the desires of an overwhelming majority of the French people." This document is more easily understood when one knows that at the head of the Group stands Lord Phillimore, who is also Chairman of that Catholic body, "Friends of Spain." The policy of that body throughout the Spanish War was to defend Franco through thick and thin as the upholder of Christianity, and to pour lies, slander and abuse upon Franco's Republican opponents. Incidentally, Lord Phillimore has persistently pressed the point that German and Italian intervention in Spain did not date before December, 1936. Even as late as January, 1939 he was insisting that "Germany at no time provided more than specialists." Facts contradicting both assertions were made known by Hitler and Mussolini after the war in Spain had ended. Lord Phillimore's bias is not far to seek.

If we ask what role the officials of the Church played in the French disaster, at least it is clear that the Holy See was an active agent between Italy and France at the time when Pétain was called upon to make his historic decision, and when he decided to give up the struggle. The Pope indeed sent a personal message to Marshal Pétain asking that his country should accept the situation "with fortitude and realism." His Holiness is also said to have appealed to Hitler and Mussolini (and especially to the latter) to inspire their terms with "moderation and the absence of vindictiveness." The Pope sent a letter to the French Bishops containing the following sentiments:

"These very misfortunes with which God has today visited your people, give assurance, we feel certain, of conditions for greater spiritual labour, favourable to bringing about a reawakening of the entire nation."

And when the new French Ambassador to the Holy See presented his credentials, Pius XII assured him (according to Havas) that the Church would support the "work of moral recovery" France had undertaken.

In this connection must be listed the noted controversy in the Press caused by an American report that the Vatican had praised the Pétain Government. The facts are that on July 9th the Vatican organ, *Osservatore Romano*, published an article in praise of Marshal Pétain and his efforts to save France. The article told in glowing terms of the "good Marshal who more than any other man seems to personify the best traditions of his race," and ended up by speaking of the "dawn of a new radiant day, not only for France but for Europe and the world." (*Catholic Herald*, July 12th, 1940.) Evidently very pointed questions were put in this country to Cardinal Hinsley regarding the allegiance of Catholics,

whether it was to the Pope and the German-controlled Government of France or to the cause which Britain represents. So much so, that Cardinal Hinsley had to publish a denial "on Vatican Authority" that the said article was in any way officially inspired or sanctioned. We were told that it merely expressed the private view of a Vatican journalist who had been commissioned to reply to a letter from the French Catholic Youth Organisation, a body which had publicly pledged the support of Catholic Youth in France to Pétain and the Vichy Government. No doubt the article was not written diplomatically enough to be Papally inspired. But that Vatican circles will sustain and strengthen Marshal Pétain in his work to Catholicise France and win the sanction of Hitler to that end is also clear. A Vatican broadcast during June showed conclusively that Catholic policy is to manoeuvre, bargain and negotiate with Fascism until the Catholic Government wins sufficient freedom for its own reforms. In the broadcast in question it was said:

"The announcement by Monsignor Tiso, head of the Slovak State, of his intention to reconstruct Slovakia on a Christian plan, is greatly welcomed by the Holy See. The new organisation of the State is to be based on the Corporate system, on Christian lines and modeled on the system which has proved so successful in Portugal.... This, coming so soon after Marshal Pétain's statement that he intended to reconstruct France on a Christian basis, is doubly welcome. One observation, however, is necessary. It is obviously fatuous to hope to build up a Christian economic and social system in an atmosphere saturated with paganism. National peace cannot be established without international peace. Christianity could exist in a vacuum or on a green island in the Pacific, but it cannot exist under a political system which denies it freedom. The plight of our valiant Lithuanians is evidence enough of this today. Nevertheless, we have great hopes in the fledgling reforms of Tiso and Pétain, and trust that they will win sufficient freedom to permit them to carry through these plans" (My italics; see *Tablet*, July 27th, 1940).



Hitler greets Msr. Joseph Tiso, Slovakian Chief of State, Papal Chamberlain and Roman Catholic Priest, at Hitler's field headquarters on the Eastern Front (October 1941)

The view has recently come much to the forefront that the collapse of France was tolerated and even actively assisted by right-wing Catholic elements. These circles saw a better guarantee for the future health of the Catholic type of Christianity in the formation of a Latin bloc of right-wing Catholic States

covering Italy, Portugal, Spain, France and the Southern (Catholic) German States than in the possible crushing of Nazism with the consequent danger of a Continental revolution under the vigilant intervention of Russian Bolshevism. Indeed, to those who are willing to believe that Hitler eventually will come to certain terms with the Church as Mussolini did before him, the plan must possess real attraction. It is interesting to note that after the fall of France, the German wireless continually elaborated the scheme for a new Christian Europe of Catholic States when broadcasting to the allies and the potential allies of Germany in Italy, Portugal and Spain. (France which finally is to be carved up between Germany and Italy, according to the German-Italian plan, can, of course, have no status in the proposed scheme.) For instance, a German broadcast to Spain was in the following terms:

"While Europe was truly European, its culture was always upheld by three nations ♦ the German, the Italian, and the Spanish, and their strength and collaboration. The new Europe will rest again on the shoulders of these three nations.... The German thesis continues that now France has died of self-poisoning by false doctrines, and England is about to be ejected from the Continent she has troubled far too long; and the restoration of a Continent of happy, civilised Catholic peoples can be achieved at last, with no tyrannical interference from Judaic usurers in London and New York."

Catholics in this country who boast of their loyalty to Democracy and are hard pressed to defend their Church from the stigma of Fascism, are voicing the argument that all this talk about the Church and Churchmen being interested in a Latin bloc policy is sheer rubbish, the result of a fable which Hitler set abroad in order to widen the schism between France and this country and between Catholics and the non-Catholic population in every country of the world. This is, indeed, a weak defense since ideas sponsoring such a constellation of Catholic powers were made public long before Hitler ever came to power. We have no difficulty in believing that Hitler will exploit every form of dissension in his opponents' ranks. But that he can do so in this case with success is due to the fact that his Catholic bloc propaganda has its roots in reality and not in fiction. Michael de la Bedoyere, editor of the *Catholic Herald*, has said as much in his article called "Christian Reform in Europe" (See the issue dated October 11th, 1940) from which we quote:

"What we Catholics have got to understand and try to make clear to our countrymen is that a big and vital movement is being born on the Continent which is not Fascist or reactionary or capitalist, but positively Christian. This movement in its early and difficult stages ♦ and what movement in the world of today can escape deformations? ♦ may take all sorts of queer shapes, and it may very well be overcome by forces materially far stronger than itself, so that it will turn out in the end to be Fascist, or purely political in the shape, for example, of a political Latin Bloc; but the fact remains that today there is behind it a strong flow of genuine Christian inspiration violently reacting against the disorder of the past. If this element in it, this new factor, can be helped, rather than hindered and mocked at, Europe may yet be saved.... if we wish Europe well rather than ill, we shall sympathise with this new Christian factor seeking to establish order amidst chaos while there is still time. And Catholics at least in this country will consider how far the principles of this great movement of Christian reform contains lessons for ourselves. It may not look as though we need them today, but it is very certain that we shall need them in the troublous times that are coming."

