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Joseph McCabe Index

The Pious Traitors Of Belgium And France

How The Preaching Of Peace Fizzled Out, And Why By Joseph McCabe

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The Black International No. 7

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Chapter I

THE WAR IN THE WEST

Those of us who know the ways of Popes watch our papers cynically for the first signs of a change of heart in Immutable Rome. In the first year of a war the Pope is on the side of the big battalions, or, in the language of modern war, the Panzer divisions. How could a nation like Great Britain expect a Pope to declare its cause just if it had only a score of good fighting planes and hundreds of thousands of hospital beds and coffins ready when it launched its thunderbolt? In the second year the Pope becomes the Great Neutral, very eloquent in telling the virtues of peace to a world which hardly needs that assurance. In the third year he becomes the Arbiter of Right and Wrong. He find's that there are limits to the world's leniency and the Catholic layman's docility.

The time has come for the third phase. The German system is ominously stretched, and expert ears listen for the first crack. Italy, disillusioned and beggared, would hang out its tattered flags if it heard of the death of Mussolini and Hitler. Japan sees the great American fleet looming on the horizon. All the little parasite dictators and Quislings tremble in their dishonored homes. Through the world surges the first flush of confidence in three years .

. . . So we begin to hear strange things from those spokesmen of the Vatican -- the Radio, the Osservatore, and the publicity bureau -- which can be quoted later as evidence of the Pope's sentiments

or lightly dismissed as "unauthorized," as the circumstances require.

The latest to hand reminds us how in a world which permits Catholics to intrigue in every newspaper office and every political lobby the Pope can command respectful attention for any eccentricity, audacity, or mendacity he cares to perpetrate. Myron C. Taylor, whose secret proceedings under cover of his unofficial office the American public might find it interesting to investigate, recently spent a week in Lisbon on his way from the Pope to the President. Under the devout dictator Salazar Lisbon, not many years ago a great Liberal center, has become an important international outpost of the Vatican. Representatives of Spain, Vichy France, Germany, and the Church breathe its air with lordly freedom. It was, therefore, not very surprising that shortly after Mr. Taylor's departure the London Times had this paragraph, which a British writer welcomed with the reminder that "good hearty laughs are hard to come by in these days," from its Lisbon correspondent:

"High ecclesiastical sources throw one clear ray of light on the Pope's attitude to the war. His Holiness in private episcopal audiences has drawn an important distinction between the Nazi and Communist systems. His public discourses have implied the obvious truth that the philosophy behind each is fundamentally anti-Christian, but in private he has repeatedly said that, whereas Nazism is almost entirely evil in its inspiration, Communism has in it certain elements of natural good which, even if utterly perverted, still exist. Bolshevism is in some sense a corruption of the virtues of brotherly love and self-sacrifice, whereas Nazism is a direct and untrammelled manifestation of hatred and greed."

I venture to think that if the reader has not seen that passage before but has read some books of this series it leaves him breathless. By comparison the passage in which the Archbishop of York tried a week later to emulate his Brother in Christ seems almost rational. He said:

"So far as I understand the economic system of Russia, as it was when the invasion began, I see little or nothing in it with which a Christian needs to quarrel" (London Evening News, November 13).

If we had not the Pope's words (alleged) to compare with this we should call it a luscious example of the kind of thing that bishops alone are permitted to say. The essential aim and operation of the Russian economic system is to share the wealth which the people of Russia produce, without one iota of exploitation of colonies or subject nations, amongst the producers, and with immeasurably stricter justice than could be found in Britain or anywhere else; and Dr. Temple, who has paid attention to the ethic of social and economic arrangements for thirty years, ought to know it.

But his boldness in suggesting that it is not quite on the Christian level pales beside that of the Pope. For years Pacelli- Pius has showered upon the entire Russian system every epithet that a man in his position is supposed to know. In a comprehensive word it is "satanic." The Catholic world was taught to close its eyes and shudder at the word Bolshevism and to regard the Nazis as the Teutonic Knight whom God had chosen to destroy it. Now we are asked to believe that while in public the Pope merely pointed out the "obvious truth" that both systems are anti-Christian in private he always acknowledged that Bolshevism was perverted virtue -- that is to say, virtue without a Catholic basis -- and Nazism unreservedly corrupt.

I need not point out to my readers that this is false. The language which the Vatican has used about Bolshevism for years, much of which I have quoted, condemned it vitriolically, on moral and social grounds, as destructive of the social order and of civilization, productive of vice, and stifling to personality. It was almost the only justification of his eight years' courtship of Germany and his silence while the entire German Catholic Church applauded those "victories" of the Nazis, which the Pope is now said to have regarded always as successes of greed and hatred, that one day they would destroy Bolshevism and so save civilization. That there is no other country in the world in which the Pope's alleged ideals -- Peace, Charity, and Justice -- have been more cherished and carried out in practice than in Russia I will show in a booklet on the Vatican's relations to that country.

But there is a growing acknowledgement today that it is the classic land of "brotherly love and Self-sacrifice." What shall we say of this moral oracle of 200,000,000 people who, when he is supposed to be correcting an earlier estimate of Russia, still puts it on a lower level than Italy, Spain, Portugal, or Brazil?

If we were to accept this Lisbon report of the Pope's words as genuine most of us would reflect, with a shrug of the shoulders, that what these high ecclesiastical authorities say seems to be of no interest to us common folk with our simple notions of truthfulness and plain speech. On the other hand, since we must at least regard it as a move on the part of the Black International we should say that it will make Goebbels look to his laurels. From 1917 to 1924, while the rest of the world cursed Russia, the Vatican courted it. From 1926 to 1941 when Russia emerged from the raw conditions of the civil war and the famine and won increasing respect, the Vatican cursed it and called for its destruction. Now that Catholic armies unite with the armies, of "hatred and greed" to destroy it the Roman Church puts out tentative suggestions of a return to the early courtship. It is one of a hundred indications given in these books that the Black International has only one aim -- the recovery or enlargement of its wealth and power -- and one code of action, the ecclesiastical

code. All this talk about social interests and the cause of civilization is eyewash.

Can we suppose that, as will probably be said presently, recent events have opened the eye's of the Pope? What events? Has something happened recently that is worse than the ruin of Spain, Austria, Abyssinia, Czecho-Slovakia, Albania, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France? Remember that in not one single instance of these exhibitions of greed and sadistic cruelty has the Pope said that that was their character. Half of this foulness had been perpetrated before the end of 1939 yet the Pope just then elected to pay Mussolini's royal vassal and spy, the King of Italy, more gorgeous compliments than any Pope had paid in Rome since Italy began to have Kings. In the Christmas season the king and queen -- probably wearing the Golden Rose he had given her as Empress of Abyssinia -- had visited him, with rich presents, in the Vatican. A few days later, not in compliance with Papal custom but defying all precedent in his anxiety to do honour to the degraded pair, he travelled across Rome to the Quirinal and exchanged the most cordial Christmas greetings and compliments in the opulent throne-room of the palace.

At that time, in pursuance of a policy jointly agreed upon between Germany and Italy, the Poles and Polish Jews were writhing, half-starved, bloodily scourged, amidst the ruins of their homes. The Pope knew it. He proved repeatedly daring 1940 that in spite of all German efforts to cut his communications with the country, he continued to receive, doubtless through Swedish Catholics, news from Poland! We remember his warm protest when, in 1940, German soldiers and Gestapo men began, under official orders, to castrate them by the thousand's. You surely remember how the Vatican protested that the operation was not in accord with Catholic theology!

And just about that time the First Murderer came in for his share of the compliments. The Vatican Radio announced joyously that one of the vilest of the Nazi group, Ribbentrop, a man for whom the aristocratic Pope must have felt a personal as well as moral repugnance, was coming to visit the Pope, and, as I show elsewhere, there was a month of hard bargaining, although Hitler met Mussolini a few days after Ribbentrop's visit and they decided upon and began the enslavement of the entirely innocent democracies of Norway, Denmark, Holland, and Belgium. We will consider later whether the plot was communicated to the Pope like those of the Irish and the Spanish rebellions, but it went through with all its savagery whether he agreed or no, and the Huns were already making a vast shambles of the roads of France when the Pope "extended his paternal love to the German and Allied armies." It is said even that he did not use the word Allied but Vatican officials felt that it was expedient to add it.

We shall come later to discuss the very difficult question of the relation of the Black International to the betrayal of Belgium and France. Let us first get quite clear the fact that, whatever Pius XII knew in advance about the German program -- there is high authority for saying that Ribbentrop told him of it -- the execution of which he never condemned, there is no question whatever of his being ignorant at that time of the motives, and the men. When he enjoyed a royal reception at Budapest in 1938 he recalled according to a profoundly admiring Catholic writer in the *British Quarterly Review* (January, 1940, p. 109), some words of Pope Pius XI:

"I thank God day by day that he has made me live in this time . . . good and evil are locked in a gigantic struggle, and nobody has the right to be merely an onlooker at this momentous hour.

Strange language for the Great Neutral! But what was the struggle at that time, and what was Pacelli's contribution?

