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GERMAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE VATICAN

1933 - 1945

By

Barry Eugene Gilbert

B. A. University of Montana, 1966

Presented in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1967

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AUG 18 1967

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## CHAPTER I

### THE REICH CONCORDAT AND CO-ORDINATION OF CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

In 1933, the emerging Third Reich encountered a political-spiritual rivalry with the smallest sovereign state in the world. Foundations for the Reich-Vatican conflict during World War II began with Bismarck and the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership. In 1870, Vatican Council I declared the dogma of papal infallibility which Bismarck regarded as an arrogation of state rights. He felt that it detracted from the supreme authority that the King and Chancellor should exert over the new German Empire. Bismarck's desire to appoint ecclesiastics and control education resulted in the Kulturkampf, a contest between the leaders of Germany and the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church which led to the expulsion of the Jesuits from Germany and the "May Laws" aimed at state control of the clergy. Bismarck also abolished the salaries and religious orders of recusants to bring the clergy under state control.

By 1878, despite persecution of the Church that accompanied the Kulturkampf, State and Church reached an understanding which made co-existence possible. This was largely due to the rise of the unique Catholic Center Party which had a solid Catholic membership drawn from such disparate elements as to be capable of entering into either a conservative or liberal coalition. The Center, holding the balance of power between the Social

Democrats and the National Liberals, brought about Church-State co-operation by siding with Bismarck against the other two parties in support of a weakened version of Bismarck's isolationist tariff bill. Bismarck saw the need for co-operation with the Center Party not only to influence the one-third Catholic German population but as a political force. Still, no final settlement of the respective rights of Church and State resulted.

World War I provided circumstances, when the United States entered the war and internal German events brought about a situation seemingly conducive to peace, in which the Center Party could exert its political influence. In July of 1917, the Center Party's conservative majority supported the annexationists in their attempt to bring Belgian, French, and Russian territories into Germany's domain. The liberal minority, convinced that Germany could not win the war, proposed a Peace Resolution with no annexation and no indemnity. Social Democrats and Progressives joined the newly oriented Center in favor of the resolution. The Allies were unreceptive to the new proposal. The Vatican, too, maneuvered diplomatically in support of restoration of Belgium under the conditions of the Peace Resolution in an effort to encourage a compromise peace. Allied failure to take advantage of the peace proposal curbed Center Party activity during the First World War and caused Pope Benedict XV to cease diplomatic initiatives

and to return to appeals for peace on humanitarian grounds.

Between 1870, when the Vatican lost the last trace of its temporal army as Rome became the capital of a new Italian Kingdom, and 1919, the Vatican experienced a transformation in its manner of handling international problems. In World War I, it became obvious that Vatican representation of all Catholics, irrespective of nationality, combined with its humanitarian goal on earth to demand that the Holy See pursue a course of the strictest neutrality. To do otherwise indicated its partiality to one country, resulting in a decreased ability to promote its objectives in the neglected country.

The problem became more acute when one of the factions at war found it expedient to hinder Vatican policy toward that country's Catholic population. The Vatican had to remain neutral despite secular pressure applied to national Catholics in order to forego their increased persecution in the offending country. Vatican policy tried to avoid this dilemma by making non-political peace proposals based on an appeal to all humanity, regardless of the political persuasion of the individual belligerents. Benedict XV's adherence to this policy caused the Central Powers to regard the Vatican as pro-Ally, and the Allies to regard it as pro-German. The Vatican learned that its new wartime policy—a strange blend of national politics, international diplomacy, and neutrality—was unwieldy.

Vatican international policy was hampered by a similar situation on the State level because the Church had to refrain from engaging in national politics. With the loss of Vatican temporal power, the philosophy of separating Church and State became particularly applicable; the church being supreme in spiritual matters and the state foremost in political affairs. Theoretically, the Church gave up its right to engage in politics on any level in order to assure peaceful existence within the nation and stringent international neutrality.

On the other hand, since the Church recognized State secular supremacy, it had to advocate that its members give allegiance to the legally constituted authority. Within this framework, the Vatican strove to fulfill its basic function of obtaining the best possible conditions for Catholics within the State.

This situation leads to political conflict that may result in a concordat, an agreement between the pope and a government for the regulation of ecclesiastical matters. A concordat is devised to delineate a "way of living" by which the State yields its right to interfere in most spiritual affairs while the Church agrees to become non-political. By this method the philosophy of separation of Church and State becomes a reality founded upon the words of a treaty. The Vatican negotiates away its right to treat politically with the

State either through itself or the Catholic Church of the nation. Nevertheless, when its national programs are threatened, the Vatican must resort to national politics and international diplomacy to protect Catholic interests. This abrogates the rights assured to it under either the philosophy of separation of Church and State or a concordat.