Marshal Pétain has already announced to the French people that the new France will free itself from all traditional friendships (i.e., with Britain) and enmities (i.e., with Germany). He has asked Hitler's

permission to act as Germany's colleague in establishing the new order in Europe.

Luckily for the non-Fascist world, there are limits which Pétain as a military leader and nationalist will not overstep. His stand on the question of Hitler's military demands (the granting of facilities for the transport of German troops across Occupied France to Italy; freedom of action for Germany and Italy in the French Mediterranean ports, both in Metropolitan France and Africa; a concentration of the French Fleet against the British should the latter attempt to oppose the plan) would point to this conclusion ♦ although Admiral Darlan seems to contemplate even naval co-operation with Germany. As regards internal events, however, it would be fatal to harbour illusions. If the German hold does not relax, France will be so akin to Fascism that we can leave it to Catholics to think out the difference. Pétain is neither progressive nor anti-Nazi in outlook, and his stand as a soldier ♦ welcome as it is at this moment ♦ should not blind us to his reactionary policy otherwise.

Having regard to these facts we must conclude that to Catholics the collapse of French resistance was in no way an unmitigated evil. Indeed, we have reason to conclude that Catholic interests were amongst the most important that prevailed in capitulationist circles. Certainly to the extent that Pétain's rule is allowed by Hitler to become Catholic-Fascist rule, Roman Catholic influence in France and in other countries will operate to generate loyalty to a Government which is prepared to co-operate wholeheartedly with Hitler in Europe. Perhaps Hitler's adamant resolve to drag France into military and naval adventures against Britain will cut short that development.

But perhaps Hitler is going to try to stamp out already the Catholic side of Pétain's rule. For as this pamphlet goes to press news is forthcoming that under Nazi pressure decrees have been passed which reverse certain aspects of education policy, especially the recent reforms allowing priests facilities for religious teaching in all schools. M. Carcopino, the newly nominated Minister for Public Instruction in France (a Roman Catholic, by the way), has declared that the ideal of French education must remain that of freedom of conscience, that school education must remain purely secular and " complemented by a religious education outside the school." No doubt Hitler is glad to create difficulties for the Marshal.

ITALY ENTERS THE WAR

Probably the Pope was more clear sighted and level-headed than Mussolini when he showed his desire that Italy should keep out of the war. He, no doubt, realised the danger to the Italian Regime which was involved, the likelihood of German influence over Italy gaining ground, the menace to the Church which a collapse of Italian Fascism would constitute, quite apart from his concern at the creation of a situation which would place the Vatican in such a delicate position. But Mussolini's ambitions outweighed all sober calculations and when France tottered he entered the war. So did the Italian Church.

A Pastoral Letter issued in June, 1940, by Monsignor Carlo Margiotti, Archbishop of Gorizia, urged the

Italian people and clergy to obey and trust Premier Benito Mussolini in the war he is waging for "the welfare of the Italian people"; --"May God always bless and protect him." He is stated to have said that the Italians " can no longer be kept within the unjust frontiers of the peninsula." (See *The Rationalist* [Australia] August, 1940.)

What is more, during the days which followed the unprovoked invasion of Greece by Italy, the Pope himself blessed a gathering of two hundred Italian officers saying:

"We bless all you who serve the beloved Fatherland with fealty and love." (*Catholic Herald*, November 8th, 1940.)

With the passing of time, however, and above all with the passing of Mussolini's reign of bluff, and his successive military defeats incurred at the hands of the British and the Greeks, the value to Catholicism of a linking of its forces with those of the Duce must have undergone a severe deflation. Perhaps the following Pastoral Letter of Mgr. Giovanni Cazzari, Bishop of Cremona, which was banned by the Italian Authorities early in 1941 is an indication that already the Church is preparing to abandon the sinking ship of Italian Fascism should the tide of events prove too strong, and overwhelm that system instead of keeping it afloat:

"God punishes a people by abandoning them to unworthy shepherds, or to perverse or inept rulers, or by permitting that even the better ones among them commit fatal errors, oversight or miscalculation."

"'War is a punishment by God' of nations that abandon the Christian faith and deny the existence of God' to embrace idolatry.'" (*Catholic Herald*, March 21st, 1941.)

We can readily admit that the Pope's position in relation to Italy is an unenviable one, and that the Italian Church, because of its complete association with Italian Fascism, is in real danger of having to share with the dictatorial system the full blast of pent-up anger and hatred. Remember the words of Hinsley: "If Italian Fascism goes under, God's cause goes under with it!" The Church is assuredly in the vanguard of those whose interests are vested in the prevention of such an overthrow. The problem of how to direct into less radical channels the swelling spirit of revolt of those who for years have suffered from the intolerance of Fascism and Clericalism undoubtedly pre-occupies the Pope today and colours his counsels. One can only say: The Church has chosen her bed freely and she must now lie on it. The death of great men -- victims of Fascism --lie also at her door. Her arrogance and unprincipled suppression of all values which do not accord with her own, no matter how deeply they are held, and no matter what they mean to the human life which prizes them, has rendered her unworthy of the help of those who base their lives on work for a free future for humanity.

CATHOLIC ISOLATIONISM IN AMERICA



Father Coughlin addresses a rally in Cleveland (May 1936)

Catholic opinion in America is strong (about a quarter of the population of U.S.A. are Catholic). Hence Catholic opinion assumes quite an importance in relation to American public life.

Much publicity was given to the anti-Nazi utterances of the late Cardinal Mundelein, and the world has also become aware of Roosevelt's close co-operation with Cardinals of the Catholic Church, and of his decision to send Mr. Myron C. Taylor to the Vatican as his special envoy. Probably this co-operation has achieved more than any other measure in spreading the fallacious belief in democratic circles that the present policy of the Pope is anti-Fascist, and that in the present struggle the Pope and his Church stand arrayed against the Dictatorships. If that were the case, Catholic opinion in America would have been hard at work to break through the isolationist tendencies in American politics. Actually it has been the backbone of Isolationism. In America, as in England, the Roman Catholic community has been divided in its attitude to Hitlerism and the existing war. The *New York Times* reported, in connection with the Presidential election, the declaration of a body of 60 Roman Catholics (including 2 Bishops) calling for "all possible help to Great Britain" as "Hitlerism, like Communism, seeks to subvert Christianity." Taking Catholic opinion as a whole, however, in its political significance in America, its influence has been on the side of extreme isolationism. The following facts substantiate that charge.