The struggle which the Pope envisaged in 1938 was not the traditional struggle of religion and irreligion, virtue and vice.

That had, from the clerical angle, continued for decades and not suddenly became "gigantic"! The symptoms of a new and formidable struggle were the brutal destruction of the liberty of Spain by rebels, mercenaries, Nazis, and Fascists: the destruction of the liberty of Austria: the destruction of the lives and property of tens of million's of Chinese: and the destruction of liberty in most of the Republics of South America. These were all parts of one struggle; the attempt of privilege and power to crush new liberties that had been won and extinguish new claims of justice. We know well on which side the Pope was. For him it was a struggle of Bolshevism and Authority, and no group of bankers or corrupt politicians had been more willing than he to enlist the services of these new forces which called themselves Nazism and Fascism. But was their evil character, their motivation in hatred and greed, hidden from him?

He was crowned Pope, as I said, on March 12, 1939. Fifty princes of royal blood, Catholics boast, stood round his throne on the balcony outside St. Peter's when the tiara was put upon his head with the usual formula, very fittingly spoken in a dead language:

"Receive this tiara of three crown and know that you are the Father of Princes and Kings, the Governor of the Earth, the Vicar of Our Savior Jesus Christ."

American papers, in the accounts sent by their Catholic correspondents, smilingly explained away this Father-of-Kings and Governor-of-the-Earth business. A quaint old Roman fashion of speaking. It certainly was not to Pius XII and the field-m Marshals of the Black International who surrounded him as he sat, tall,

straight, emaciated, his large black eyes shining in his long olive tinted face. They had awarded him the crown precisely because he believed this -- because he was a churchman who would, as the Jeromes and Bernards of old had commanded, walk over the body of his mother to do his clerical duty. And no other cardinal knew the world he was to govern as well as he did. Catholic writers boast that he read the chief papers daily of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, France, England, and South America: which probably means that he read all the passages blue-pencilled by secretaries. He had lived twelve years in Germany and had travelled in twenty countries.

It is nonsense to pretend that he did not know the real character of his allies, the Nazis, Fascists, semi-Fascists, and the greedy Japs; and whether it be true or false that in October, 1941, he authorized the statement that he had always recognized this foul character, we want to know -- not as a matter of curiosity but because it is a vital point in our indictment of the Black International -- why not a single word of this kind, not a single warning to the world about the nature of the forces that were preparing to enslave it, was uttered before October, 1941, if it was even then uttered.

It was not possible for an honest man to doubt that character after 1939: to profess a doubt any time after the summer of 1940 required the peculiar heroism of a Lindbergh or a De Valera. The facts are known but let me, for a reason which will appear in a moment, quote this passage from the authentic account by a British soldier of what he saw in Belgium in 1940. He was taken prisoner and like tens of thousands of other prisoners had to walk afoot to a camp hundreds of miles away because the trains eastward were wanted for wounded, for officers returning to carouse, and for their immense quantities of loot.

The guards had whips and laid them upon the captives "whenever they felt like it, just to show us and the Belgians who was boss." Any captive who accepted an apple or a bit of bread -- they were starving -- from a Belgian was shot or bayoneted. He goes on:

"Sometimes they'd make us run through the villages holding our hands above our heads, cracking the whip all round the column. They gave us no food. They were shooting all the time, for sport and to show off, at anything that happened to be about -- cats, dogs, hens, men, and women - - anything that came handy, and they were hitting right in the head every time. After they'd shot a man they'd pat their Tommy-gun affectionately and wink at us. They treated the old women and children worse than they did us . . . These soldiers were all young ones. The older soldiers, who'd seen the last war, were different -- less like crafty wild animals -- much more human altogether, and they don't seem to get the gangster idea of warfare."

So they had acted in Poland, the Italians in Abyssinia, and soldiers and airmen of both armies in Spain; and this repulsive blend of civilized savagery and looting was fouling eight countries in Europe at the time when the Pope "extended his paternal love" to the German soldiers and Cardinal Schuster visited barracks in Italy and "distributed blessed medals to bring luck to the Italian armies."

The point I wish to make clear here is that the Pope, like every bishop and priest in Germany, had known for years that the men were being trained for precisely this kind of "warfare," and it would be preposterous to ask us to believe that his eyes were first opened in the year 1941. Notice in the above passage the distinction between the young and the old soldiers. It was customary in the last war to call the Germans "the Huns." While pointing out that it was the Kaiser who stupidly gave occasion for this by telling his men, when he sent an expedition to China, to "behave like Hun's". I never used the word; though, as the *Kolnische Zeitung* itself mildly observed, they had done "many regrettable things" in Belgium. The German military order of *Schrecklichkeit* (intimidation) naturally led to such things.

But there had been a far more serious corruption of the German mind, especially of German youth, from 1933 to 1939, in preparation for the present war, and any man who suggests that Pacelli was not thoroughly acquainted with a system of debasement which was described with disgust by educationists and sociologists in every country must mean that his vaunted knowledge of German and Germany or his deep interest in the world's welfare and the causes of war are mythical. Dorothy Thompson and others described it (in *Assault on Civilization*) as early as 1934, see Prof. Schuman: *Hitler and the Nazi Dictatorship* (1936) and other American works. It is needless to say that it incurred no censures for the Black International throughout Germany, which continued to woo Hitler, the arch-corrupter.

Its basic principle was Hitler's declaration (the title of the last chapter of *Mein Kampf*), "What is Necessary is Right", which Rosenberg expressed as, "Right is what Aryans consider Right." Since these new moral legislators had by 1933 the fully developed idea of an Aryan conquest and exploitation of Europe and for this a vast and completely ruthless army was "necessary", they immediately converted the entire educational system -- in the broader as well as the narrower sense -- into a scheme for making callous fighters. The training began in the cradle. Every German female capable of child-bearing was to bear -- in time government officials said publicly that it did not matter if she was not married - - and was to make her children war-minded as soon as possible. One fool, the kind of fool whose writings the Nazi Party subsidised, told the mother to watch eagerly for the first gleam of the starlight of battle in the little Aryan eyes. Hitler himself ordered mothers to

talk war and choose war-toys "until the brain of the smallest child glows with the prayer: God Bless our weapons." The boy not yet in his teens swaggered about with "Blood and Honor" on his knife and learned to shout as early as possible because, as one educationist said, shooting makes a youth "calm and cold-blooded". In school he chanted with his little pals: "We were born to die for Germany."

It was far worse in the secondary (high) school the course which began at an earlier age than in any other country. For six or seven years boys and girls were drenched with the vilest Nazi sentiments Science was little more than a perversion of the teaching of genetics to instill racial pride and selfishness. The whole curriculum, such as it was -- Hitler turned educationist and said the aim was to "make bodies sound to the core" -- was prostituted. So rapid was the debasement of education that in a list of 28 countries in the Year Book of Education in 1938 Germany was fourth from the bottom. Hundreds of thousands of youth's trained in these, schools are in the army today -- or dead -- for they are accepted, if strong, from the age of 17, and 700,000 will pass to the army, submarines, and Luftwaffe in January, 1942. But this intensive training in Nazi aims is not enough. Hundreds of thousands of both sexes were selected for special free maintenance and training in the Castles of the New Social Order (age 15 to 25), Adolph Hitler Schools, Napoli (National Political) Schools. Here the future Gestapo and male and female agent's, for home or abroad received perfect physical training and what must frankly be called a training in callousness and brutality. In the universities the old type of professor was extinguished or, in too many cases, turned into a hypocrite. Nazi youths of the most brazen type ruled the classrooms and the lecturers.

Education in the broader sense -- the whole environment for communicating ideas or sentiments -- was equally captured and debased. Everything -- books (authors, publishers, and book sellers), the press, radio, the theatre, concerts, all lectures, pageants, etc., down to village dances -- came under a Kultur Kammer with Goebbels as President and a colossal staff and representatives in every village. Prizes were offered for the best -- most hysterically Nazi -- books, and the callowest youths became great writers. One man composed a Lord's Prayer to Hitler. An aristocrat, Ritter von Taub, edited a Book of Popular Songs including monstrous hymns to Hitler. It is enough to recall a line of the famous "Horst Wessel Song: "How high Horst Wessel towers above Jesus of Nazareth". The youth, a vile character, had lived on the earnings of a whore -- but he had been heroically callous and brutal.

This drenching of the mind of Germany for six years before the war, the most massive and effective illustration possible of the truth of the modern science of social psychology -- that there is no "mind" or "character" other than the sum of what such influences

as I have described put into a child or man -- has been well known for years to every educationist and moralist in the world, and certainly to every priest in Germany. And education was the same during all these years, if less ably controlled, in Italy and Japan, the other countries allied with the Vatican, I still wait to hear of a Catholic apologist who will claim that Pacelli-Pius was not acquainted with it.

Chapter II

"Norway, Not A Catholic Country"

These were the men, these dynamic automata of a thoroughly depraved force, whom the Pope saw set out, with the blessing of the German hierarchy, in the spring of 1940 for the speedy conquest and looting of western Europe and (they thought) the reduction of England by a ruthless massacre of its citizens, as a necessary part of the preparation for that campaign against Russia which the Pope so passionately desired.

