

The Pope And World Peace



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[The ultimate aim of the Roman Catholic church is to reestablish its dominion over all nations, and efforts to this end will be intensified now that we are on the threshold of a new age of atomic power. Msgr. Robert Hugh Benson has dramatized its successful attainment in his futuristic novel, "*Lord of the World*," in which the Pope, after a cataclysmic war, is triumphantly convoyed by a fleet of airplanes from Rome to London to dictate peace terms for all the world. A similar vision of the ultimate "triumph of the Catholic Church" is painted in an official Catholic propaganda booklet entitled, "*Great European Monarch and World Peace*" now being published in great numbers by "*Our Sunday Visitor Press*."

Still another such Catholic propaganda book recently published is "*John Smith, Emperor*," in which it is recounted how, by means of a secret weapon that paralyzes those who refuse to conform, the aims of the Catholic church are made to triumph throughout the world.

Even the secular press in America is filled with the Catholic claim that **no lasting peace can be made without the Pope**. In the following article. Dr. Murphy shows what conditions were like in the past when the Popes of Rome exercised dominion over the nations of Europe. He backs all his statements with the testimony of historians of the highest repute, with particular stress on the "*Cambridge Modern History*," compiled under the direction of Catholic Lord Acton, and recognized even in Catholic circles as most reliable and impartial.]

SPOKESMEN of the Catholic church look upon the Pope as the representative of the Prince of Peace and declare that **without the guidance of the Vatican no lasting peace can be established**. Dr. Leo F. Stock of the Carnegie Institute in Washington, D. C., has boldly proclaimed this sectarian conviction as follows:

That the chances for a just and enduring peace would be more likely to succeed, if the Pope should be invited to sit at the peace table, cannot be questioned.

Behind this Catholic conviction lie the dogmas of papal infallibility and salvation only through “the one true church” of Rome. This infallibility pertains not only to questions of faith but also, under the guise of morals, to principles of government and social welfare. Jesuit Father Joseph Husslein in his book, *The Catholic's Work in the World*, page 200, arrogantly declares, “Catholics, therefore, have the only absolutely true, universal and perfect social program.” Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, teaches the same thing:¹

“We lay down the principle, long since clearly established by Leo XIII, that it is Our right and Our duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic problems.”

So much for Catholic propaganda. When we turn to the record of past centuries, we find that **the “perfect social program” of Catholicism is an historical farce**. Far from ruling medieval Europe justly and efficiently, the Papacy was a corrupt and grasping institution, indulging its lust for power at the expense of the ignorant, deluded masses. In nature and purpose it was essentially a political system that aimed to carry on the world dominion of the Roman empire from which it sprang. The great English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, said:

“If a man considers the origin of this great ecclesiastical dominion, he will easily perceive that **the Papacy is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman empire**, sitting crowned on the grave thereof. For so did the Papacy start up on a sudden out of the ruins of that heathen power.”

The theocratic aim of Catholicism, to conquer and rule the world in the name of God and religion, is clear from the formula used at the crowning of a Pope:²

“Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that thou art Father of Princes and kings, Ruler of the world, Vicar of our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Just what kind of a hand the Pope would play at a present-day peace conference can best be judged by the way the Popes have always acted when powers of government lay in their hands. A glance at conditions in Catholic Europe of the Middle Ages, when the Vatican was the maker of kings and governments, will suffice.

Church Government In Medieval Europe

The most striking aspect of the Papacy's attitude toward secular government was its *contempt* for it. **Beyond the dictatorship of the Pope it knew no law and willingly tolerated no independent government**. This has been emphasized by the renowned Lord Acton, a Roman Catholic and former Regius professor of modern history at Cambridge University. On page 27 of a book entitled *Lord Acton on the States of the Church* he says:

“The notion of the superiority of the ecclesiastical power ripened into the notion of the worthlessness of the civil power and the **derivation of its authority from the Church**.”

In medieval Europe the Papacy owned “fully one-third” of all land and property according to the *Cambridge Modern History* (I, 662). Where it did not rule through subservient kings and princes, it at least constituted a “state within a state.” Even Father William Barry, writing in the *Cambridge Modern History* (I, 621), says of the Papacy: “It kept its jurisdiction intact, its clergy exempt, and held its own Courts all over Christendom... **It had revenues far exceeding the resources of kings**, to which it was continually adding by fresh taxation.”