The *Catholic Herald* has stated: "Catholic opinion in the States is virtually all in the Isolationist camp." "War -- We Stay Out," is the front-page slogan of American Catholic papers. The Jesuit weekly, *America*, has since the outbreak of war proclaimed the need for the strictest Isolationism. In its columns the American President has been condemned for having deserted "any semblance of neutral feeling." He is asked:

"Is it the fixed purpose of the President to disregard the authority of Congress and bring this

country into an undeclared war against Germany and Italy? . . . No policy merits national support except a policy for adequate protection against attack. To say that our first line of defense is to come to the aid of Britain is to say that we are justified in attacking Germany and Italy. I do not think that claim can be sustained. As the Archbishop of Cincinnati has said, we have no moral justification for making war against these nations. . . . It is our duty to prepare to defend this country, in the unlikely, but possible, event of attack. It is no part of our duty, morally, or because of legitimate commitments, to prepare armaments to be used in England's aid." (*Catholic Herald*, July 19th, 1940.)

The insolent refusal of Henry Ford to supply aeroplane motors for Britain can well be mentioned in this connection, since his contact with Catholic circles, and particularly Catholic Fascist circles is so close. His own son, Edsel, married a Roman Catholic and turned Roman Catholic himself. Ford's grandson, Henry Ford II, has been received into the Catholic Church prior to his marriage to a Roman Catholic. It is reported that the elder Henry Ford is receiving instruction from a priest prior to his own entry into the Catholic Church. His contact with the Catholic pro-Nazi Fascist, Father Coughlin, is well known. During recent labour troubles in Detroit Father Coughlin's assistance was used to bring about a settlement. Incidentally, *Free Europe* (of October 4th, 1940) quoted a report of P.M., a New York evening newspaper stating that Ford has received the Order of the German Eagle, an emblem of honour given to "distinguished foreigners who have deserved well of the Reich." Certainly Coughlin's loyalty to Nazi Germany is not in doubt. He writes of that country:

"Perhaps, nothing is greater proof of the rottenness of the empire system than that one single unified, clean-living people, fired by an ideal to liberate the world once and for all from an orientalist gold-debt slave system of finance can march tireless over nation after nation, and bring two great empires to their knees."

In his own paper, *Social Justice*, he speaks of the future in terms of which the following is a summary:

" Great Britain is doomed and should be doomed. There is no danger of Hitler threatening the United States. We should build armaments for the purpose of crushing Soviet Russia in co-operation with the Christian Totalitarian States: Italy, Germany, Spain and Portugal." (See *League for Human Rights Bulletin*, Cleveland, Ohio.)

A campaign is on foot headed by Coughlin's movement and the International Catholic Truth Society to outlaw Gunther's book, *Inside Europe*, from the schools and libraries of America.

American Archbishops have used their influence in the same direction against the "rising war hysteria," and in furtherance of the slogan: "Leave Europe to God." The Cardinals of Boston, Pennsylvania, Curley and Philadelphia are notorious for their Isolationist propaganda. The following are typical statements of leading dignitaries of the Church.

Mgr. Duify of Buffalo declared that if the United States went to war with Soviet Russia as an ally, he for one would publicly ask Catholic men to refuse to fight. Archbishop Curley made thrusts at the European democracies saying:

"I ask you today not to be swayed by war propaganda. Many of us recall the propaganda of 22 years ago in this country and other countries. I am speaking particularly now of this country. We were asked to make the world Safe for Democracy. What Democracy? Our country was not invaded then; it is not being invaded now. We shall willingly and

courageously defend America if needs be, but there is no reason why we should fight the battles of war-mad countries in Europe. We have done nothing to stir up strife in Europe. We are not responsible for what is going on over there. We want to live in peace and we must be determined to live in peace. Where are the democracies in Europe which we are called upon to save? I am not an exponent of totalitarian states, but again I ask, where are the democracies in Europe? "

Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia uttered this warning:

"Meddle not with what does not concern you lest you be used as a cat's paw by others."

At a "Sword of the Spirit Meeting" in London a Catholic speaker, Mr. Christopher Hollis, waxed indignant about the role of Continental and American Catholics in relation to the present war. Referring to America which he had recently visited he said:

"The main obstacle to pro-British sentiment, and one which has been giving the gravest concern to the authorities at Washington, has been the attitude of American Catholics. In America it is very easy, for instance, to publish accounts of the persecution of the Church in Germany in the non-Catholic Press; it is almost impossible to get Catholic publishers of papers to print anything of the kind. They suspect that it is a dodge to bring America into the war. There are, of course, notable exceptions among individual American Catholics, but it is somewhat humiliating that the most we can prove is that the Catholic support of Hitler has not been unanimous!" (*Catholic Herald*, November 15th, 1940)

When the discussion of the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Bill was before the country, Roman Catholic Prelates of eminence and Authority were in the vanguard of the opposition. True, they viewed the Bill with dismay for private reasons, because in its original formulation it did not exempt the clergy, lay brothers and seminarians from compulsory military service. But the American correspondent of the *Catholic Herald* at the time pointed out (see issue dated September 13th, 1940) that Catholics were opposed to the principle of the Bill since:

"There is a spreading alarm that the conscription is intended to build a huge army . . . that such an army would be called to the defense of Great Britain. It would be unfair to English Catholics to reveal the continued opposition on the part of very many American Catholics to any sort of aid being lent England.... England's cause has not been helped any, in the view of American Catholics, by the policies of the Pétain Government. The banishment of Freemasonry, the purge of Government officials, the restoration of the Family in France, Vichy's good relations with the Church ♦ all these serve to build the esteem with which American Catholics are ready to view the Pétain Government."

To crown all came the comment of the late Catholic American Ambassador to Britain, Mr. Joseph Kennedy, who on his return from this country to America is reported to have declared publicly that "Democracy is finished in England"; England's not fighting for Democracy; that's the "bunk stuff." And according to Sir Norman Angell's message from America, Kennedy's chief occupation since his return from England to America have been



Cardinal Pacelli, later Pius XII, with Joseph P. Kennedy [left] (1936)

to raise the bogey that the socialists are running Britain, and that therefore schemes to associate closely America and Britain must be treated with due caution. It is obvious that the visit of Mr. Wendell Wilkie to this country early in 1941 was, in part, prompted by such alarmists talk. Both Mr. Kennedy and Henry Ford are prominent members of the "America First Committee" -- the latest form of organised Isolationism. Even after the Presidential Election and as late as January 3rd, 1941, the *Catholic Herald* in this country referred to the fact that:

"The Catholic community in America appears to be one of the strongest centres of isolationism, but it will find it increasingly difficult to maintain its point of view in the face of the majority decision."