How far this was the condition of the German people generally does not properly concern me here but the reader may care to hear what impression in this regard a very extensive and varied literature has left on my mind. Let me point out first that the account of German miseducation which I have given relieves us from accepting the worst estimates of the character of the German people. That they are a tainted stock and must be treated accordingly is pseudo-scientific rubbish. Such sentiments as the above were during many years before 1932 confined to a miserable minority. In spite of all its misfortunes Hitler did not sweep the country with his gospel of hatred and greed. He needed the aid of monstrous lies, of very heavy subsidies from the capitalists and of the cooperation of the Church. I gave the figures elsewhere.

The correct attitude to face the problem of Germany is, therefore, to ask whether all or what proportion of its people were mentally and morally poisoned by this system which in its monopoly has no parallel since the destruction of the medieval Church and in its force, owing to modern science, has not the feeblest analogy in any other period of history. The answer to that question is at present impossible. In the spring of 1933, we saw, less than half the adults of Germany voted for Hitler. The regime of brutal intimidation and elimination, and of national bribery (the world is our oyster), of corruption of the young, and of the influence and bold successes won by the indolence or cowardice of the democracies began at once, and further millions must have been attracted. At the outbreak of the war a leading Socialist refugee said that three-fifths of the nation supported Hitler without reserve one-fifth applauded his successes but disliked him and much of his work, and one-fifth, the core of the old Socialist and

Communist bodies, were secretly and bitterly anti-Nazi. The extraordinary Nazi successes since then have probably won over large numbers. In the summer of 1941 we would hardly estimate that one-fifth of the people were anti-Nazi, and Ambassador Dodd, though not quite consistent in his Diary, generally agrees. But a distinction on paper between Nazi and anti-Nazi does not correspond to psychological reality. Already millions who were carried away by the rapid successes in West and East must be wavering or returning to sanity in view of the news from Russia. What is most painful is the spectacle of certainly the overwhelming majority of the Germans applauding such foul victories, but, besides that millions of them have the moral lead of the Black International on whom they have been taught to rely in such matters, we have the consolation of feeling that what miseducation could do in six years sound education can undo. The idea that aggressiveness and covetousness are "in the blood" is a superficial conclusion of literary men who know no science and distort fragments of history.

However, we have here to confine ourselves to the relation of the Black International to the wave of barbarism that now rolled over Western Europe and at one time seemed to have a chance of completely engulfing it. Here we distinguish between the German hierarchy and the Vatican: not because, as Catholics pretend, the Vatican has or may have no responsibility for the former, but because the case against the black army in Germany itself is easily settled whereas it is too early to expect clear evidence on the latter. Indeed, since the invasion of Poland automatically made the Catholics of the British Empire enemies of Germany and in a very large measure involved the sympathies of the 15,000,000 Catholics of America the Vatican had now to proceed with the utmost caution. Of the attitude of the German Black International I have given abundant evidence elsewhere, but nobody disputes it.

It was united and enthusiastic in supporting the war. From September, 1939, to the present hour no paper has quoted any German bishop saying or in the broadcast language hinting that these campaigns beyond the frontiers of the Reich were brutal conquests dictated by that hatred and greed which the Pope is now absurdly said to have discerned from the start. I quoted the heads of the Church cheering on the troops only a little more soberly than the Nazi press. I showed that when the final victory seemed to be in sight the prelates, assembled in full strength (as they rarely were), resolved to render solemn thanks to Hitler and his armies when the work was complete.

You may ask, as some Catholics ask about the Pope himself. What else could they do? If one replies that they might have done what some writer's of Germany (Thomas Mann, etc.) and many writers and other professional men of other countries did-express their disgust at the foulness and cruelty, sacrifice all they had, and

fly from the debased country -- the retort will be that churchmen have sacred duties to their people which forbid such conduct, ardently as they desire to emulate it. One might justly ask whether the duty to remain with their people required that they should open their mouths in praise of the savagery and not at least have maintained a dignified silence. And if it is said that this would have brought some persecution upon their people we can point to an enormous Catholic literature in which it is said to be proof of the holiness of the Church that priests and people everywhere suffered every type of penalty rather than bow to iniquity or injustice . . . But enough of this sophistry. The Nazi government never persecuted priests for virtue, but for vice; and, while some did go to prison for complaining of the government's invasion of the rights of the Church not one ever braved punishment by saying that the war was a campaign of greed. Nor does any sane man believe that if the bishops had given an Honourable lead and won a consistent following the government would have shifted one-sixth of the nation, including one-sixth of the army, into concentration camps and aroused the anger of Catholics in Spain, Hungary, Italy, and South America. The common-sense reply is: The bishops knew that their people would not follow them. The Black International has no inflexible moral principles. It follows the crowd when it applauds a vile war as surely as when it rejoices over a royal birthday. The myth of its moral leadership, its value to civilization, is torn to shreds by the experience of the last ten years.

It is well to remember, when Catholics airily reply that this is not a criticism of the Church but of local bodies of clergy, that the supposed beneficent influence of the Church on the world must be exercised mainly, if not entirely, by these local clergy. What, apart from his direction and control of their conduct, does the Pope do? He makes "allocutions" and broadcasts addresses and issues letters, and the world takes no notice of them beyond paying them verbal compliments. How much influence in the world have all Pius XII's sermons on peace had? If any, it was bad: it fostered trust in Hitler and Mussolini. As to the Encyclicals, the more pretentious gestures of the Popes, even those on which American apologists have written whole libraries, like the *Immortals Dei* and the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII -- we shall see presently why American Catholics have said so little about the *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI, which the Vatican considers at least equally important -- had no influence whatever. The press was most generous in praise when they were issued, but there was not a journalistic expert on sound political or economic matters in the world who did not know that what was sound in them was borrowed by the Pope from the world and was already a platitude in social literature.

The test of the moral usefulness of Popes is to see what they say or do when one of the local or national hierarchies under their control is corrupted by applauding iniquity or when a crime of

world-proportions is committed which should be envisaged from an international angle. To discuss the first point would be waste of time.

The Pope lets his bishops in Italy, Germany, and Japan wave the blood-stained national flag as vigorously as schoolboys. And it is hardly necessary to say anything more on the second point until we come to the year 1940. The rape of Abyssinia, China, and Czecho- Slovakia and the barbaric treatment of the Jews were the outstanding crimes of that year. The Pope blessed the criminals. The new Pope was at once confronted with the crime of the invasion of Albania. He did the same. Those useful unauthorized agencies of the Vatican have put about the rumour that he urged the King of Italy to prevent it. Did the Pope not know, what all the world knows, that the King of Italy had as little power to prevent it as Lord Halifax has to emancipate India? In any case there is no evidence of such action.

Then came the invasion of the West. I have shown two things in connection with this. The first is that it is impossible to doubt that the plan was previously communicated to the Pope. Ribbentrop has an hour's conversation with him on the eve of the Brenner Conference at which the plot is finally settled and the date for Mussolini to stab France in the back is fixed. Can one imagine any other reason for thus sending the Nazi Foreign Secretary -- for the first time, remember -- to the Vatican? The second point I have now made clear is that the Pope certainly knew the character of the men who directed the campaign and the soldiers who carried it out.

I will suggest later what Germany wanted of the Pope -- Ribbentrop was certainly not sent to secure the loyalty of the German hierarchy, which could be relied upon whatever crime was committed -- and what the Pope, though terribly anxious and nervous, hoped to get out of the invasion of the West. Here let us see what he did. The worst crime from the international ethical angle was the invasion of Norway, Denmark, Holland, and Belgium. France had, with Great Britain, declared war on Germany, and must expect attack. while these smaller powers had been lulled into a feeling of security by the most solemnly reiterated lies, and the invasion of them had to be excused by further monstrous lies. This treachery and the corruption by which the Germans weakened in advance the resistance to their superb Aryan warriors the Pope never censured.

Since there was no hierarchy in Norway or Denmark the annexation of those countries does not concern us here. The reader will find it interesting, in fact, to compare the proportion of Catholics in the four countries first invaded with the Pope's attitude. Norway had only 2827 Catholics in a population of nearly 3,000,000. Hitler demanded on April 9 that the country be handed

over to him, and, when this was refused, let loose the concealed troops and traitors that he already had in the country to paralyze opposition to the divisions he had on the way. The country distinguished itself by its heroic resistance to impossible odds when the blunder of its reliance on Nazi Honor was realized and sustaining the struggle for two months and proudly resisting the invaders ever since. Compare the conduct of this least Catholic country in Europe to that of Belgium and France. The invasion of it was the most flagrant and significant aggression of which the Nazis had yet been guilty, for the excuses put forward were not even plausible. Ever since the beginning of the war, in fact, Norway had protected German shipping in its coastal waters. But when the Pope was asked to denounce the outrage, one of his unauthorized mouthpieces explained that Norway had only 2,000 Catholics and he must think of the Catholics of Germany and not offend Hitler. I give the quotation presently. The only respect in which one could truly call the Pope the Great Neutral was in regard to the moral law.