In the same volume of this work, page 672, it is rightly pointed out that “Rome had become a center of corruption whence infection was radiated through Christendom... In 1490 Rome numbered 6,000 public women – an enormous proportion for a [total] population not exceeding 100,000.” Quoting from the Diary of Burchard, which it terms “unimpeachable,” it goes on to say:

“The public marriage of the daughters of Pope Innocent VIII and Pope Alexander VI set the fashion for the clergy to have children, and they diligently followed it; for all, from the highest to the lowest, kept concubines, while the monasteries were brothels.”

In those days of Catholic political supremacy the Pope himself was usually a tool in the hands of stronger relatives. Of Pope Innocent X the *Cambridge Modern History* (IV, 687) says:

“Of this Pope it must be said that instead of ruling he was ruled, and that by his sister-in-law, Donna Olimpia Maldachini.”

The Papacy itself was purely a political machine. No king or feudal noble was deceived by its religious trappings. *The Cambridge Modern History* (I, 644) pointedly observes:

“Papal history, in fact, as soon as the Holy See had vindicated its supremacy over general councils, becomes purely a political history of diplomatic intrigues, of alliances made and broken, of military enterprises. In following it no one would conclude, from internal evidence, that the Papacy represented interests higher than those of any other petty Italian prince, or that it claimed to be the incarnation of a faith divinely revealed to insure peace on earth... Universal distrust was the rule between the States, and the Papacy was merely a State whose pretensions to care for the general welfare of Christendom were recognized as diplomatic hypocrisy.”

In the late Middle Ages Europe seethed with disgust at Papal abuses and tyranny. Then came the Protestant Reformation. Later, in 1648, the Treaty of Westphalia put a legal end to religious intolerance, which was the groundwork of the Pope’s political power. Pope Innocent X, mentioned above for his subservience to his sister-in-law, was infuriated at this threat to Catholic domination, for he knew that it could not withstand open competition. He penned an “apostolic denunciation” that is best described in the words of the *Cambridge Modern History* (I, 688):

“On November 20. 1648, Pope Innocent X published the memorable bull, *Zelo Domus Dei*, in which **he declared the Peace of Westphalia to be ‘null and void,**

accursed and without any influence or result for the past, the present, or the future;' and he expressly added that no one, even if he had promised on oath to observe this peace, was bound to keep the oath. The Pope teas (? It appears to be a typo but I don't know what word it should be.) filled with the deepest grief because in the treaty of peace the free exercise of religion and the right of admission to offices was granted to Protestants."

Some may discount the historical facts recorded above and fall back on the old Catholic alibi that the Popes of the Middle Ages were forced into these abuses by the evil influence of unscrupulous kings and nobles. They may argue that, where the Popes were unimpeded by secular powers, their rule was a model of justice and of efficient administration. A study of the Papal States, where the Roman pontiffs were sole and sovereign rulers, shows how poorly this Catholic defense stands up under factual analysis.

Origin Of Papal States

The origin of the Papal States lies in deceit and forgery. Catholic Lord Acton in the opening pages of his above-quoted book admits that the Roman church started out by concentrating on increasing its wealth and property "even under the pagan emperors, when the Church, not being recognized by law, was not legally entitled to hold property... and at the close of the 6th century we find the Popes the richest landowners in Italy."

But this early deceit of the Roman church is only a shadow of the brazen frauds it perpetrated after it became more paganized. Professor Cadoux, in his book on Catholicism and Christianity, p. 482, well summarizes the forgeries on which the Papacy's political power was built:³