On July 31, 1919, the newly adopted constitution of the Weimar Republic upheld the undisturbed exercise of freedom of religion under State protection and did not impose a State Church.<sup>1</sup> During the inter-war period the Vatican's superior doctrinal development and organizational capacity helped it gather strength in the wake of weak and unstable lay governments.

By 1933, the Roman Catholic Church had evolved into a supra-national entity with persuasive influence over the moral, ideological, and political actions of more than 350 million persons in Europe. Income and budgetary figures are not published, but the Vatican's immense global holdings in finance, property, and membership caused the secular powers of the world to regard the Vatican as an institution capable of influencing the thought of entire countries. Diplomatic

<sup>1</sup>U.S. War Department, Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression (Washington, 1946), IV, 688. Hereafter cited as NCA. This is the Constitution of the German Reich, Third Chapter, Article 135-137. The Vatican generally fears a State Church because it detracts from the international power of the Holy See.

relations with thirty-seven nations, exclusive of apostolic delegates, and one of the best informed intelligence services in the world<sup>2</sup> added to this prestige. The pope, as visible head of the Church, commanded only a 500 man temporal militia and an 108 area, but in fact, led an "empire" comparable in wealth and power to many lay governments.

This supra-national entity is directed by a highly centralized organization, having functions comparable to the foreign services of secular countries, directly responsible to the pope.<sup>3</sup> The Vatican uses these agencies

<sup>2</sup>Camille M. Cianfarra, The Vatican and the War (New York, 1944), 66-67. Hereafter cited as Cianfarra. The Vatican had more than thirteen hundred bishops throughout the world who sent periodical reports to the Holy See. In addition, the numerous Nuncios and apostolic delegates, having access to the same information as lay ambassadors, sent both political and ecclesiastical news to the Papal Secretary of State.

<sup>3</sup>The Roman Catholic Church functions through a strict hierarchy. The pope is the supreme authority who delegates much of his power to twelve collegiate bodies called congregations, three tribunals, and four offices. These assemblies form the Curia, or Church Government. The Congregations are comparable to the departments of state of lay governments. The cardinals, most of whom reside in Rome although a few are heads of dioceses, constitute the Vatican Senate. Apostolic delegates have only a religious mission to lay governments but may act as intermediaries with the lay authority in practice. They have access to the same sources of information as nuncios, who are charged with a diplomatic mission. This same political mission extends to internuncios. The papal envoys of ambassadorial rank are nuncios while an internuncio is comparable to an envoy extraordinary or minister plenipotentiary. The function of both is to foster good relations between the Vatican and the lay state while attending to the state of the Church in their

to disseminate information and protect its international flock by formulating policy, programs, and directives intended to stabilize adverse pressures applied by lay governments.

On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler, a Catholic, became German Chancellor and proceeded to amass sweeping totalitarian powers under the aegis of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). The Vatican's inability to reconcile its ultramontanism with the National Socialist belief in Party supremacy in all aspects of life gave rise to immediate moral and ideological opposition. Hitler and the Nazi hierarchy clearly saw the delicate problem of superimposing National Socialism upon religion. They undertook the political manipulation of the German Catholic Church and the Vatican so as not to become liable to their suasive moral and political power.

Conflict first occurred on the political level within Germany. Paul von Hindenburg, President of the Weimar Republic, appointed Hitler to head a cabinet based on a parliamentary majority of the Reichstag. The

assigned territory. Bishops have authority to govern the Church outside of Rome in conformity with canon law and papal directives. They are the link between the Holy See and the parish priest. All ranks are directly responsible through the hierarchy to the pope. For further information see: Cianfarra, 63-67; Robert A. Graham, Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane (Princeton, New Jersey, 1959), 23 and 125-26. Hereafter cited as Graham.

Nazi Party, supported by the conservative Nationalists, held only 247 of the 583 seats and lacked the necessary votes. The Center Party, the party of the golden mean that normally elected between sixty to seventy members to the Reichstag, held the balance of power between the Right and the opposition Left. Hitler began negotiations with Monsignor Ludwig Kaas, leader of the Catholic Center, to secure an electoral majority. The Chancellor said that if negotiations failed he would dissolve the Reichstag and hold new elections.