Denmark had only 22,137 Catholics in a population of 3,700,000. One might almost call it the second least Catholic country in Europe. It was a very happy, enlightened, and progressive little state, a significant contrast to Poland, Eire, or even Belgium (which, however, was only half Catholic). Of the deputies in its Folksting (Congress) 64 were Socialists, 31 Liberals, 26 Conservatives, 14 Radicals, 3 Communists, and 11 the usual odds and ends Roman Catholic doctrine had no appeal whatever in that very free and stimulating atmosphere, so -- naturally -- the Pope did not shed a tear over the repulsive treachery of the Nazis.

As late as May, 1939, the Germans had signed a ten-years pact with the Danes, swearing that under no circumstances whatever would they use force against Denmark or injure it. As will be remembered, they gave the Danes no chance whatever to defend themselves, just taking the land over in a rush as it had a common frontier with Germany. Doubtless the Pope would, if anybody had taken the trouble to appeal to him, have explained that it was "not a Catholic country." We used to think that Popes were interested in ethics in all parts of the world.

Holland, which during the Middle Ages had been under Catholic Spain, was in a different position. It had nearly 3,000,000 Catholics to 5,000,000 Protestants and Freethinkers. Its rich colonial empire added to its importance, and although it was less progressive than Denmark and Scandinavia, it had 23 Socialist deputies amongst the hundred in its Congress. Catholics had 30. You will, therefore, not be surprised to learn that, when the Germans broke their pact with Holland and spread over the country with great brutality and treachery the Pope awoke.

Defying Hitler and his watch dogs in Rome he sent a telegram of sympathy to the queen of Holland. But I doubt if Hitler minded. He knew that the Pope must be allowed to make these innocent little gestures sometimes to blunt the edge of Catholic criticism in America and Britain and give the Catholic press something to be enthusiastic about. The wording of the telegram was, in fact, very cautious. Its one approach to censure was that Holland had been invaded "against its wish and right." It rather reminds us of the timid sort of neighbour who ventures to say to a man who has savagely beaten a wife or child: "You shouldn't do that, you know." Dutch Catholics seem to have been quite satisfied, even proud of the splendid audacity of their Pope.

Since it is as yet impossible to get evidence of the behaviour of Dutch Catholics to the invaders, such as we get in the case of the traitors of Belgium and France, I leave the question open. They may, of course, have behaved quite differently from their co-religionists in France and Belgium. All that we know is that in face of this monstrous violation of the rights of small nations, about which the Pope is so concerned in his Five Points of Peace, and of the Honor of international agreements the Pope merely uttered a very mild word of protest when it involved a country with a large and rich body of Catholics. Whether the Black International had had anything to do with the pathetic blunders of the Dutch and Belgians in refusing until it was too late to concert measures of defense with the British and French we cannot say, and I decline to speculate.

The fact that Poland had included a good deal of genuine German territory had given a shadow of an excuse for invading that country, yet the Pope, taking advantage of the fact Russia invaded it at the same time, had vaguely censured the behaviour of the Germans (or both armies) in that country. The invasion of Norway, Denmark, and Holland had not an atom of excuse. It was the first defiant unveiling of the Nazi greed for the conquest and exploitation of Europe. American Catholics were greatly disturbed and pressed for a Papal condemnation.

On April 12 the Vatican correspondent of the Herald-Tribune referred to this pressure and said that the Pope "declined to act" on the ground that "the Holy See cannot participate in a political movement which would only lead to further hatred amongst the belligerents."

That piece of moral cowardice and sophistry did not satisfy people who had been reading all their lives that the Pope was the moral governor of the earth and an inflexible judge. On April 17 the Vatican correspondent of the New York Times reported that the Vatican would be little concerned if the war spread to the Balkans because "no Roman Catholic country would be involved." He added that it was rumoured in high Vatican quarters that through Myron

B. Taylor the President had pressed the Pope to condemn the invasion of Norway and Denmark, and he was instructed by one of those conveniently anonymous mouthpieces of the Vatican to add:

"While the Holy See strongly condemns Germany's action and has sponsored the attacks against the Reich in the *Osservatore Romano*, it is pointed out that there are only 2,619 Roman Catholics in Norway out of a population of nearly 3,000,000. Therefore, although the moral aspect is severely judged, from the practical viewpoint it is stated that the Holy See must keep in mind the 30,000,000 German Roman Catholics in its activities."

This muddled declaration -- "strongly condemning" Germany in one breath and explaining in the next why the Vatican must not condemn it -- and the letter of sympathy to the queen of Holland are all that the apologist for the Pope can quote. The above passage could, of course, if Germany had protested, have been explained away at once as unauthorized, and the telegram (after weeks of pressure) cannot be called a condemnation. If one phrase in it is so represented we must say that that kind of kid-gloved ruling of a world in which greed and brutality had become an appalling force is of no use whatever to the race. What sticks in the mind is the repeated statement that the Pope is deeply concerned only when a crime is committed against a Catholic country -- it injures the Church -- and that his moral censures must be trimmed in accordance with the interests of the Church. But even this position, whether or no you regard it as morally respectable and humanly serviceable, collapses when we come to study developments in Belgium and France. There we find the Black International really at work.

Chapter III

The Treachery Of Leopold

We come now to those parts of Germany's western offensive on which the mist still lies, and charges of cowardice and treachery and fiery denials shuttle back and forth amongst the Belgians and French themselves as vigorously as military men dispute the moves in the campaign. Here, on the face of it, we find it difficult to trace the action of the Black International, and recent writers give us little assistance. There is so general an agreement that there was base treachery to the cause of civilization that, journalists, essayists, and authors are more careful than ever not to "offend Catholics." Most of them, however, make one honest blunder which distorts the perspective. They take the conventional view that both Belgium and France are "Catholic countries".

The effect of this is to give the reader the impression that the division of the country into supporter's of the traitors and opponents of their policy was just a split in a Catholic body and

therefore the question of Church influence need not even be raised. This is entirely wrong, and when we correct it we see at once that the arch-traitors and their leading supporters, if not the main body of their supporters (which is obscure), are docile Catholics and their most bitter opponents. non-Catholics.

Belgium require's a few words of historical explanation. Its Catholicism, like that of Holland, is largely due to its inclusion in the Spanish Empire in the later Middle Ages, and its energy was absorbed in a fight for freedom, in which patriotic priests joined (as in Ireland) with people, at the time when other northern countries were discussing religion and breaking away from Rome. Austria and France in turn ruled it to the French Revolution, when it declared itself an independent Republic. But at the fall of Napoleon the Council of Vienna put it under Protestant Holland, and the fierce struggle against that country to 1839, when it won its independence, hardened its creed. To this date the Belgians had had a splendid record of spirited self-assertion, but with the expulsion of the Dutch the Black International fastened upon the country, with the usual consequences.

Further, Belgium contains two different peoples, and they are almost as antagonistic as the English and Irish. Though one's impression in travelling amongst them is that the Walloons in the south (including Brussels and the great manufacturing towns) are a volatile Latin people and the Flemings, in the northern half are closer to the Dutch, all are really of Teutonic stock, but the southerners, whose daily speech is French, are naturally more French in culture while the mainly agricultural Flemings are heavy, backward, and priest-ridden. I lived amongst them for a year and am not here repeating the impressions of literary travellers, but these few preliminary lines will suffice for my present purpose.

By the opening of the present century Belgium, of which it was, and still is, said in our works of reference that "the great majority of the population are Catholics", was permeated with skepticism of the French type. French literature had a free run in the French-speaking half of the country, and from the middle class, which was for the far greater part anti-Papal, this revolt was spreading rapidly to the urban workers. I found it extensive even in some rural districts. In my special research (The Decay of the Church of Rome) in 1909 I found that the Church had about 4,500,000 members and had lost about 2,500,000. The Black international dreaded the new urban industrial conditions, as the Catholic leaders now do in France and the Vatican does everywhere. They mean the growth of free and informed discussion. And when, after the war, Socialism and Communism spread amongst the workers as Liberalism had spread in the professional classes, the Church began a struggle for life.

The absurdity of the conventional statement that Belgians are "for the most part" Catholics is positively proved by the electoral statistics, which here, as in the case of pre-Fascist Italy, pre-Nazi Germany, and pre-Franco Spain afford decisive evidence as to religion; and the fact that this was true in the democratic era and ceased with it will give you another indication whether it is true that Pius XII is "a great admirer of democracy", as American Catholic writers say. At the last election (1939) the country returned 73 Catholic deputies, to whom we may add 17 Flemish Nationalists and 4 Rexists. Against these there were 61 Socialist deputies, 33 Liberais (very anti-clerical), 9 Radicals, and 9 Communists. In other words explicitly anti-clerical candidates were returned by much more than half of the adult community. Even the Senate had only 61 Catholics out of 150.