"The growing accumulation and centralization of power in the hands of the medieval Popes was in large measure facilitated by the production and unsuspecting acceptance of an extraordinary series of forged documents: The earliest of these dates from the pontificate of Symmachus; a number of others appear in the *Liber Pontificalis* of the 6th century: the notorious 'Donation of Constantine,' according to which that emperor bestowed on Pope Sylvester spiritual supremacy over the other patriarchs and temporal dominion over Italy and the western provinces, was apparently composed at Rome about 775 A. D. About 850 there was compiled in the province of Tours the great collection now known as 'the false Decretals,' consisting of fabricated letters ascribed to various Popes of the first six centuries and interspersed with a certain number of genuine documents. These forgeries were accepted by all as genuine down to about the middle of the 15th century. In the course of the next two centuries, largely by dint of Protestant criticism, their falsity was completely proved, but not before the unsuspecting belief in them during the Middle Ages had again and again contributed to the legalization and consolidation of Papal prerogatives. The forgery was admitted, 'but the system built upon the forgery abides still,' as Pusey declared. Well might the Catholic Lord Acton say: 'The passage from the Catholicism of the Fathers to that of the modern Popes was accomplished by willful falsehood; and the whole structure of traditions, law's, and doctrines that support the theory of infallibility, and the practical despotism of the Popes, stands on a basis of fraud.'"

Speaking of the false 'Donation of Constantine,' the most daring of these gigantic frauds, perpetrated by the Papacy 400 years after the death of the emperor Constantine, Gibbon in his celebrated work, *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* (ch. IV, p. 740) makes this penetrating observation:

"The Popes themselves have indulged a smile at the credulity of the vulgar [common people]; but a false and obsolete title still sanctifies their reign; and, by the same fortune which has attended the Decretals and the Sibylline Oracles, the edifice has subsisted after the foundations have been undermined,"

Development Of Papal States

With its Temporal Power firmly established on the forged signatures of personages dead for hundreds of years, the Papacy used wars and further trickery to consolidate and expand its territorial gains and political power, especially the Papal States that were sanctimoniously known as the 'Patrimony of Saint Peter.' *The Cambridge Modern History* (I, 220) says:

"The conduct of the Popes in incorporating petty independent or semi-independent principalities with the 'Patrimony of St. Peter' did not materially differ from the line of action adopted by Kings Louis or Henry toward their overpowerful vassals."

The Papacy not only seized neighboring duchies and states but also the wealth and property of individuals, under one pretext or another. The most revolting of the methods used for this purpose was to lay hands on everything that belonged to a person who had been arrested and condemned without trial by the Inquisition, even when this meant, as it invariably did, that his wife, family and descendants would be reduced to beggary. It is unnecessary to point out how the loot received was an impetus to further condemnations, or how the racket was promoted by giving a 'cut-in' to those who informed against others, even their own relatives.

Lord Acton, on page 26 of his book mentioned above, says of the Popes that "the unity of their States was completed by force of arms, first by Cardinal Albornoze and at last by Caesar Borgia, illegitimate son of Pope Alexander VI, who made him a cardinal at the age of 18, and Pope Julius II."

Papal States Of The Last Century

The ideals and policies of Papal government are best studied by examining in detail the rule of the States of the Church in the last century, a period of democratic progress and general enlightenment in the rest of Europe.

The Papal States were entirely dominated by clerics. Every office of any importance was in charge of a cleric or prelate, from Secretary of War to chief of police. "Cardinal Rivarola remarked that in the States of the Church the laity should be only 'tolerated by the generosity of the Clerics.'"⁴

A passport to go to a foreign country could not be obtained without permission of one's parish priest.

René Fulop-Miller calls the Papal States "an artificially preserved remnant of the Middle Ages" and in his book, *Leo XIII and Our Times*, p. 45, describes them in this way:

"In this theocracy the Pope was also temporal sovereign, and priests filled practically all administrative offices. From the Holy Father downward, a hierarchy of officials functioned in cassocks: the diplomats were Clerics as were the provincial governors, the judges and the tax collectors. Thus the whole life of persons who belonged to the Patrimony of St. Peter was passed from the cradle to the grave under the determining influence of the priesthood."

Papal Tyranny

So reactionary and absolute was Papal rule in the States of the Church that even the severe program of Cardinal Consalvi was considered so liberal that not long afterwards Cardinal Antonelli revoked it.⁵

'The *motu proprio* of July 6, 1816, proclaimed the program of Cardinal Consalvi for the centralization of the government... the customs, laws, and the privileges of towns and provinces were abolished. The Papal territory was subdivided into 21 'legations' under cardinals... To them the Governors, who were selected from the prelacy, were subject, and only exercised inferior jurisdiction. Over all were the ordinary courts, the court of appeal, and last the Rota Romano, and the Vatican congregations... Cardinal Consalvi agreed that every province should have a council of laymen, but even these were nominated at Rome. They had no executive power, and could only give advice on prescribed topics. Consequently the whole bureaucratic system rested upon the priesthood and the prelacy.