Kaas submitted questions and suggested guarantees designed to protect the Center Party. Hitler immediately repudiated these provisions, intended only for discussion, as excluding a basis for agreement and called for new elections.<sup>4</sup> Kaas protested to Hindenburg too late. Hitler had already obtained a decree from the President setting the date of March 5, 1933, as the time for a new election. On February 17, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, Hermann Goering, ordered his police to open fire on members of parties hostile to the government. Thus a terrorist campaign began which, although directed at Communists and Socialists, counted many Catholics among

<sup>4</sup>Allan Bullock, Hitler: A Study in Tyranny (New York, 1962), 255-58. Hereafter cited as Bullock. Bullock and other competent historians believe that Hitler pre-meditatedly used the submitted provisions as an excuse to call for new elections.



its victims.<sup>5</sup>

The Nazi's intensified election campaign gained impetus when an alleged Communist revolution and the burning of the Reichstag building gave Hitler an opportunity to decree the revocation of individual liberties guaranteed by the Weimar Constitution. The decree of February 28 contained many other provisions that allowed the NSDAP to assume vast powers and culminated, on March 5, in a Nazi-Nationalist coalition with a bare majority in the Reichstag.

The Nazis now began a drive for passage of an Enabling Act to allow the government to deviate from the Constitution, conclude treaties with foreign powers, and enact laws drafted by the Chancellor without the cooperation of the Reichstag. They needed a two-thirds majority to pass the Act as a constitutional amendment. The necessity for such a large number of votes again placed Hitler in contention with the Center Party. It had actually increased its proportional representation in the Reichstag during the election.

Hitler's March 23 Reichstag speech masterfully convinced the opposition parties that it was to their advantage to vote for the Enabling Act. Its appeal to the Catholic Church was singularly successful. Promising

<sup>5</sup>George Seldes, The Vatican: Yesterday--Today--Tomorrow (New York, 1934), 336. Hereafter cited as Seldes. Goering planned to eliminate all opposition. Influential Catholics were included intentionally, not accidentally.

peace and Christianity as the foundation of Germany's life, Hitler declared that the "Government will devote its care to the sincere living together of Church and State."<sup>6</sup>

The speech evoked an official memorandum from the Fulda Bishops' Conference. It stated that, although the German bishops had adopted a decidedly oppositional attitude toward National Socialism, subsequent official German statements convinced them that their earlier prohibitions and warnings must now be disregarded.<sup>7</sup> The historically opportunistic Center Party, believing the speech to be a guarantee of Church rights in Germany, voted with the two-third majority for passage of the act.

Meanwhile the NSDAP began to extinguish the "Catholic political movement" throughout Germany. It brutally attacked Catholic associations such as the National Convention of Roman Catholic Journeymen and the Catholic Benevolent Association.<sup>8</sup> Leading bishops complained to the Chancellor about the methods employed. Hitler sympathetically assured them that such incidents were undesirable, were not directed specifically against Catholics, and that Catholic associations would not be

<sup>6</sup>NCA, VI, 104.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 105. The Fulda Bishops' Conference began as an advisory assembly of Prussian and Upper Rhenish bishops. After 1933, it included all twenty-five German bishops. They directed German Catholic opinion. Quite often it did not reflect Vatican policy.

<sup>8</sup>Seldes, 337-38.

disturbed by the new regime if they entertained no tendencies hostile to the government.<sup>9</sup>

The State's demand that influential Catholics and their organizations stay strictly out of politics began to solidify as Hitler molded Germany into a totalitarian nation. On April 28, the Chancellor clearly outlined this necessity to the bishops of Germany. They had presented grievances to him concerning deprivation of the freedom of the Catholic Church, schools, associations, and the dismissal of Catholic officials purely because of their ideology. While forcefully rejecting the idea of any renewal of the Kulturkampf and speaking of the Church with great regard, Hitler insisted that it simply fulfill its spiritual mission and keep its organizations aloof from party politics.<sup>10</sup>

On June 24, the Reich followed up this warning by assimilating the Christian (Catholic) Trade Unions into the German Labor Front. The Catholic Unions had escaped the general State take-over of unions a month earlier purely as a concession to their Christian nature. But they continued to use their special position to remain undisturbed by National Socialism while promoting

<sup>9</sup>U.S., Department of State. Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945. Series C (1933-1937), (Washington, 1957), I, 360-61. Hereafter cited as DGFP, C.