At the previous election (1936) the number of Catholic deputies had been reduced from 79 to 63, and a candid Catholic French writer in the (Catholic) *Revue des Deux Mondes* (June 15, 1936) gives an interesting explanation of this. There had been a grave financial scandal in which the Church had been "very guilty." In order to "increase its strength and enrich some of its members" it had "embarked upon sordid speculations." It is an old and familiar clerical story. It was chiefly the Rexist Party that had reaped the advantage at the polls of the exposure of this scandal. The Rexists are the followers of a young Belgian Catholic Leon Degrelle, who marked out a path for his political ambition by raising the banner of what we may call Christian Socialism, or that milk-and-water blend of Socialist rhetoric about capitalists (while defending capital) and Catholic abuse of Socialists which the late Pope recommended in an encyclical that we will analyze in the last chapter. By 1939, as the above figures show, Degrelle had lost a good deal of the ground he had won, but he and his movement must be taken into serious account. His ideal was Mussolini's Corporative State, as modified in the Pope's Encyclical, so he was patronized both by Mussolini and the Vatican. He used an Italian broadcasting station to weaken the Belgian government by his abuse and to appeal for "a joint effort of Italy and Belgium to bar the way of Bolshevism." The usefulness of the movement to Germany is obvious, and today Degrelle is very active under the Germans and in cooperation with them.

The above figures reflect a distracted and disunited country which the unified might of Germany would easily devour unless it kept up its old alliance with France and Britain, which had saved it in 1918. This Leopold the Traitor prevented. On his own initiative he had in 1936 renounced all Belgium's military alliances and pledged the fate of his country on the veracity and Honor of Adolph Hitler! Belgium still had a large army, but, though the men are brave enough, its poor quality had been seen in the last war. It is the fairly equal division of parties and the influence of the Church

that permitted a neurotic monarch of poor intelligence to assume such power. The country had alternated for years between Liberal and Catholic rule, and with the rise to power of the Socialists it had seen some unhealthy coalitions. Many Liberals, as usual, supported even the Church they hated against the threat of Socialism, but the Socialists themselves entered an almost unique feature of political life -- into a coalition with the Catholics against the capitalists.

I remember discussing the matter in 1924 during a merry dinner on the Boulevard Michel in Paris with the Socialist leader Denis and a group of French Freethinkers. Denis laughingly said that they would make a deal with the devil if they could get anything out of it, I reminded him of the proverb: He who supps with the devil needs a long spoon. Today Socialism is extinct in Belgium and the Church and the Rexists rule in the ruins under their German master.

This is the true perspective in which one has to see the question of the Belgian treachery. It would be well also for Americans to investigate closely, if they can, the movement of their Catholic ambassador at Brussels, Cudahy. It was stated in the British press he visited Berlin and the Vatican, then had a few days with Kennedy in London, before returning to America to make a defense of Leopold. There is little doubt that Roosevelt and Churchill intend to make it one of the terms of the final settlement that Leopold shall be returned to his throne. No one has charged them with an intention to see that the rights of the Socialists and Communists also are restored.

What are the known facts about the great betrayal? After refusing until the last moment to allow his military chiefs to concert a plan of defense with the French and British experts, Leopold, when the invasion began, appealed to them for help. We know now that neither French nor British armies were properly equipped to meet the mechanised German divisions, though the preparation of these had taken years, but, while there is a great deal of controversy about the campaign, it is the conviction of some leading experts that even when the Germans had thrust through to the sea the position of the Belgian, French, and British armies in Belgium was not hopeless. There is fair agreement that lack of ability and energy in the higher command of each was as detrimental as the lack of heavy equipment. The most significant fact is that it was the conviction of the Belgian cabinet that the situation was not hopeless.

We next have the admitted fact that on May 27, Leopold, without consulting his ministers, entered into negotiations with the Germans for a surrender. They at once closed on him, and at 4 a.m. on the 28th, while the troops slept and the Allies had no suspicion what Leopold was doing, he signed the betrayal of his

army. It is further a well-known fact that the Belgian ministers, who were in France, issued a statement on the 30th to the effect that the King's act was illegal and unconstitutional -- in fact the Belgian Constitution did not recognise any royal document as valid unless it had also the signature of a minister -- and they deposed him.

The evil consequences of this act cannot be exaggerated. To the King's plea that further sacrifices, by his people were useless a Frenchman might retort in a famous line of the great tragedian Racine who, when one character, excusing a fault, asks, "What else could they do?", replies "They could die." It is, however, not necessary here to discuss that. Leopold's treachery to his Allies and to Civilization was greater than his betrayal of Belgium. It left a large British army suddenly isolated and fatally weakened, and the men had to abandon all the equipment which it had taken 18 months to prepare and run in disorder for Dunkirk, where the lives of most of them were saved by a memorable piece of heroism. Leopold nearly had to answer for 100,000 or more British lives, for it was mainly the destruction of the British army that he had -- one is inclined to say sold -- to the Germans; and he knew it. The further consequences were even worse but will be considered later. The treachery confirmed the defeatists in high French military quarters and led to an even more disgraceful apostasy from the ideals of civilization.

Leopold and his Catholic Supporters in Belgium today, protest that he did send word of his intention to his Allies. He had sworn not to make a separate peace and is uneasy on this point. It is undisputed that no such message reached either the French or the British. Reynaud, broadcasting on the same day and branding Leopold's act as one "without precedent in history", made this clear. But it is not disputed. The question we ask ourselves is not whether Leonold sent a message which the Germans intercepted but whether he was stupid enough to fancy that they would not be on the watch for any communication. The man is, like most European kings, of such poor intelligence that one would not be surprised to learn that he handed a message to the Germans who kindly promised to deliver it. But the whole story is so improbable that we may prefer to think that Leopold's clerical advisers recommended him to lie for the good of the Church. This would be nearer the millionth than the first time in history.

But how shall we estimate whether he is likely -- there is, of course, no evidence -- to have acted under clerical influence? A Catholic king has two separate groups of counsellors: his ministers and bishops. We know that he did not consult the former, who were hundreds of miles away. The latter were in Belgium, and this was just the kind of issue on which they were apt to be consulted. His dilemma was whether conscience overruled his oath to observe the Constitution. It is the business of priests to solve such

problems in a Catholic Court. One of the first to defend the king was the head of the Belgian Church, Cardinal von Roey. In a pastoral that he ordered to be read in every church he endorsed Leopold's act (London Times, June 18, 1940). The telegram which the Pope sent him was before the betrayal and merely sympathised with him on the invasion of his county, "against its right and wish" and trusted it would one day recover its Independence: the least the Pope could do in face of an outraged world.

That the Osservatore, which could be repudiated as unauthorized, went further and charged the Germans with having opened "a pitiless war of extermination conducted in defiance of the laws of war" does not impress us. The Vatican was at that date, as I will explain more fully later, trying to drive a bargain with the Nazis and almost became bold, or at least less cowardly. It published British and French war-news in the Osservatore (to the great financial profit of that paper, as no other Italian paper was allowed to do so), and the Fascist press howled that the Pope was "the ally of the Jews, the Freemasons, the democracies, and the English Protestants." But it very quickly lost this Honourable position (New York Times, May 18 and 21). Mussolini cracked his whip, and the Vatican obeyed. A week later the Rome correspondent of the most respected British daily, the Manchester Guardian (May 24), reported: "The National Socialist State has, it seems, been able to reach an understanding with the Catholic leaders." There had been another plum-promise in regard to the Church in Poland, Bohemia, etc. -- for the good boy. At that date, as all the world knows, the juggernauts of Germany were ploughing red furrows in the masses of Belgian and French fugitives. The flower of Hitler's training colleges in chivalry were treating old women and war-prisoners with the brutality which I have described. The traitors and quislings were getting out their swastika flags. And the Pope, as I have already quoted, sent his "personal affection" to the German soldiers.

The larger question, what benefit the Pope might expect to derive from a German victory in the west, must be postponed until the final chapter, after we have considered what happened in France. Belgium today is Catholic, beggared, and dishonoured. It lives by making tanks and bombs for use Against England and Russia and food for Germans who keep their fat while Europe starves. Degrelle has reached his miserable ambition. Having looked to Mussolini instead of Hitler he at first thought it prudent to fly. The Germans came to an understanding with him, and he manages to accommodate the social-political teaching of the Pope's encyclical to the merciless exploitation of the country by the Germans. His paper Le Pays Riel urges Belgians to "forget past quarrels" and piously endure their new slavery. His party is the only one permitted in French-speaking Belgium. Over the rest of it

the Black International and the Gestapo wield a benevolent control and there is less sabotage than in any other conquered country.

Chapter IV

France Recovers Its Faith And Loses Its Honor

There is no more pathetic chapter of recent history than the fall of proud France from its earlier position as one of the leading powers of modern civilization. It had led the advancing nations of the world from the days of Voltaire to 1918. The movement of intellectual emancipation which began in Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu and broadened into the period of the Encyclopaedists culminated in the Great Revolution that lit the world. French idealism had already enkindled the revolutionary flame in America. Now its light awakened a fever for reform in England, Italy, and Spain and transformed Latin America. In the long and terrible reaction which followed the fall of Napoleon France still led. Its revolutions of 1830, 1848, and 1870 are milestones in man's laborious climb, back to the height of 1790.