Better known to people of today is Pope Pius IX who ruled over the Papal States during the last 22 years of their existence. After he became Pope-King in 1848, he fled to Naples for fear of assassination. The eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (XX,715) says:

"When French arms had made feasible his restoration to Rome in 1850 he returned in a temper of stubborn resistance to all reform... took his inspiration from Cardinal Antonelli and the Jesuits... set his name in 1864 to the famous Syllabus, which was in effect a declaration of war by the Papacy against the leading principles of modern civilization."

Robert M. Johnston in his book, *Roman Theocracy and the Republic*, p. 198, says of Pope Pius IX that he was "entrapped in the Jesuit toils more and more closely spun about him by the indefatigable and crafty Cardinal Antonelli."

Cardinal Antonelli's character is well analyzed in *The Roman Question*, a book by Edmond F. About, p. 107: "Cardinal Antonelli has been compared to Cardinal Mazzarin of France. They have in common: fear of death, inordinate love of money, a strong family feeling, utter indifference to the people's welfare, contempt for mankind."

Antonelli was widely suspected of being a lay Jesuit, that is, a member of the Jesuit order who pretended to be an ordinary layman with no relationship at all to the Jesuits. Although a cardinal and Secretary of State under Pope Pius IX, Antonelli did not admit that he was a priest and was generally considered a layman.

Maladministration

(The actions of a government body which can be seen as causing an injustice.)

The Patrimony of St. Peter was synonymous with maladministration. De Cesare says that Rome vied with Naples as the filthiest city of Italy. The streets overflowed with beggars, Clerical and lay. Edmond de Pressense in his book, *Rome and Italy at the Opening of the Ecumenical Council*, p. 115, relates the state of affairs:

"Begging has its third estate at Rome; it is recognized and patented; every mendicant wear a medal from the government and goes with a nasal whine to church doors as though he fulfilled some state function."

The laws of the Papal States were so ill conceived that they were a laughingstock. Respect for all law was killed by absurd regulations such as one made by Msgr. Antonio Matteucci, Director-General of the Police, which prohibited encores in the theaters. A picture of the utter inefficiency of Papal rule is given in De Cesare's book, mentioned above. For instance, on page 43 he notes:

"There were no State registers... no statistics, no census, not even minutes of the rare meetings of the Council which always sat in secret..."

A glimpse of the utter collapse of government functions in the Papal States is given by Luigi Farini in his book, *Roman State*, which was translated into English by the British Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone. On page 328 he says:

"The clergy alone have supreme administration of all that relates to instruction, charity, diplomacy, justice, censorship and the police. The finances are ruined, commerce and traffic are at the very lowest ebb, smuggling has sprung to life again; all the immunities, ail the jurisdiction of the clergy are restored. Taxes are imposed in abundance, without rule or measure. There is neither public nor private safety; no moral authority, no real army, no railroads, no telegraph. Studies are neglected. There is not a breath of liberty, not a hope of tranquil life... atrocious acts of revenge, factions rising, universal discontent. Such is the Papal Government..."

De Cesare tells that under Pope Pius IX in 1851 postage stamps were used for the first time in the States of the Church. Government employees sold sheets of stamps at half price, pocketing the money. Others in the post offices instead of canceling the stamps, tore them off the letters and resold them. "It was three years before a Superintendent of Post Offices introduced a canceling machine."

Robert M. Johnston, on page 23 of his book referred to above, reveals that

"though the country was poor enough, the leaders of the clergy were comparatively rich, and viewed change and improvement with dislike and fear. Manufactures were all but non-existent, trade restricted in every way, and but one prosperous form of business was known, that of smuggling."

Bandits overran the Papal States with little opposition from Government forces so that all traveling was extremely dangerous. *Cambridge Modern History* (X, 138) informs us:

"Laws were unable to stop organized brigandage... The bandits even drew recruits from the ranks of the Papal soldiery and police. The police itself was untrustworthy..."