<sup>10</sup>DGFP, C, I, 347-48.

political Catholicism.<sup>11</sup>

The replacement of Catholic union leaders with National Socialists corresponded with conflict in the areas of education, youth organizations, and press facilities. Reich-Church tension became so hostile in fields where both powers claimed jurisdiction that the necessity arose to draw clear lines of authority within which Church and State could contain themselves. The Vatican could no longer divorce itself from the relations between the Reich and the German Catholics and, searching for a way to protect its German membership, resorted to national political activity designed to negotiate a concordat similar to those with the German States of Bavaria, Prussia, and Baden.

Germany took the initiative in instigating a concordat by sending a devout Catholic, Franz von Papen,<sup>12</sup> to Rome to see the Italian Head of State and

<sup>11</sup>NCA, III, 383-84. The spirit of the German attitude is captured by the Director of the Office of the Organization of the German Labor Front in NCA, IV, 1055: "It is above all the Catholic party leaders whom the Trade Unions have taken over who should be removed from the associations, those men who . . . are maintaining their connections with political Catholicism just as they always have."

<sup>12</sup>Franz von Papen (1879-1959): member of Catholic Center Party; Vice-Chancellor under Hitler, January 30, 1933-August, 1934; Special Plenipotentiary for the Saar, November 1933-June 1934; negotiator of the Concordat; Ambassador to Austria, July 1934-February 1938; Plenipotentiary Minister Extraordinary on special mission to Austria, July 1936; Ambassador to Turkey, April 1939-August 1944.

placate the Vatican. Papen hoped to use the concordat not only to ease tension with the Vatican but to pacify the Cabinet Conservatives' demand that basic Christian principles be incorporated into the government's statements of policy.<sup>13</sup>

Later, Benito Mussolini pointed out to Papen the momentous effect that a successful agreement with the Vatican would have on world opinion toward Germany. He noted that such an act would establish the new regime's prestige abroad for the first time. He told the German Embassy in Italy that by enticing the Vatican to conclude a concordat, Germany could relieve its isolated position, win a moral victory, and gather favorable Catholic opinion throughout the world. This would place Germany on a better footing for diplomacy with the lay nations.<sup>14</sup>

The German Ambassador to the Holy See passed this information on to the Foreign Ministry. He stressed that the possibility of a concordat proved important enough to upset enemy powers who were "using all their influence in order to dissuade the Vatican from concluding a treaty with Germany."<sup>15</sup> Despite foreign opposition, preliminary

<sup>13</sup>Franz von Papen, Memoirs (New York, 1953), 278. Hereafter cited as Papen.

<sup>14</sup>DGFP, C, I, 636. These thoughts occurred to leaders of the Reich, but Mussolini's beliefs added impetus to concordat negotiations.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 610-11.

discussions with the Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli,<sup>16</sup> cordially progressed to a discussion of the final draft.

German policy toward the Vatican during negotiations, indeed throughout the war years, centered around the two explicit demands that Catholic influence be 1) absolutely and finally removed from political matters, and 2) relegated to a purely Christian role as determined by the State. The Vatican, which never openly endorsed national Catholic political parties, bargained away the Center Party in an effort to conclude the concordat.

The Social Democrats, Communists, and Nationalists were already defunct when, on July 5, the Center declared itself dissolved in accordance with Hitler's wishes. However, sporadic anti-Catholic outbreaks hindered conclusion of the concordat. Hitler displayed his genuine concern by issuing orders to rescind former measures against Catholics in order to appease the Vatican and promote conditions conducive to signing of the concordat.<sup>17</sup> His desire to bring internal peace succeeded and, on July

<sup>16</sup>Eugenio Pacelli (1876-1958): Ordained 1899; promoted to Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1914; consecrated Archbishop of Sardes, 1917; Papal Nuncio to Bavaria, 1917; Papal Nuncio to Berlin, 1925-29; made a cardinal and Secretary of State, 1929; traveled extensively in both Americas and Europe; made Camerlengo in 1935; elected as Pope Pius XII and reigned from March 2, 1939 to 1958.

<sup>17</sup>Papen, 281.

20, 1933, Papen and Pacelli ratified the first important foreign treaty entered into by the Third Reich—the German-Vatican Concordat.

The Concordat theoretically delineated the entire gamut of legal relationships between Church and State, but the heart of the document, the provision without which the Reich would not sign, was the regulation of "political Catholicism" contained in Articles 31 and 32.<sup>18</sup> Political Catholicism, originating as a reproach against the Roman Papacy during the Kulturkampf, became the vortex of National Socialist agitation toward the Catholics. Article 31 guaranteed protection to purely religious organizations and their respective Christian-oriented affiliates. Organizations extending beyond these limits to add social or professional interests were similarly protected provided that they remained absolutely non-political.