And on March 14th, 1941, that paper spoke of the "maintenance of a Catholic opinion" against the Lease and Lend Bill.

In considering the motives which possibly inspire Catholic Isolationism, the following points are worth mentioning. Naturally they are sustained both by general anti-war sentiment and the arguments of pro-Fascist saboteurs.

(1) As long as the Catholic Church, or more correctly her leaders, see a hope that the Fascist States and the Universal Church can work in harmony, or at least reach an agreement of sorts, no better perspective for the Church being in view, the advance of Fascism in general and Nazism in particular will not be regarded as a major disaster by Catholic forces. Many Catholics are Fascists at heart. But even the Catholics who have no love for the Fascist System are more easily reconciled to Fascist victories when those victories are accompanied by concessions to the Church or promises of these. Democratic Catholics found the Fascisms of Franco, Mussolini, Salazar and of Dollfuss tolerable because their Church gained ground at the same time.

(2) The Catholic creed in many of its fundamentals coincides with certain Fascist tenets (Authoritarianism and the Corporate State, for instance), so that Right-wing Catholic opinion very often veers round to the view that a "Christianised Fascism" offers more to the cause of Catholicism than is offered by Democracy, which is considered too tolerant towards Catholicism's opponents. Experience in Italy, Portugal, Spain, Austria (under Dollfuss) and now in Petain France strengthens this view, whilst the differences between the Church and the State in Germany are considered by the long-term diplomats of the Church to be too short-lived to present a decisive argument against the possibility of a Nazi-Catholic alliance.

(3) Should America become embroiled in the war as an ally of Britain, and the American Bishops become linked up with a patriotic campaign against Fascism, this might cause an acute cleavage within the Church at a time when, in some countries, she may have reached a tolerable understanding with Hitler and a whole bloc of Nazi-controlled Fascist States. The Pope would assuredly find such a state of affairs difficult to handle. We must not forget, in this connection, that almost all his funds come from America at the present time.

(4) Unquestionably the strongest reason for Catholic Isolationism in America is that which springs from the rabid anti-Bolshevism which is almost an obsession in practically all Catholic circles. It is probably feared that should America join forces with Britain, this will drive Germany into a position of greater

dependency on Russia, which may result in a further "peaceful expansion" of Soviet territory and rule with the tacit consent of Germany. On the other hand, Catholics in America may believe that a Britain which is denied full American aid will be eventually compelled to seek a solution with Germany on the basis of an anti-Russian orientation in international politics. An alternative perspective is also not to their liking, namely Russia and America as allies in this war.

For such reasons as these, influential sections of the Catholic population of America try to hold America aloof from equal participation with Britain in the present struggle. Before the Presidential Election the democratically-inclined wing combined this with the advocacy of restricted assistance to Britain whilst the Right-wing and avowed Fascist circles advocated the refusal of every aid to Britain in her emergency. Since the presidential election, and as a result of the fall of France, there has been a greater tendency to regard assistance to Britain as inevitable, the President's line of policy being what it is. Consequently the key point at issue now is the extent and kind of assistance to be granted.

CATHOLIC ANGLE ON BRITISH POLITICS

In this country, up to the outbreak of war, the line of the Catholic press strongly resembled that pursued by the late Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain. It regarded Bolshevist Russia as International Enemy No. 1, approved every move to isolate her, opposed every attempt to build up any form of Collective Security which implied co-operation between Soviet Russia and the Western Powers, and appealed to Germany to be reasonable and negotiate with Britain on an anti-Bolshevist line of foreign policy. Naturally at the same time Hitler was admonished for his "excesses" against the Church this being the real obstacle, he was told, to his incorporation in Western civilisation. The following telegram was sent by Cardinal Hinsley to the late Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, on his return from Munich in 1938 :

" The Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of England and Wales at this meeting today offer their heartfelt gratitude to the Prime Minister for his successful efforts in the cause of peace, promising him their loyal support and prayers." (*Catholic Herald*, October 28th, 1938).

With the outbreak of war between England and Germany, this line was modified, at least in regard to the official publications and the Catholic press.

Hitler was given a more villainous countenance, and it was said that "on the moral plane" Nazism and Bolshevism had now become indistinguishable. Headed by Cardinal Hinsley, the mass of the Catholic community thought and acted as patriotic citizens who were anxious not to witness the victory of Hitler in this war. The official blessing of the Catholic Hierarchy of Britain was contained, for instance, in the following message:

" We, the Catholic Hierarchy of England and Wales, wish to urge upon all the faithful . . . the duty of loyal obedience to His Majesty the King and of willing co-operation in every

form of national service. We have a profound conviction of the justice of our cause. Our Nation in this conflict stands for freedom and for the liberty of the individual and the State. In the words so recently used by His Holiness Pope Pius XII, 'Conquests and Empires not founded on justice cannot be blessed by God.' We pray Almighty God to defend the right, to preserve His Majesty the King and the safety of his Dominions."

Today, Hinsley's hatred against Nazism knows no bounds. The Hitler Regime is treated by him as the personification of evil and degradation. It is only a thousand pities that it has taken a gruesome and terrible international war to bring home to him that truth. It is also a weighty reflection on him and his Church that the moral conceptions which guide them are such that it has been the essence of Roman Catholic policy since 1933, when Hitler came to power with Catholic support, to come to terms with Hitler. For this implied that the Church was ready to sanction and support all the inhumanities and wanton violation of the individual by Nazism provided that the Church was singled out for privileged treatment.

When Italy entered the war on the opposite side from Britain, Cardinal Hinsley found it necessary to recant his earlier praise of the Christian-like virtues of the Italian Leader. In a statement to the Press he wrote:

"The disguise of temporarising with religion has been cast aside. The leaders of Fascism have with brutal 'realism' broken with the Christian civilization which built up Europe.... If for a while there was a hope of securing freedom of conscience for the faithful under such a system, now there is no longer a possibility of a 'modus vivendi' with this open enemy of the faith of the majority of the Italian people." (*Catholic Herald*, June 16th, 1940.)

He did not try to justify the invasion of Greece by Italy.