It again led the world in the complete secularization of the state, and, while priests mournfully predicted that this would lead to degeneration, the nation fought with all its old vigour and heroism when the test came in 1914. After 1919 every friend of France saw a change. Scandals multiplied, the old vitality was squandered in domestic quarrels, and when the test again came France, to the stupefaction of the world, promptly raised the yellow flag and bought peace with dishonour.

Is it a mere coincidence that this period of degeneration, 1919 to 1939, is the only period in modern French history in which you will find a Catholic claim of a great religious revival? In 1909 I proved that there were not more than 6,000,000 genuine Catholics in a total population of 39,000,000. The only serious criticism. came from the distinguished French Protestant Scholar, Sabatier, a high and very impartial authority on religion, who wrote me that there were in France at that date no more than 4,000,000 genuine, or as the French say practicing, Catholics. The war of 1914-1919 brought Alsace-Lorraine, with more than 1,000,000 Catholics back to France. This very natural development had the unforeseen consequence of compelling the French government, which had contemptuously ignored the Vatican and been heavily scolded by it for 20 years, in increasing the power of the priests to a remarkable extent. The Alsace-Lorrainers wanted independence, not absorption in France, and the chronic unrest of the provinces, fostered by the clergy, gave the Vatican one of its usual opportunities: we will keep Alsace-Lorraine docile for you if you will make concessions to the Church. As political security and economic prosperity are far more sacred things than either religion or irreligion the bargain was struck. Alsace and Lorraine had brought

great wealth to French capitalists and, on the other hand, they were the weak spot in the heel of France if, or when, the German war of revenge opened.

From 1880 to that time no French politician had taken the Church into account. Catholic statesmen are as unknown in that period as Catholic scientists, philosopher's, economists, or historians of leading rank. Still in the period between the two wars every French statesman was a Freethinker, except the Protestant Waldeck-Rousseau, but even the most skeptical of them now showed an ostentatious respect of the Church.

I was at Athens in 1922 when the news came that the Turks in Asia Minor had inflicted on the Greeks the worst defeat they have suffered in modern history. I was in the British Legation when the Greek Foreign Minister secretly brought the news -- it was concealed from the public for four days -- and the secretary, a friend of mine, told me that the minister assured them that it was with French help that the Turks had made a sudden and overwhelming attack. When I repeated that in England the journalistic "experts" leered, and a few years later a Harvard professor whom I met assured me that, though he had himself suspected it, it was not believed in America. But as usual the truth came out and may be read partly even in the Catholic Teeling. The Vatican did not want the Greeks to get Constantinople, as they easily could have done -- I had been a few days earlier with a large Greek army within a day's march of Constantinople which then had no Turkish troops -- because that would enormously increase the power of the Greek Church in the East.

This is one of a hundred instances of "the government of Jews and Freemasons," as Rome had called the French government for forty years, cooperating most respectfully with the Vatican. In 1925 I attended the Freethought Congress at Paris. The government frowned on it and it was a total failure. But the canonisation of Joan of Arc brought out the freethinking politicians and officials in crowds to attend the gorgeous ceremonies. After the blunders of the fire-eating Catholic-cooperating statesmen of 1919-1924 the Radical's under Herriot got power and tried to recall the ambassador from the Vatican. The Church got the deputies from Alsace-Lorraine to rebel, and the wealthy Catholics, and even the peasants with fat stockings, held back their money from public funds and defeated a government which really represented the majority of the nation. So the truckling to the Vatican continued.

The Czechs, as I have earlier explained, defied the Vatican and expelled its Nuncio. Rome turned to France, the alliance with which was vital to Czecho-Slovakia, and the Czechs had to yield. In return the Pope, to the scandal of good Catholics, heavily censured the Catholic-royalist body in France, on the ground that it detected

heresy in the leaders, and seemed to relieve the French government of one of its embarrassments.

I have in these booklets so severely to condense all matters referring to the period before 1936 that I must run the risk of giving the reader an inadequate impression. He should understand that the world-tragedy of today is far more surely the culmination of the miserable history of Europe from 1919 to 1936 than it is a consequences of the Conference of Versailles to which so many attribute it, and in no case is this clearer than in that of France. Free French writers have called the appalling conduct of the Vichy group "the Revenge of the Dreyfusards." The affaire Dreyfus is generally forgotten -- the attempt of Catholic military men and politicians in the last century to make a scapegoat of an innocent Jew, foiled by Zola and the anti-Catholic politicians -- but it is profoundly true that what is happening in unoccupied France today is the revenge of Catholic generals and politicians, in the name of the Church and with the aid of the German bandits, on the men and the entire modern regime of life which have kept them in obscurity and impotence for more than half a century.

The preparation for that revenge covers the entire period from 1919, beginning with the prestige which the Catholic generals Foch Petain, and Weygand had won in the last war and the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. Lorraine brought to French capitalists and bankers, one of the greatest iron-ore beds in the world and to French bishops a very substantial reinforcement. So these brother's in arms based the whole policy of France on the cry of the security of the country, the "sacred union" of all Frenchmen (or cessation of attacks on the Church), and close alliance with the Vatican.

Since the French press was in those years no more disposed or free than the American and British to tell the truth about Rome, the French people never realized that from 1933 onward the Papacy was in close alliance with their deadly enemy across the Rhine, the man who had sworn in print to trample France in the mud and to reduce Britain to the status of a little island out on the Atlantic. The same planting of Catholics in high military quarters and in the diplomatic and civil service is taking place in the British Empire -- see the Catholic Who's Who as in France. It might be useful if some American writer were to make a corresponding inquiry on this side.

But, as I said, although the most important material for judging the question of the Black International and the great French betrayal is found in the prewar developments, they must here be dismissed briefly. Let us say that the country was terribly enfeebled and its attention diverted by the passionate quarrels of half a dozen rival parties, or of men ambitious to lead parties of their own. The scandals in public life which occasionally occurred

reveal no worse corruption than in America but they are more fiercely discussed. It was the dissipation of forces that chiefly counted. Even the sound progressive body of the people was split, in virtue of the old jibes about Socialism and liberty and the personal ambition's of politicians, into Radicals, Radical- Socialists, and Socialists. Read the appalling description of France in 1938 -- "like one in deadly sickness it neither moves nor speaks on the threshold of an agony", etc. -- in J.C. Maxence's *Histoire de dexans 1927-1937* (1938).

Two parties chiefly profited by the confusion, the Communists and the Catholic Royalists. The Communists made their usual mistake of encouraging pacifism because "the capitalist system was not worth fighting for" and of saying that the Church no longer needed watching. One wonders what they say in their ruin and misery today.

Catholic-Royalism, which is the French form of Fascism, grew and became bolder every year. Teeling is quite wrong when he claims that the developments in France show that the Church had regained considerable ground, but his acceptance of a world-total of 330,000,000 (instead of about 250,000,000) Catholics shows that he has made no study of this matter. I have elsewhere shown that the estimates of French Catholic writers varied from five to ten millions, and that the best of them and the Catholic Denis Gwynne (resident in France) regard the latter figure as very excessive. If we split the difference and say 7,500,000 (in a total population of 42,000,000) we see that, taking into account the inclusion of the Catholics of Alsace-Lorraine, there has been no growth of the Church since 1919. It is in power alone, in virtue of its intrigues and its high military members, that the position of the Church improved; and it is just in this respect that we look for its influence in the betrayal of the country.

A small library has already been written on the military collapse of France. When we allow for the folly of the French, who would never submit to sufficient taxation to provide an army equipped like that of Germany, in trusting to the Maginot Line and leaving their northern frontier practically open and their very inferior equipment we still have, as most experts admit, a very serious situation to explain, The successive blunders -- Reynaud called some of them "unbelievable faults" in the Chamber -- cannot be discussed here. Shirer sums up all criticisms in the phrase: "France did not fight." He means, of course, not with its old fire, perseverance, and ability. When he explains that this was due to Communist pacifism in the ranks and defeatism amongst the higher officers we do not quite follow him. The Communists were a relatively small minority, and any Communist soldier who wavered would get short shrift.

On the fact that there was something wrong in the higher command and that, specifically, Weygand and Petain showed deplorable weakness and defeatism the majority of impartial experts are agreed. As these soldiers, on whose verdict that a continuation of the war was hopeless the French government had to rely, and the bunch of admirals, generals, and politicians who at once emerged to support them are Catholics, as the immediate result of their assuming power by betraying the country was an intensification of the power of the Church, and as Blum, Reynaud, Daladier, and nearly all the non-Catholic statesmen were opposed to surrender, we very decidedly have a case for suspecting Church influence. Only the Vatican and Catholic countries like Brazil, Portugal, Spain, and Eire fully endorsed the surrender and support the Vichy group of traitors today.

It is, in fact, only because the British and American Press dare not, for fear of their Catholic censors, even raise the question of Church influence or inquire into the significance of the rise to power of a Catholic group for the first time in 65 years that many are surprised at the suggestion.