The State also guaranteed the right of regular worship to members of sport and youth organizations falling under State control. Members of these organizations received the right of exemption from participation in activities not in harmony with their religious beliefs. Although the one-party state had become a reality by the time Papen and Pacelli signed the document,

<sup>18</sup>See Appendix A, 187-91 for selected articles from the Concordat.

Article 32 removed the last possible opposition by flatly excluding the clergy from political parties (except the NSDAP) and activities on their behalf.

The majority of the articles proved unsatisfactory. Article I contained the usual clause pledging freedom of religion. Articles 5 through 10 described the legal status of the clergy, and 11 through 13 diocesan boundaries and juridical religious bodies. All Articles depended on favorable interpretation and, in some cases, the status of German civil law. Under Article 14 the pope appointed the bishops who assumed office only in the absence of political objections by the government. The selected bishops then, by Article 16, swore a loyalty oath to the Reich.

The Vatican obtained its major victory in Articles 19 through 25 which guaranteed the Catholic educational system by providing a basis by which Nazi inroads in this area could be combatted. Most of the remaining articles, between 25 and 31, regulated marriage, prisons and other institutions, and the language to be used in church services.<sup>19</sup>

Problems of practical application of the Concordat's terms became the subject of numerous crises even before the final ratification. Misinterpretation, or

<sup>19</sup>See Guenter Lewy, The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany (New York, 1964), 79-86 for a superb explanation of the Concordat terms. Hereafter cited as Lewy.



narrow interpretation, precipitated most crises, but the true reason was more fundamental. The Church grossly misunderstood the lengths to which National Socialism would go to uphold its totalitarian ideas, and the Reich failed to realize how steadfastly the Church would cling to its basic doctrines. The document offered various opportunities whereby divergent views could be reconciled by "joint agreement," but neither camp foresaw its beliefs as totally exclusive of the other's.

The NSDAP's method, and that of Hitler, was to "jointly agree" only when a number of solutions acceptable to the Reich were proposed and the Vatican accepted one of them. This worked well for Article 27 whereby the Reich nominated a number of Army Bishops, and the Holy See appointed one "so that no one can be appointed by the Vatican to whom the Reich Government does not agree."<sup>20</sup> However, this method did not succeed in areas where Catholicism was more firmly entrenched.

Article 31 provisions for regulating Catholic political activities were a constant source of irritation, but the first clashes occurred in the field of youth education which seemed to be stabilized by Article 21. This article provided that religious instruction be taught in accordance with Catholic principles as an

<sup>20</sup>DGFP, C, I, 622. Letter from Papen to Hitler.

integral part of secondary, senior, and vocational school curriculums. Nevertheless, National Socialist requirements that teachers join the NSDAP, teach in an atmosphere of anti-Semitism, and remove crucifixes from the classrooms became irreconcilable with Catholic beliefs in humanitarianism and the display of the visible Church.

Another acute problem arose concerning German assimilation of Catholic youth into organizations directed by the State. Section 4, Article 31 pre-supposed difference of opinion in this respect and specified that members of these bodies need only participate as far as their religious conviction would allow. Here again, as National Socialism gradually inculcated its beliefs into the organizations, the Church found its principles in opposition.

The satisfactory solution of resulting disagreements never occurred under the Nazis and, as Germany expanded to Western and Eastern Europe, new differences emerged when the Concordat did not sufficiently cover situations arising in newly incorporated and occupied territories. Finally, the statement of Article 33, Section 2, that: "Should differences of opinion arise regarding the interpretation or execution of any of the articles of this Concordat, the Holy See and the German Reich will reach a friendly solution by mutual agreement . . . ." <sup>21</sup> became untenable.

<sup>21</sup>See Appendix A, 190.