Once appeasement was clearly dead, so far as the of official policy of this country was concerned, the Catholic press kept fairly well to the patriotic line. The only signs of wavering were connected with two issues: The collapse of France, which has already been descried, and the attitude of Mr. Churchill and his Government to Soviet Russia, which is, presumably, one of trying to reach an agreement of some kind with the Soviet State. On every conceivable occasion Catholic editors blazed forth their warning: Don't trust Russia. No alliance with the Bolshevik State. When talk was in the air of trade negotiations with Russia, the "whole Christian forces of this country" were called upon to protest against "this suicidal move." Week after week the Catholic press declared how shocked was the Catholic conscience at the decision to send Sir Staiford Cripps to the Kremlin "to explore the possibility of an understanding between Britain and the Soviet." On one occasion the editorial columns of the *Catholic Herald* (May 31st,1940) even carried the suggestion that instead of seeking co-operation, Britain should make war on Russia:

". . . what sort of help can we expect from Stalin? Far better go down with our honour intact than clutch at a filthy straw.... Would it not be infinitely more worthy of our cause to call Stalin's bluff, and, with the help of Turkey, to create a gigantic diversion which might well bring the Bolshevik superstructure tumbling and release in Russia the forces that would prove to be our friends indeed? A mad plan? But consider where sanity bas brought us."

Alfred Denville, M.P., spoke in a similar vein when asked by the *Catholic Herald* to state his views

regarding the reported undertaking of Britain to prohibit anti-Soviet criticism in this country in return for certain promises on the part of Russia. He said:

"The only difference for us Catholics between Nazi paganism and Soviet communism is that we are not fighting the one which is the worst."

Such sentiments are by no means isolated utterances on the part of some peculiar type of Roman Catholic. This deadly fear of British-Russian co-operation -- even in its most casual form -- haunts the minds of practically all Catholics who have any real understanding of the teachings of their Church. It is surely fair to conclude from this rigidity of the Roman Catholic mind in relation to the Russian Government and the Soviet System that Roman Catholic influence will seek to poison the atmosphere between Britain and Russia, especially should the prospect of weaning Russia away from her present policy of aiding Germany seem more promising than it does at the time of writing. We must not forget that the war has brought many surprises. What if Mr. Churchill does manage miraculously to bridge the gulf between Britain and Russia ◆ what then? Will the fervent support of Cardinal Hinsley and the Sword of the Spirit Movement which he enjoys today turn suddenly to lukewarm and critical tolerance, one shade removed from actual hostility only because of the political calculation that Churchill is too powerfully placed to be shaken by Catholic opposition or intrigue? For Cardinal Hinsley and for most British democrats in the Church, Catholic hostility to Hitler is in the foreground at the present time, but their hostility to Stalin is, if anything, more basic. One thing is certain. At such a time, the spirit of defeatism would unquestionably emanate from Church circles and find many prepared minds there on which to work. The people of this country should not forget that for six and a half years, from February, 1933, when the Nazis came to power to September, 1939, when this war broke out, the Catholic press in this country has glossed over most of the misdeeds of Hitlerism against humanity. Not even the attacks on their own Church were treated as news. It is no chance that the documents on The Persecution of the Catholic Church by the Third Reich were prepared for publication and published here after the war broke out and after more than six years of discouraging effort on the part of the Church to persuade Hitler that co-operation with Catholicism was worth while. In contrast to this attitude of extreme reserve, the fullest publicity on Catholic press and platform has been given to every misdeed, every error, every indiscretion which could be traced back either to Communism, the Russian State, the Communist Parties of the world down to every Communist cell, member and "ancillary" member. Such one-sided recording has left a deep-rooted bias which renders the mass of Roman Catholic followers and voters a prey to any demagogic campaign against "Bolshevism." Such Catholics as Miss Barbara Ward of the Sword of the Spirit Movement who have reached the firm conclusion that Hitler is out to exterminate the Church, and who are intelligent enough to understand the reasons why the Church has been one-sided in the past, will undoubtedly keep their balance and not get carried away by blind emotion should the issue of friendly relations with Russia ever become acute. But such balance can be assumed on the part of relatively few Catholics. It was blind hatred of Bolshevism which played German Catholicism into Hitler's hands and gave him the victory. What terrible catastrophes will that same spirit bring about here? We can only thank our stars, and the good work of those whose spirit of freedom has led them to oppose Catholicism here, that the British Church has not nearly the same political potency as was possessed by Catholicism on the Continent.

THE GREATIST OF ALL "NON-INTERVENTIONISTS"

THE mass of data here provided demonstrates forcibly what pro-Fascist groupings and tendencies exist within the fold of the Church, and that the Church herself has supported and marched together with Fascism when it suited her purpose. These facts challenge the superficial assumption that because Papal encyclicals appear which obviously condemn certain aspects of aggressive Fascism, it is legitimate to conclude that the Pope and his Church are wholeheartedly on the side of Britain and her allies in the present war. Is it legitimate to conclude, then, that "Catholic" and "Fascist" are synonymous terms, and that, therefore, every person of the Catholic religion can only be treated as an open or hidden friend of the Fascist regimes? Some opponents of Catholicism tend to overshoot the mark when they assume this. There are Catholics today who sincerely, if erroneously, believe that Hitler and the Pope could never come to any sort of terms because neither side can ever modify either ideology or practice. At the same time, there is more truth in the identification of Catholicism with Fascism than at first meets the eye.

The Catholic Church has never surrendered, and never can surrender, her claim to world domination. In that sense, her policy is imperialist, as imperialist as the schemes of the German Fuhrer. She maintains and extends her power and influence with the aid of wars if the appropriate occasion occurs (the Spanish War was a modern example of this); she uses Catholic support of war in any country as a basis for negotiating concessions from the secular power. In carrying out this policy she shows skill and infinite patience. In internal affairs too she has her Catholic columns at work, penetrating parties and other movements, active in Governments and civil administration, changing policy here and personnel there so as gradually to gain more power for Catholicism in public life. On the Right, on the Left, amongst all social classes, she is active. She demands a "living wage" for the workers, a "family wage" for the poor, and she urges for the richer classes the right to own and exploit extensive property in private. She harshly condemns the revolutionary Left who assert that labour is the only title to wealth. On the Right she sharply rebukes the worst monopolists who ignore all conceptions of the common good, and whose insatiable appetite for profits create those very tense social conditions which the Church is out to prevent. So long as class relations are relatively peaceful, she continues to plead for harmony between the classes on the basis of a social policy which, if followed, would exclude the worst excesses of monopoly Capitalism and avoid the extremes of Socialism.

But her pleadings with the rich and powerful have, in practice, produced little tangible result. Nor have the workers proved as meek and submissive as the encyclicals exhort them to be. Exploitation has continued in harsh forms, and with it the impetus to end exploitation on the one hand, and the zeal of the powerful to devise surer means of safeguarding their wealth and their personal power has burned still brighter. Socialism arose as a movement based on the claim to end privilege, whether economic, political or cultural. Fascism came with the aim of destroying all socialist effort and aspirations, and creating a new era of privilege by a still greater use of the centralised power of the State. When growing social tension and radical thought and organisation on Right and Left created critical conditions, the Church, willingly or unwillingly, had to make her choice as regards which side she was

going to support in the different countries. That choice in internal affairs has always been in favour of Fascism. This outcome is no matter of mere chance either. The Church and her leaders have many considerations in mind which make Catholicism lean towards Fascism in the modern age.

