

The Antichrist in the Twentieth Century

The twentieth century has certainly witnessed the Papacy again as a prominent force in world affairs. By maneuvering as a world political power, it has affected the course of world events. One area has been Papacy's support of Fascism.

In 1919 Archbishop Pacelli (who later became Pope Pius XII) gave Hitler Church money to "help his small, struggling band of anti-Communists 'to quell the devil's work,' as Pacelli told Hitler." [34] Hitler's Nazi-ism was born. By the Vatican exerting international pressure, part of Ukraine was taken from Communist Soviet Russia and given to Catholic Poland. [35] Much to the Vatican's delight, in 1922 Mussolini set up a Fascist dictatorship in Italy. Finally, because of the Vatican's political power, any Vatican representative was forbidden to enter the Soviet Union. Then from 1925 onward, the real Vatican campaign against the Soviet Union "began to flood the whole world." [36]

Under Vatican pressure, in 1926 Pilsudski set up a Catholic Fascist dictatorship in Poland. For over 15 years Catholic priests accompanied Polish soldiers in expeditions to punish the so-called "rebel Ukrainians" in parts of the Ukraine previously annexed by Poland. Orthodox churches were burned and "thousands upon thousands" were executed. [37]

Between 1929 and 1942 the Vatican focused on establishing powerful Fascist political and military blocks designed to oppose and finally to destroy Communism and Socialism. First, the Vatican would support Fascist parties within the various nations of Europe that were devoted to the destruction of Socialism and Communism within the country. Second, the Vatican would support the takeover of that government for the purpose of war against the Soviet Union. Powerful economic, social and financial forces throughout the world would assist in this double purpose. [38]

The Vatican even reached out to Japan as reflected in the *Catholic Times* (November 23, 1934):

In the event of a war between Japan and Russia, Catholics would sympathize with Japan, at least in so far as religion is concerned, so let us beware of any Anglo-American bloc against Japan involving us on the side of Russia.

Understandably, the Vatican was not pleased with the U.S. involvement in the Grand Alliance (Great Britain, United States and Russia) of World War II. The Vatican in 1929 signed the Lateran Treaty with Mussolini, which guaranteed the full and independent sovereignty of the Vatican State in Vatican City. Also Fascist Italy paid the Vatican a vast sum of money to compensate for the loss of the Papal States in 1870. [39]

In 1933, the Pope had Franz von Papen persuade President Hindenburg to appoint Hitler to be a Chancellor of Germany. [40] Fritz Thyssen, a rich Catholic steel magnate who financed Hitler, wrote an article in the Swiss *Arbeiterzeitung* entitled, "Pius XIII, As Nuncio, Brought Hitler to Power." [41] Impressed with the organization of the Papacy, Hitler is quoted as saying the following: [42]

I learned much from the Order of the Jesuits...until now there has never been anything more grandiose on the earth than the hierarchical organization of the Catholic Church. I transferred much of this organization into my own party.

In 1936 the Vatican and Mussolini backed General Franco's bloody civil war against the Spanish Republic and vigorously supported his Fascist regime.[43] Then between 1939 and 1941 the Vatican pressured Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Belgium and France to cave in to Germany.[44] With the fall of Czechoslovakia, the Vatican and Hitler in 1939 set up a Catholic Fascist State in Slovakia headed by a Catholic Prelate Monsignor Tiso. His regime was brutal towards Jews and non-Roman Catholics. (After the war he was executed for war crimes.[45])

The Pope even collaborated with Hitler regarding the invasion of Poland:[46]

The Pope had been informed of the war plans of Hitler to invade Poland. Hitler had told of his grand strategy and his ultimate aims. He had to risk a European war in order to achieve them, but they were worth it. The ultimate and main goal was the invasion of Soviet Russia. To do that Hitler needed to occupy Poland.... The Pope would have to use all his influence in persuading the Poles to settle matters with Hitler.... If the Poles refused, Hitler would invade Poland. He asked the Pope, first not to condemn the invasion, and secondly not to ask the Catholics in Poland to oppose it, but to rally them to a crusade against the Soviets. Hitler made two promises: he would, this time, respect all the privileges of the Church in Poland, and secondly, the occupation of Poland would be "temporary".... Pius XII accepted. He did, however, put forward three conditions.... Once more Hitler promised all that the Vatican asked.

The Vatican began to exert pressure on the Polish Government, through the services of Cardinal Hlond, and in French Catholic circles, so that, if the worst should happen, the French would not enter the war against Germany. The negotiations failed.

France and Great Britain had a mutual defense pact with Poland against aggression by Germany. The Pope was feverishly negotiating with the Western Powers to acquiesce to the occupation of Poland and then join Hitler in a war against the Soviet Union. Before his invasion of Poland, Hitler gave the Pope the opportunity to dissuade France from hostilities. General Pétain, Laval and General Weygand (of Belgium birth) were the pawns in this ploy. By Papal intrigue Pétain became Premier of France and Weygand Commander in Chief of the armed forces. Pétain, Lavan, Weygand and the Papacy had a plot to surrender France to Hitler without the firing of a shot. Then France would become a Fascist-Catholic State under the dictatorship of Pétain. This plan failed the last minute when Mussolini demanded certain territories in France. Hitler invaded Poland. After bringing Poland to her knees in less than a month, Germany's military might turned to the West. When Belgium was invaded, Weygand of France and the Vatican induced King Leopold to surrender prematurely. This threw the Allied timetable off.