Flouting Of Justice

Order is dependent on just laws wisely interpreted by the courts. In the Papal States law and order were in disrepute. The *Cambridge Modern History* (X, 138) summarizes these chaotic conditions as follows:

"The suggested rules of legal procedure were never enforced; the separation of juridical from administrative functions was never carried out. The Cardinal Legates encroached upon the domain of justice by arbitrary intervention... the clergy appealed to episcopal courts."

Robert M. Johnston, p. 20, adds:

"Young Monsignors administered such justice as ambition, prejudice or pecuniary interest prompted. Away from Rome, provincial governors ruled with Oriental supremacy."

Luigi Farini (*Roman State*, p. 323) tells of youths who were sentenced to twenty years in the galleys because Papal revenue on tobacco had fallen off as a result of a prank on the part of young men who had stopped smoking to annoy the government. They were accused and sentenced for the crime of "coalition against the use of tobacco," though at the time of their abstinence from tobacco no such law or 'crime' had ever been heard of.

Of course the Inquisition flourished in the Papal States and condemned individuals to death even in the 19th century. It frequently hounded the Carbonari who worked for a free, united Italy. The *Cambridge Modern History* (X, 135) says:

"Cardinal Pacca had obtained in 1814 the condemnation of the Freemasons and the Carbonari... But by Cardinal Pacca and those who shared his views, all sovereigns and statesmen... the Protestant Bible Societies, the liberals, everybody in fact who did not hold their opinions were stamped as Freemasons."

Fascists, whether of the 19th or the 20th century, vent their hatred of religious liberty by oppressing and persecuting the poor Jewish minority. It should surprise no one to read that even in the enlightened 19th century tyrannical Popes indulged their hatred of Jews. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (X, 458) says:

"Shortly afterward, however, with the fall of Napoleon, the Castle of Sant' Angelo was returned to the pope, and the gates of the ghetto in Rome were closed. The Inquisition was reintroduced, Jewish trading privileges were limited to the ghetto, and the Jews' franchise was revoked. Conditions became still worse under Leo XII (1823- 29) and Pius VIII (1829-31), when all the medieval edicts and bulls were renewed... they were compelled to listen to conversionist sermons... In October, 1849, the houses of all Roman Jews were searched... Ornaments which bore no satisfactory marks of ownership, including even such as belonged to the synagogue, were not returned to them. Compulsory baptisms took place, as in Sinigaglia and Ancona... Even in the Sixties coercive baptisms occurred in large numbers."

Conclusion

To the modern mind, life under the rule of the Popes, even in the Papal States, was a veritable chamber of horrors. Nothing could be less democratic, or more thoroughly Fascist.

It is unnecessary to labor the point that such a politically corrupt institution has nothing to offer toward a better and more lasting peace. The honeyed words of Catholic propagandists about peace, order, justice and democracy sound seductive until one realizes that they were never taken seriously even by the Catholic church itself. But it is a monument to the impertinence of the Catholic church and a keynote to its policy that, with 15 centuries of sordid political rule behind it, it dares to present itself to the world as the great champion of liberty and the only reliable architect of the democratic world of tomorrow.

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH, which has been a rival of the Roman church for nearly a thousand years, despite unscriptural additions and an overload of ritual, has the following scripture points in its favor:

1. Its priests may marry;
2. Communion in both kinds is allowed to the people;
3. Confession is in public;
4. It does not teach Purgatory;
5. It allows no "Pope," and teaches that the Holy Spirit alone is the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth.

1. Quoted from the translation of this encyclical on p. 294 of *The Christian Social Manifesto* by Jesuit Father Joseph Husslein.↵

2. Quoted from the official *National Catholic Almanac* for 1942, p. 171.↵

3. Further treatment of the false 'Donation of Constantine' is found in Bryce's monumental work, *Holy Roman Empire*, Ch. VII, p. 97; Joseph Wheless' *Forgery in Christianity*, p. 257; Catholic Encyclopedia, V, 118ff.↵

4. *The Last Days of Papal Rome, 1850-1870*, page 17, by Raffaele De Cesare, distinguished Italian historian, author of *Fin di Un Regno* and other works.↵

5. *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. X, page 135.↵