Fascism has always staked its claim for support on the basis of its intent to root out Socialism (or Communism) and to institute a disciplined order in place of the " chaos " of democratic rule. The affinity of outlook between Fascism and Catholicism in their attitude to Socialism and Democracy is remarkable. The following reference to Catholic creed will indicate this.

In the economic sphere: The Fascist economics of a Corporate State are almost in every detail identical with the Christian economics laid down in numerous encyclicals.

(a) Both require the compulsory suppression of "class war" by extinguishing the free trade unions and creating in their place associations of workmen under the watchful eye of the "leaders of industry" and under the aegis of the State. Catholic teaching on the point runs:

"The corporations are composed of representatives of the unions of working men and employers of the same trade or profession, and, as true and genuine organs of the State, they direct and co-ordinate the activities of the unions in all matters of common interest. Strikes and lock-outs are forbidden. If the contending Parties cannot come to an agreement, public authority intervenes. Little reflection is required to perceive the advantage of the institution thus summarily described: peaceful collaboration of the classes, repression of Socialist organizations and efforts, the moderating influence of a special ministry." (*The Social Order*, Pages 4-3.)

(b) The Socialist programme of ending the monopoly of the means of production and thus abolishing monopolistic privilege and gross forms of unearned income, either by Collectivism or other means, is not only repugnant to Fascism but anathema to the Catholic Church. Catholic teaching on the point runs:

"The first and most fundamental principle, therefore, if one would undertake to alleviate the conditions of the masses, must be the inviolability of private property." (*The Worker's Charter*, Page 19.)

' . . . the Church recognizes the existence of inequality amongst men who are by nature unlike in mental endowment and strength of body, and even in amount of fortune, and she enjoins that the right of property and of its disposal, derived from nature, should in the case of every individual remain intact and inviolate." (*The Pope and the People*, Page 19.)

(c) In relation to Fascist economics, Mr. A. Raven Thompson could well write in *The Catholic Gazette*, April, 1937:

"One can no longer deny that the Corporate State is so far the nearest thing to the ideals of the Popes that the modern world can offer."

Whilst Christopher Dawson wrote as far back as May 4th, 1934 (see the *Catholic Times* of that date):

". . . there seems no doubt that the Catholic social ideals set forth in the Encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI have far more affinity with those of Fascism than with those of either

Liberalism or Socialism."

As regards Socialism, the encyclicals have laid down that: " No one can be at the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist." And:

"We pronounce as follows: Whether Socialism be considered as a doctrine, or as a historical fact, or as a movement, if it really remain Socialism, it cannot be brought into harmony with the dogmas of the Catholic Church...." (*The Social Order*, Pages 53-4)

Regarding the conflict between Fascism and Democracy, the Church has a strong bias towards Dictatorship on the basis of her own creeds. Catholic support for any government which does not guarantee the Church absolute and undisputed supremacy in the sphere of Religion and education can be at least only a matter of temporary expediency until she herself has the power to institute her Christian alternative. That alternative rests on the dogmas of Catholicism which assert that sanction to govern and the rules of government must come from God as interpreted by his Church, and from no other source. Democracy, whereby people assign to themselves the right to choose rulers and say how they shall rule, stands in fundamental contradiction to the Church's teaching. The Church is authoritarian in philosophy and authoritarian in her political ideas. For Catholics to sponsor the cause of Democracy means to sustain the very religious errors which the Church must doggedly combat. Human sanction, free press, free assembly, religious and educational freedom, these are poison to the Church. For she aspires to a regime in which the religious and irreligious opponents of the Catholic Church possess neither rights nor powers in the State. As the encyclical on *The Christian Constitution of States* asserts:

"It is a public crime to act as though there were no God."

". . . Gregory XVI in his Encyclical Letter *Mirani vos*, of date August 15th, 1832, inveighed with weighty words against the sophisms which even in his time were being publicly inculcated—namely, that no preference should be shown for any particular form of worship; that it is right for individuals to form their own personal judgments about religion, that each man's conscience is his sole and all-sufficing guide; and that it is lawful for every man to publish his own views, whatever they may be, and even to conspire against the State."

". . . the liberty of thinking, and of publishing, whatsoever each one likes, without any hindrance, is not in itself an advantage over which society can wisely rejoice. On the contrary, it is the fountain-head and origin of many evils."

". . . it is evident that the origin of public power is to be sought for in God himself, and not in the multitude...."

This conception of authoritarian morality is even more clearly elucidated in the publication *Does the Catholic Church Persecute?* written by the Rev. Joseph Keating:

"Possessed of the conviction of her divine mission, the Catholic Church has never hesitated to claim to be the sole depository of God's revelation, the ultimate and infallible judge as to what men must believe and do in order to please their Creator, even though by this claim she implicitly condemns as false all other institutions which profess to represent Christianity...."

"We have seen that the Catholic Church is necessarily, as far as her mind is concerned, intolerant of error. She must be or forfeit her claim to be the organ of God's revelation. Now, intolerance of mind is apt to proceed to intolerance in act, as all human history shows. There are two courses of conduct to which it is likely to give rise: Persecution and Proselytism. Thus, if toleration may be defined to be a practical recognition of our neighbour's right to follow his conscience in matters of belief and conduct, provided the right he claims to exercise does not injure social order or social morality ♦ which seems a fairly adequate description ♦ then intolerance, as a consequence, is the denial of that right even so limited. And when expressed in action, it will show itself either by penalising the neighbour for following his conscience, which is persecution or by using unfair means to induce him to conform his conscience to one's own which is ♦ to give the word its common invidious sense ♦ proselytism.... Now, it is plain that no one on his own account has a right to do this: all men in this respect are by nature perfectly equal, and if a person seeks to enter the domain of his neighbour's conscience it must be either at the invitation of its owner or by the permission, direct or indirect, of Him who alone has the absolute right of entry, Almighty God; otherwise he usurps a power to which he has no claim. It follows, then, that man's right to determine for himself in matters of faith and practice can be circumscribed only by his Creator, acting directly on the conscience or through his accredited agents, in order to bring him to the knowledge of the truth and the love of the good, which are the proper objects of his mind and will.... But clearly those to whom God has delegated the functions of instructing others in religious truth (as, in the natural order, parents regarding their children and, in the supernatural, pastors regarding their flocks) cannot be regarded as exceeding their commission when they support the dictates of conscience by assigning penalties. They have a right, in due measure and as a means of education, to make the way of the transgressor hard."