Meanwhile, by Papal intrigue in French affairs, the power of Pétain, Lavan and Weygand consolidated to the point that they could surrender France long before the military was ready to cede defeat. Of course, a Fascist-Catholic State ruled in Belgium and France until the Allied liberation. All opposition was ruthlessly suppressed.[47]

Hitler promised the Pope that a German victory in Europe would result in a "new Christian Europe, formed by Catholic States and by victorious Germany, who together would bring about the complete restoration of a Christian Europe, the prosperity of the Catholic peoples...."[48]

In 1941 the Axis Powers and the Vatican set up the Catholic Fascist Party, Ustashi, in Croatia under the dictatorship of Ante Pavelic. Archbishop Stepinac was the Supreme Military Vicar of the Ustashi Army. Jews were murdered, Serbian Orthodox churches were destroyed and Serbs were given the choice to convert to Roman Catholicism or be killed.[49]

Under the headline, "The Catholic Church is Accused of Complicity in the killing of Serbs," *The New York Times* (September 6, 1994), gave the real reasons for the cancellation of the Pope's visit to Sarajevo:

Serbian anger, which is evident in the Bosnian Serbs' refusal to assure the Pope's visit, is essentially rooted in the events of World War II, so a papal visit might have been greeted with whistles and boos. During the War, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, greeted the installation of the Pavelic regime as "God's hand at work" and never publicly denounced the onslaught on Serbian civilians. The ferocity of this onslaught, which often involved conversion of Greek Orthodox Serbs to Roman Catholicism at gun point or their massacre in churches, was well known in the Vatican.

The article then described some executions of masses of Serbs by the Croats. As incredible as it sounds, Pope John Paul II, during his visit to Croatia in September of 1994 lauded Cardinal Stepinac as a national hero and a "vigilant, true pastor of his flock"—despite his World War II involvement with the murderous Pavelic regime.

When in 1943 it was known that Germany would eventually lose the war, the Vatican and Britain tried to plot the fall of Hitler and then have Germany join forces with Great Britain and the U.S. in a war against Russia.[50]

In 1945 The Axis Powers and the Vatican lost World War II and until 1989 Communism swept over one third of the world. But in 1982 through 1989 Pope John Paul and former President Reagan successfully plotted the downfall of the Communist Empire (Time, February 24, 1992). Regarding this clandestine campaign, Archbishop Pio Lashi said to the U.S. diplomat, Vernon Walters, "It is a very complex situation...listen to the Holy Father [Pope]. We have 2,000 years experience at this." It was further observed, "Step by reluctant step, the Soviets and the Communist government of Poland bowed to the pressure imposed by the Pope and the President." Finally in 1989 the Communist Empire fell. A leading newspaper reported that Mikhail Gorbachev observed, "Pope John Paul II played a major political role in the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe." [51] The Papacy finally triumphed over her bitter enemy.

The New Look of Papacy for an Old Concept

In 1990 the Vatican's ultimate agenda is revealed in the following statement the Pope made on April 21:[52]

A united Europe is no longer a dream. It is not utopian memory from the Middle Ages [emphasis added]. The events that we are witnessing show that this goal can be reached.

The Pope wants to revive the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle (Dark) Ages! ...How is this possible? After World War II, the Papacy's rapprochement with Protestants began to intensify. Ecumenism seems the appropriate solution for both Catholics and Protestants in mutually bolstering up their credibility—and survival. Although essentially the Papacy has not changed, a few cosmetic alterations have helped the Roman Church have a new look. Vatican

II has played a significant role in the face-lift project. Bible studies in the Church—albeit restricted—are now permitted. Meat on Friday is okay. Philanthropic activities around the world abound. Services no longer have to be exclusively in Latin. And the Church of Rome beckons to its "separated brethren"—the Protestant Churches. Have the Protestant Churches forgotten why they separated?

In November of 1993, Moody Bible Institute in its periodical said, "Today, for good or bad, the lines that separate evangelicals and Roman Catholics are fading. More and more people from both sides are working together..." Charles Colson wrote, "It's high time that all of us who are Christians come together regardless of the difference of our confessions and our tradition..." Today the ministries of Billy Graham, Luis Palau, World Vision and charismatic groups such as YWAH involve activities with Catholics.

In 1994 a group of 40 prominent evangelical and Catholic scholars and leaders agreed that Christians must stop aggressive proselytizing of one another's flocks and work together more closely to "contend against all that opposes Christ and His cause." The statement, signed March 29 in New York further stated, "We dare not by needless and loveless conflict between ourselves give aid and comfort to the enemies of the cause of Christ." Finally, the statement concluded, "Not since the 16th century have Protestants and Catholics 'joined in a declaration so clear in respect to their common faith and common responsibility.'"

In May of 1995 Pope John Paul II issued an encyclical on Christian unity, "Ut Unum Sint" ("That They May be One"). The encyclical was an unprecedented call for Protestant and Orthodox denominations to dialogue on a Christian unity that would accept the authority of the Pope. In response, a prominent group of Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars and church leaders gathered in South Carolina to re-examine the road to unity. In spite of much disagreement, the consensus was to keep open the dialogue at regular intervals.

On May 12, 1999, the co-chairman of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission issued the document "The Gift of Authority." It stated, "the need for a universal primacy exercised by the Bishop of Rome [the Pope] as a sign and safeguard of unity within the reunited Church" (cf. Authority in The Church 11, 9).

On October 31, 1999, the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church issued the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, which they said ended a conflict that began with Martin Luther in 1517.

The Antichrist is posturing for its end-time scenario with the image of the beast and false prophet.

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