Let us examine what happened. At the critical phase, when Weygand, whose feeble appeals to the troops sufficiently show that he was something of a defeatist from the start, completely failed in his strategy and the Germans were rushing toward Paris, Reynaud for some obscure reason took two well-known Catholic defeatists, Baudouin and Prouvost, into the cabinet. What we shall see presently will suggest that this was due to the intrigues of Laval and other Catholics. A few days later (June 10) Italy delivered what Roosevelt called "the stab in the back," and French morale fell still lower. On the 12th Weygand reported that resistance was hopeless. Reynaud appealed frantically to America for help and Churchill, agreeing with him that the reply was unsatisfactory, consented to relieve France of its agreement not to seek a separate peace. Reynaud and the majority of the cabinet wanted to continue the war, but "the will to fight had departed from Marshal Petain and General Weygand, and their example was contagious." On the 16th Reynaud resigned, and the President asked Petain, "who responded with alacrity," to form a government nearly the Vichy group of today. At once the senile Marshal (aged 84) asked an armistice fatuously explaining to the Germans that the settlement would be "as between soldiers" who respected each other. Daladier, Delbos, Mandel, and other of the old ministers took ship from Bordeaux to Africa, intending to carry on the war from there, as the elementary dictates of French Honor, when not diluted with piety, required.

They were arrested and returned to France as prisoners. Petain signed what he incredibly called "hard but Honourable" terms, and he and his gang moved to Vichy and began to spit epithets at the one power, Great Britain, that seemed to be left to face alone the

appalling might of Germany reinforced by all the resources, except the fleet, of France and six other conquered lands.

That is the summary, condensed, of events which we find in the most important and most impartial annual survey of contemporary history, the Annual Register. But I have reserved for special notice one part of the narrative. The thoughtful reader will, of course want to know how Petain, a man (as subsequent development's show) no more fitted for statesmanship than for teaching zoology, came to be chosen for the supreme position and his bunch of Catholic friends were waiting for his call. If I suggested that this crucial development was due to the intrigues of Catholics I should be accused of prejudiced imagination, but that is just what the Annual Register states.

Laval a docile Catholic in good order at the Vatican and a thorough defeatist, was, it says, "the most responsible for French politics at this juncture," When the government transferred to Bordeaux he went there and, the Annual says, intrigued with all his energy to get "peace at any price". Reynaud, not a man of sufficient personality to meet so terrible a crisis and assailed by rumours of an entanglement of an unpleasant character, was worn down. Petain, on the other hand, was flattered to his teeth and persuaded "by Laval (who hoped to rule France through him) that he was called by God to save France. President Lebrun and Herriot were dissuaded from shifting the government to North Africa and conducting the war from there, and Mandel, Daladier, and others had to fly secretly to carry out the plan. Laval was taken into Petain's group and became, when the members of the Senate and Chamber (Congress's) voted themselves out of existence by 569 votes to 80 and made Petain dictator, Vice-Premier.

In giving a summary above of indications of an increasing Church influence in France I postponed one item. On June 9, 1935, the Papal organ, the Osservatore Romano (quoted in Keesing) recalled with joy that for the first time in 70 years a French cabinet-minister was visiting the Pope and kissing his ring. He wore the insignia of the Order of Pius IX, which had been bestowed upon him by Pius XI. He presented several sumptuously bound works of Catholic piety to the Pope, who gave his daughter a gold and coral rosary such as a Catholic maid would treasure for life.

The Times (June 10) and other papers referred to the facts as another admirable symptom (like Mussolini's bargain with the Vatican) of the wise reconciliation of the secular and spiritual powers.

The devout pilgrim was Pierre Laval, who thus entered upon a friendship with the Secretary of State, Cardinal Pacelli. Laval is now so universally loathed that our papers will not even mention that he is a Catholic, much less recall his Papal decorations and his close Vatican connection. Pacelli, a year or two later, returned the

visit. He was the first Papal Legate to be received in Paris since 1814, and he was very royally received. And at the following New Year's Day there was a fresh Papal decoration for Laval, and one even for the freethinking Prime Minister.

If any readers still hesitate about the share of the Black International in the betrayal of France let us consider what happened. The French hierarchy at once at the surrender ordered their people to support Petain.

The Pope, who mediated in the settlement with Italy, sent Petain a personal message and a letter pointing out to the French bishops that the new situation made possible "a reawakening of the entire nation." The Osservatore surpassed itself, hailing

"the dawn of a new radiant day not only for France but for Europe and the world" (Catholic Herald, July 12).

As all the world which was not Catholic-Fascist or under the lash of the Gestapo considered the new day one of dishonour for France and of evil augury for the world Cardinal Hinsley, head of the Church in Britain, was compelled to ask what the Great Neutral meant by this. The article, it was explained, was not authorized. Even under Hinsley's nose, in his Catholic Herald, the jubilation at the Catholic victory broke out. A writer said that "all that is vital in the soul of France, purified and glorified in heroic suffering, can look out once more upon Europe with a clear Christian purpose". Next week Hinsley had to explain to an outraged England that that was not authorized. but the paper continued (see editorial October 11, etc.) to rejoice, more discreetly, that the action of France had promoted the plan of a Catholic bloc and had inaugurated "a big and vital movement." Could anything but the interest of the Church inspire such glorification of cowardice and treachery in a British paper?

Then the senile wreck, too dense or too pious to sense his dishonour, began to set up the New Order in France. For the grand (if exaggerated) cry of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" that had once roused the world and was now blotted but as a blasphemy Petain mumbled his new trilogy, "Work, Family, Country." Religion first. The beetles, male or female, waddled back to the schools and institutions from which they had been banished, with great profit, for 50 years; the text-books were rewritten under Petain's personal supervision -- surely a unique spectacle! -- and all non-Catholic teachers (in a country with 45 million non-Catholics to 7 million Catholics) were expelled or turned into hypocrites. This development went so far that the Germans had to make Petain modify it to prevent riots. Women were shut back in the Middle Ages, and favour, even ordinary justice, shown only to parents with at least three children. And the good workers were to be meekly organized on the lines of the Papal encyclical which I will analyse in the next chapter and the employers educated in that

beautiful Catholic spirit of paternal kindness to their helpless employees which had, of course, been seen everywhere until this modern atheism and the urban industrial conditions which begot it arose in the nineteenth century. French bankers and capitalists, who are now falling over each other and fighting truculently to get fat jobs under the Germans -- are, in fact, now making fortunes by making armaments for use against Britain and Russia -- smiled at the old fool and his priests but encouraged him. No more Socialism or Communism in France.

I do not care to enlarge further on the spectacle of a great nation that has been betrayed into misery and shame by a few priest-ridden leaders, but the consequences to the few nations that remained civilized were appalling. Soon afterwards I watched from my bedroom-window, five miles away, the most precious square mile of the city of London, with its historic treasures as well as its vast stores, dissolve in flames, and for weeks later I met the poor maimed folk who had left their dead in the cinders of their homes. It goes on. As I write Vichy is deliberating whether to put its fleet (contrary to the most solemn pledges) and its vast African empire at the disposal of Germany for the final destruction of civilization in Europe. And Papa Pacelli continues to bless Vichy.

The one man in the miserable group whose sense of Honor is not smothered by his piety, is dismissed as if this were a disgrace . . . France will yet -- next year, I venture to think -- rise again, shake in the wind the defiant tricolor that spells out its old trilogy, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," and prove to the dead traitors and their priests that it has lost neither its Honor nor its vigour.

Chapter V

THE AMAZING FOLLY OF THE CATHOLIC BLOC

What gain did the Black International think it would derive from the German conquest of Belgium and France? I have already established two points. First, as is made plain in every chapter of these booklets, no human consideration -- no thought of secular ruin and the "earthly" suffering of millions -- is allowed to stand in the way of the clerical ambition. We have seen it from Spain to Abyssinia, from Brazil to Vienna. The pretext is that men's "immortal" interests outweigh all these "temporal" disasters: the fact is that the protection or recovery of the power and wealth of the Black International comes first. Secondly, there is no room for doubt that the Vatican was warned in advance of the conquest of Belgium and France and the intervention of Italy. Ribbentrop was received at Rome, with much enthusiasm, the day before he was to join Hitler and Mussolini at the Brenner for the final endorsement of the plan of the conquest of the West. It is absurd to ask us to believe that Hitler was deeply concerned at such a moment to secure a friendly understanding of which he had not the least need,

with the Pope about Church affairs in Poland and Bohemia. It is still more absurd to suggest that he wanted an assurance of the loyalty of the German Catholics, which was never in doubt whatever crime (not against the Church) Hitler committed. The Annual Register says that "according to Vatican sources" Ribbentrop had told the Pope in April that the German troops would be in Paris in June and in London in August.

The immediate gain of the Church is obvious. Socialism and Communism were just as dangerous to it in Belgium and France as in Spain, Austria, Germany, and South America, and a German conquest of the West automatically involved the complete destruction of them. It seems to me just as certain that the Vatican was promised, or foresaw, the seizure of power in France by Petain, Weygand, Laval, and Darlan and the setting-up of a clerical state. Think of the situation, as I have described it. Since 1875 French Catholics had not only never had power in France but had not had a single statesman until the black Laval wormed and bribed his way in. Now, in an hour of profound humiliation and misery, priests govern the men who govern France. The price of power never matters to the Papacy.