With the Dictatorial Regimes the Church has a very natural affinity. They have in common Authority and blind obedience, the hierarchical principle of government and enforced discipline. The more the idea of Dictatorship catches on in the minds of the people, the more easy is it for those same people to submit themselves to a moral Dictator. The less the people reason critically and the more they obey external commands, the more they are plastic material to be moulded in thought and deed into forms set by priests and Pope. For all these reasons, the Catholics who understand the spirit and teaching of their Church can be democrats and pay homage to the fundamental liberties of man only as a temporary and tactical expedient. Fundamentally there can be nothing but disharmony between the two. Pope Leo XIII in 1888 openly proclaimed this position when he stated:

"Although on account of the extraordinary political condition (of today) it usually happens that the Church acquiesces in certain modern liberties, not because she prefers them in themselves, but because she judges it expedient that they should be permitted, she would in happier times resume her own liberty . . ." (*The War and the Papacy*, Protestant Truth Society).

In reply it may be argued that although the Church's teaching lays down certain fundamental objections to Democracy, and sponsors a Christian Order which is markedly in harmony with the political forms which the Fascist movements represent, nevertheless Catholicism and Fascism are poles apart because Catholic teaching is at variance with fundamental tenets of Fascism. For instance, when Hitler fanatically sweeps forward to achieve his plan of imposing a Nazi Order on the world on the basis of a

pretended racial superiority of the German people, he is displaying an intense Nationalism and aggressionism which are opposed to the Church's teachings. For the Church opposes international strife as much as she does the conflict between classes. Again, the barbaric nature of Nazism will be contrasted with the humanitarianism of Catholicism. Finally, we shall be reminded that a distinction must be made between an Authoritarian and a Totalitarian form of government, and that the Church has just as fundamental objections to Totalitarianism as to Democracy.

It is certainly true that the Church's teaching does in many aspects conflict with the ideology and practice of certain present-day Fascist States. On the other hand, the point must be ceded that no matter how much internationalism and humanity the Church sponsors in her teachings, the practice of the Church can leave no shadow of doubt that these issues are not a matter of principle to her on which she will make a stand. National Churches have existed as long as the Church herself was a force, and they have rallied the people to the call of Nationalism and Imperialism throughout the centuries. Mussolini's aggression against Abyssinia was not less nationalistic, imperialistic and barbaric than the campaigns of Hitler, but the Italian Church rallied the people to the call of patriotism and conquest. The World War too demonstrated the Church's intense capacity to violate her own teachings with impunity when considerations of strategy demand such a course. Her humanitarianism has also been shown not to sit very deep. Apart from the wars she has fostered and supported, that she is capable of displaying unlimited inhumanity has been shown by the period of the Inquisition, by France prior to the French Revolution, and by the history of the Spanish Church, to quote some of the grossest examples.

The vital point is this. The Church aims at establishing the greatest monopoly in life that has ever been conceived. Whereas other monopolistic organisations control, or work to control, for example, all access to land and raw materials, the Church seeks to vest in herself all access to Salvation, Morality, Goodness, Spirituality, call it what you will. Her supreme aim is, by means of conversion and coercion, to bring all humanity to the view that only with her assistance can one live a good life on earth and qualify for a tolerable position in the Better World to Come. The path of conversion will never lead to the goal by itself. There is no great and positive idea in Catholicism to keep the Church alive. Only the most feeble members of the human race will easily fall for a creed which persistently points a finger at their crippled state of mind and with, and which persistently undermines moral self-reliance and confidence and uses that as the basis of religion. Thought and all healthy feeling revolt against the Shepherd-Sheep concept of things. It can only be accepted by those whose thinking and feeling are twisted, or from childhood placed in chains, or whose human powers are so abnormally weak that they have no strong convictions about anything. Faced with this fact, the Church must have power or die. She must get hold of the young so as to kill the spirit of questioning, of independence, of disobedience. She must be sustained with legislation which will allow the Church to silence the words of the heretic, to crush the organisations that dare criticise and challenge the basis of Catholicism. In short, Catholicism's survival, its growth and the Church's final success in establishing universally her power over Man, all rest on the Church's capacity to secure privileges from those who wield decisive secular power. To grasp such privileges, the Church will sacrifice all else. She will ally herself with the most irresponsible, the most callous and brutal systems the world could ever witness if this is the price for power. She will stop progress in every other sphere if that is the price of her own progress.

That is why the essence of Catholic strategy is cowardice and opportunism. The Church makes no stand on any principles which civilised men and women cherish. She recommends herself to the

legislators of the earth, for she has something to give them if they will serve her. Her appeal to the tyrants of the earth is bluntly if callously set forth in the Encyclical *On the Outbreak of the European War* which was written by Pope Benedict XV in November, 1914:

"The second cause of the general unrest we declare to be the absence of respect for the Authority of those who exercise ruling powers. Ever since the source of human powers has been sought apart from God the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, in the free will of men, the bonds of duty which should exist between superior and inferior, have been so weakened as almost to have ceased to exist.... We remind the peoples of the earth of that doctrine, which no human opinions can change: "There is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God"(Romans xiii. 2.) Whatever power then is exercised amongst men, whether that of the King or that of an inferior Authority, it has its origin from God.... From which principle the Apostle of the Gentiles infers that he who contumaciously resists the legitimate exercise of human authority resists God and is preparing for himself eternal punishment: ' Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.' (Romans xiii. 2.) Let the Princes and Rulers of peoples remember this truth, and let them consider whether it is a prudent and safe idea for Governments or for States to separate themselves from the holy religion of Jesus Christ, from which their authority receives such strength and support. Let them consider again and again whether it is a measure of political wisdom to seek to divorce the teaching of the Gospel and of the Church from the ruling of a country and from the public education of the young. Sad experience proves that human authority fails where religion is set aside.... There remains, of course, the expedient of using force to repress popular risings; but what is the result? Force can repress the body, but it cannot repress the souls of men."

The service of Catholicism to reactionary rule has extended further than their efforts to foster the slave virtues of obedience and humility. To the extent to which they have been able to make the existence of hell a reality in the minds of the masses they have had, as Burns once wrote:

". . . a hangman's whip To haud the wretch in order."

No wonder, then, that of the practice of the Church Roman Catholics have written:

" The Catholic Church is always prepared to come to terms with any Government in the world. Pagan, tyrannical, dictatorial, republican, imperial, monarchical, the Church makes no distinction. She is concerned solely for the souls of her children." (*Catholic Herald*, November 26th, 1932.)

Some Catholics like to repeat mystical words about those who strike against the rock of Peter ending by being broken to pieces. The truth is rather the opposite, that the Church would break to pieces if she came into serious conflict with the State. She has not the moral qualities which would allow her to defy persecution by the State. She has not even moral qualities enough to allow her to exist as a voluntary body, unhampered but unassisted by the finance and powers of the State. Perhaps that is why she brings mysticism to her aid.

The point is surely proven that the Church and the Pope are neither on the side of Fascism nor its opponents in the critical struggle of today. The Catholic Church stands aloof, ever lustful for power, never forgetting her power of the past, committing herself to so little, aspiring to so much, waiting to judge which side will win in the conflict and using the pressure of Catholic support of this or that

Government, System or Party to stake the claim of Catholicism for new rights and favours. Those who dub the Pope either pro-Fascist or anti-Fascist in policy have still to learn the most elementary truths about Catholic diplomacy.

This shameful position was unashamedly admitted in an editorial of the *Catholic Herald* (January 3rd, 1941) which included the following frank statement .

"The Church, as the Pope has just repeated, does not take sides as between the rival political and social theorists (for instance, Democrats and Fascists. Author). Her sole concern is to work by spiritual and moral means to ensure that the policy of the victorious party should be animated by those principles which the Holy Father has just enunciated."

The British Government will be wise not to refuse the co-operation of Roman Catholics in this country in relation to the present struggle against Nazism. But Parliament and the people at large must realise on what unreliable foundations such co-operation rests. Otherwise they will be deceived into expecting absolute loyalty from a community which, with individual exceptions, can give absolute loyalty to none but the leaders of their Church.

CHRISTIAN UNITY AND ITS DANGERS

What are we to say, then, to the increasing amount of denominational unity which this country is witnessing, and which is being sponsored on the Pope's Five Peace Points? A Joint Manifesto over the signatures of Cardinal Hinsley, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council accepts these proposals as embodying the War Aims of all Christians. These Christian leaders are further agreed on five standards which should govern economic and social life in the years after the war. Interdenominational campaigns to popularise a Christian Post-War Order have been announced.

Roman Catholics plan to extend the co-operation thus achieved at the top to every town, village and parish; to establish a Christian Council of Action to bring pressure to bear on national and local public representatives, and to submit to a combined Christian Convention a practical programme which can then become the focal point of a struggle to "Christianise" this country. It is also evident that overtures are being made to working-class circles to persuade them to adopt the Pope's policy, and become an integral part of the new Christian Front. The editor of the *Catholic Herald* in a recent letter to the *New Statesman and Nation* invited the non-Communist Left to join up with Christians in their work for a new Order. The *Catholic Herald* interviewed Mr. George Gibson, Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, with the object of finding out what are the chances of the Christian Ten Points being adopted by the T.U.C., and according to that paper's report, received quite a sympathetic reception.

The Pope's Five Peace Points have received too much publicity to need quoting in detail here. As an expression of the wish that international anarchy be ended they are not a subject for criticism ♦ though the practice of the Church in aiding and abetting those warmongers she can use for her own advantage makes one doubtful about the genuineness of that desire. In any case, such sentiment is widespread

already. Another hotch-potch of general phrases about the need for the independence of nations, for progressive disarmament, for international institutions like the League of Nations and the Hague Court, etc., etc., contributes nothing to a solution of the practical problems involved in the outlawing of war. The world's miseries are due to the fact that those politicians and financiers who want power and wealth at the expense of millions who are robbed of their rights and security have been accosted with pious schemes galore, but seldom with people who are armed with a detailed and realistic plan and the resolution to see it achieved.

The Five Social Standards which the leaders of Catholicism, Anglicanism and Methodism have adopted in common are no whit less open to the same criticism. Few progressive people would deny that the inequalities of wealth and education should be eradicated. The difficulties only arise when we begin to define what we mean by Equality and consider how such a state of Equality is to be attained. Again demands which proclaim that the Family must be safeguarded, that the sense of a Divine vocation must be restored to man's daily work, and that the resources of the earth must be used as God's gifts to Man provide no practical guide whatever to questions of social policy.

All this ambiguity is no matter of chance, however. For it is only by sticking to nebulous propositions that unity between the denominations is possible at all. Where she has power, the Catholic Church protects the Family, for instance, by compulsory Catholic education, by Catholic censorship, by making divorce impossible and the distribution of information on Birth Control a punishable offence, and by compelling women to adopt the "vocation" of Wifehood and Motherhood by means of closing the doors of Industry and the Professions against them. Few Christians outside the Catholic Church would recognise such compulsion as akin to their ideals. Again, equality in Education has always meant for loyal Catholics in this country the demand that Catholic children shall be taught the Catholic religion by Catholic teachers in Catholic schools at the public expense. And many are the moves going on both in public and behind closed doors to prepare the launching of educational reforms which will allow the Catholic priests a greater scope for action in the Schoolroom and, in general, will give religious sectarianism free play in school life. Very many Christians, as well as non-Christians, will be strongly averse to a demand for Educational Equality which serves only as a cloak for reforms which divide and segregate the children in the schools on the basis of differences which they cannot possibly understand.

For these reasons, Christians outside the Roman Catholic Church will fall for such schemes of Christian Unity at their peril. Many of them are opposed to Nazism because they believe that the minds and consciences of people should be inviolate and the object of respect, and they recognise that Nazism shatters with rude and brutal hands the values they prize so highly. But these values are menaced equally, if less obviously, and less immediately, by Roman Catholicism. Do these Christians who are cooperating with Roman Catholicism want to escape from the frying pan only to burn in the fire? In the non-Fascist countries Roman Catholic strategy is seeking to harness the Christian Churches and Christian sentiment behind the Church of Rome, and to drive the wedge deeper between Christians and non-Christians. But actually the real schism exists elsewhere between intolerant Catholics -- together with particularly bigoted representatives of the other Churches -- and those people inside and outside the Churches who want a world of greater freedom at the end of this war. The ultimate outcome of Christian Unity, so far as the leaders of Catholicism are concerned, is to stimulate Catholic growth as a step towards that political status which will permit the Church to carry through her divine commission to persecute and proselytise those who show no voluntary aptitude to let their minds and wills become the property of the Church. The War will indeed be fought in vain if the people of Europe ward off Hitler's New Order of Tyranny only to discover too late this other enemy within their gates who will forge in the name of religion a system which is equally intolerant, equally authoritarian and, if

necessary, equally brutal. There is no reasonable basis for the unity of all Christians during this War. Those people inside the Anglican and Free Churches whose desire to see the people free is deep and genuine, should repudiate the alliance which has been initiated by their leaders. Let them go together with lovers of freedom outside the Churches. And let them define in common with these others War Aims in terms that will challenge the right of any State or Institution to mould the young to set patterns, and place penalties on the opinions of adults, and on the human conscience.