But a further very important gain was that the transformation of France into a Catholic state provided a new, and most important unit for the Pope's plan of a bloc or League -- let us call it a League -- of Catholic powers. As far as I can trace, this idea of the Pope was born in the spring or early summer of 1940, which suggests further evidence that he knew of the coming degradation of Belgium and France. Slovakia was at that time added, as a Catholic state, to Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The Pope could have had no illusion about the value, on a world-scale, of Slovakia, Spain, and Portugal or the condition of Italy; and the usefulness of the Spanish-American Republics in a League with European anti-democratic countries was of still more doubtful value. The United States, that exasperating democracy that sent so much money to Rome but compelled its Catholics to profess such adulterated ideas of the faith, might have something to say. France, a first-class power, was a different proposition.

These Catholic states were to be constructed on the lines of the Papal encyclical of the year 1931 *Quadragesimo Anno*. The title -- the title of an encyclical consists of the first two words of the Latin text -- means "In the fortieth year" and is an indication that it follows up the "great" encyclical (*Rerum Novarum*) published by Leo XIII in 1891. You may know how the world-press applauded that encyclical and how American apologists still quote it with pride.

It went to the revolutionary length of saying -- in the last decade of the nineteenth century! -- that a worker must have "a living wage"; though the Pope, when asked by a Belgium prelate who

was pressed by Socialists, declined to say what is a living wage. Pacelli, who was firmly in the Secretariat of State by 1931, seems to have thought that it was a good basis to build upon. I do not suggest that he wrote it, though to do so required no knowledge of economics. It is a very long and rambling document, mainly composed of the familiar solemn clerical platitudes about the wickedness and folly of the world and the deeper wisdom which the Church is ready to impart upon all questions if men will only listen.

You may reflect that you never heard of this important pronouncement and would like to read it. Unless you read Latin of the modern Italian type I fear you will not be able to do so. Though it is intended for the whole world it is written in a dead language, so the Vatican meant each national branch of the Church to make a translation of it. I have heard of only two -- German and French. In Britain at least, no translation was published, and there is only a booklet on it (Pope Pius XI and Social Reconstruction, 1936) which is a paraphrase intended to conceal its crudities. I can learn of no American translation. Strange, you may say, if this is the supreme effort of Pacelli and Pius XI on a very vital question and the document on which these new Catholic states expressly base themselves.

It is not really strange. It is a manual of Catholic Fascism, blending features of Mussolini's Corporative State, the medieval guilds, and weird Vatican conceptions of modern life. Although Vichy France, Portugal, Slovakia, etc., appeal to it as their inspiration it says little about the political form of the state but clearly assumes that it will be a dictatorship. The main point is its solution of the larger problem, which is very simple. The desire of the workers to have unions is, the Pope is gracious enough to say, legitimate. But must not be democratic and independent. They must be "directed." The employers also must have associations -- you see the relation to Mussolini's idea -- and in case of a difference of opinion representatives of the two bodies must meet in Christian amity and come to an agreement. It reminds us of the British industrial experiment of Witney Councils, which had already been discovered to be useless before Plus XI, or Pacelli, recommended the idea as original and profound. The Pope does not say whether the workers or the employers are to have the marginal superiority or how, in case they are equal, a decision is to be reached. Such a deadlock, he supposes, cannot arise when both sides are Catholics. They then see everything in the light of pure justice.

But there are incidental passages which made it all the more inadvisable to translate this gem of Papal wisdom for the workers of America. What for instance, would they say to this:

"The workers, sincerely repressing all that feeling of hatred and envy which agitators in the social Struggle so cunningly exploit, will

not only submit to but highly esteem the position in human society to which Divine Providence has assigned them (p. 104, Freiburg edition).

It is exactly the kind of language which the bishops of the Church of England addressed to the workers a century and a quarter ago when they were agitating for the right to form unions. The worker who sees the marble bathing pools, the rich banquets, the spacious and luxurious homes of the rich on the screen must, when he returns to his dingy and uncomfortable home, repress that wicked feeling of envy and thank Divine Providence for giving him the \$15 or \$20 a week job. To do otherwise leads to Socialism, and the Pope settle's the vexed question whether the Vatican no longer condemns Socialism. "No man", he says (p. 90) "can be a good Catholic and a good socialist," The priests did not care to let even British workers see that. As to Communism, it is "impious and wicked", not simply, as the Pope is now represented as saying, natural virtue to be condemned only because it has not a Catholic basis (in reality, a Catholic or priestly boss). There is to be no restriction on a man's power to make a fortune, but the rich must be generous to the poor. At the same time the Liberal and very American doctrine of "free competition" is wrong. This is supposed to be a wise Catholic middle position between the two extremes in contemporary life: a wonderful example of that famous "wisdom of the Vatican".

It obviously did not suit the American hierarchy to let the American public know that their Church condemned unrestricted individualism and free competition, but the blear-eyed Petain, like the sleek priest-ruler of Slovakia, the truculent dictator who protects privilege in Brazil, and the scheming Dr. Salazar of Portugal found it a useful doctrine. It is, as I said, Mussolini's Corporative State modified. You may choose to think that these innocent folk at the Vatican did not realize that Mussolini's scheme was mainly devised for the purpose of war -- to bring both the industrialists and the workers under the despotic control of the State. In any case the Pope puts the Church above the state. He blandly claims that it is "the supreme authority even in these economic matters." That also would hardly suit America, but old Petain would not blink if it claimed to be the supreme authority even in sanitary matters and sport. He had a vague idea that he could, on the lines of the Papal encyclical paralyze the great industries which by their urbanisation and stimulation of the people had certainly promoted the growth of freethought. France was to be mainly agricultural once more, because peasants are less quick-witted and anti-clerical, and in such industries as were permitted the ascendancy of Catholics would be secured, not merely by the control of Church and State but by giving low wages to all men who were not married or had not at least three children. By long

tradition, parents of three or more children in France were almost always Catholics.

One would not say that the Germans smiled: they must have roared with laughter. The old fool would serve the immediate purpose, and their patronage of him and his insipid ideas could be put on their credit side at the Vatican, which was expected to give further help in the African Empire and the East. As I write the Germans seem to be about to dismiss Petain to some country cottage or home for the aged. The truth about him is breaking through the Catholic censorship. A series of articles in the Herald-Tribune in the summer of 1941 by the distinguished French dramatist Henri Bernstein punctured the Petain clerical legend. He proves that the "great soldier" was a defeatist in the war of 1914-1918 and wanted to abandon the English allies to the German's. His coreligionist Foch had to silence him. It appears even that he never was a great soldier and "the hero of Verdun." It was the priests who manufactured his reputation.

As I said, for seventy years they had failed to get a distinguished representative either in statesmanship, science, philosophy, or history, so in the miserable prewar period., when they concentrated on pushing into power political creatures like Laval, literary journalists and soldiers: men who know nothing outside their special fields and are easy prey to the clerical sharp.

Just about the time of the surrender of Paris even the German papers began to discuss with respect the idea of a Catholic League. Whether they or the Pope started it I cannot ascertain but it became an important item in their new program of friendly understanding with the Vatican. Catholic papers in England and Eire, in Portugal, Spain, Spanish America, and Hungary -- and, I suppose. in the United States -- began to reflect the glory and joy of the new vision that lit the Papal mind. The great League would cross the seas and bring in the republics of South America. "Spaniards", Franco's newspapers said, "are the only ones entitled to look after Spanish America." Britain and America were saving Spain from famine and collapse, and its press was telling President Roosevelt that "his tutorship is unsolicited". Instead of a Nazi threat to the United States from Latin America there was to be a Catholic Fascist threat; and the main body of American Catholic's still praised Petain, Salazar, Franco, and De Valera. Germany hinted that this was not all. The Pope's eyes began to brighten at the prospect of Germany conquering the Balkans and destroying for him the ancient Greek, Russian, Serbian, and other "Orthodox" Churches which had defied the Papacy for more than a thousand years. This mighty League, pivoting on Italy, need not fear Hitler even if he had won his victory and then faced the Vatican without a mask.

The Germans, I repeat, must have laughed. Now that Italy was sucked clean of vitality, or soon would be, the vast German force would, if necessary, cut through these Catholic powers as easily as the smaller armies of 1940 had cut through western Europe. When the time came Germany would take them all over into its servile empire, their people the helots who would grow food and hew out minerals for the German workers and industrialists. Any doubt of that after the terrific strain that the German onslaught has put upon Russia in spite of its mighty resources and superb heroism would be ludicrous.

What would Germany then say to Roman Catholicism. It would disdainfully sweep aside all its trumpery Catholic-Fascist institutions. It would enter upon a real "persecution of religion" such as the modern world has not yet seen. If the Pope murmured about promises and agreements, the cynical Nazis would remind him how he was silent year after year when they made solemn agreements and tore them up. It would remind him how through years of corruption and dishonour, of bestial cruelty and ruthless aggression, he had been silent or friendly, solely because he thought it would ultimately profit his Church. Shall we have to write in another year or two that atheistic Bolshevism saved the Papacy as well as European civilization?

Joseph McCabe Index

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