Still, in July 1933, the Concordat initially satisfied both the Vatican and Germany. Eminent Catholics now considered the Reich as a bulwark against eastern communism, and Cardinal Pacelli assured the German Catholics that their position in the nation was secure. Hitler saw many advantages for the Third Reich. Considering the Vatican's stand against National Socialist doctrine the mere act of negotiation pleased him. More notably, the accomplished fact caused Catholic withdrawal from most political activity. Also, proper manipulation of the Concordat terms would allow him to prevent the Vatican from concluding further treaties with the individual German states. This measure, to stop Vatican exploitation of German political division by forming separate concordats, greatly influenced German desire for the Concordat.<sup>22</sup> Most importantly, he realized that the conciliation, seemingly impossible a few months before, earned him support from all over the country as "an unreserved recognition of the present regime; . . ."<sup>23</sup>

Anti-Catholic measures increased in Germany immediately after ratification of the Concordat. On July 25, the government promulgated a sterilization law of

<sup>22</sup> Konrad Heiden, Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power (Boston, 1944), 634. Hereafter cited as Heiden, Der Fuehrer.

<sup>23</sup> DGFP, C, I, 653; Papen, 280.

untold repugnance to the Church. The "Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring" had been approved on July 14 but was put off until the 25th so as not to jeopardize conclusion of the Concordat. From this time forward the Reich carried out a conscientious policy of "co-ordinating" the German Catholics. Co-ordination meant to construct a quasi-national Germanic Church which would pursue interests parallel to the National Socialist principles of the State.

Attempts to achieve this result caused Germany to over-step guarantees decreed in the Concordat. In October, the Vatican presented the Foreign Minister with a list of specific points of discord arising from German violations of the document. The Vatican expressed the opinion that the situation differed "from the tragic experiences of the Kulturkampf of the past only by its greater harshness and depotism."<sup>24</sup> Yet Germany showed little inclination to negotiate about these differences until the middle of December. At that time Hitler approved the sending of a special representative to communicate directly with the Vatican rather than through Diego von Bergen,<sup>25</sup> the Ambassador to the Holy See. The Reich took this action only after Ambassador Bergen

<sup>24</sup> DGFP, C, II, 25.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 9. Diego von Bergen: German Ambassador to the Holy See, April 1920-April 1943.

repeatedly stated that the Holy See displayed a profound distaste for German failure to discuss the Concordat breeches. Bergen's warning that the Vatican was beginning to advocate an outright schism with the Reich resulted in a direct and open display of Germany's willingness to consider the breeches. This proved to be a highly successful maneuver.

Pope Pius XI<sup>26</sup> had already written a Christmas speech denouncing Germany in the bitterest terms for violating the Concordat in regard to the education of youth and persistent ill-treatment of Catholics all over Germany. "All the world was expecting a very sharp pronouncement against us by the Pope, . . ." Bergen wrote to the Foreign Minister, "and we succeeded only by dint of the greatest effort, and by use of all the diplomatic means at our disposal, in eliminating bit by bit the harsh ideas already set down in writing."<sup>27</sup> Pius XI rewrote the speech and attacked only the sterilization law while deleting all other anti-German passages. The special representative's presence successfully stopped the Christmas denunciation and caused further action concerning the list

<sup>26</sup> Ambrosio Damien Achille Ratti (1857-1939): Apostolic Visitor to Poland, the Baltic States, and Russia, 1918; Papal Nuncio to Poland, 1918-1921; made a cardinal, 1921; elevated to Archbishop of Milan, 1921; elected Pope Pius XI on February 6, 1922 and served to March 1939; greatest political achievement was the Lateran Treaty with Italy, 1929.

<sup>27</sup> DGFP, C, II, 284, 277.

of breeches to lapse into oblivion simply because of calculated inaction by the Reich.<sup>28</sup>

Co-ordination of the German Catholic political apparatus continued in 1934 as manifested by State take-over of the great array of daily newspapers, weeklies, and periodicals of the Catholic Press. In February, the Reich Director of the Press subordinated Catholic publications to the NSDAP. The following year Germany pointed out that the Church no longer needed a press as the Concordat provided for government protection of the Church. Finally, with the outbreak of war the press remaining in existence complied with demands of the NSDAP to join their propaganda campaign. However, reduction of the press to a shadow of its former power negated the great benefit that this may have had for Germany.<sup>29</sup>

The appointment of Alfred Rosenberg,<sup>30</sup> author of the pagan and racist The Myth of the 20th Century, as

<sup>28</sup>The special representative, Rudolph Buttman, periodically appeared at and disappeared from the Vatican throughout 1933 and 1934. Buttman made prolonged excuses for his absence only to return when the Vatican applied great pressure. Subsequently, he would refuse to converse and leave again. See: DGFP, C, II, 25, 172-73, 240, 247.

<sup>29</sup>Lewy, 143-148.

<sup>30</sup>Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946): early associate of the Nazi movement; head of the Nazi Party Office for Foreign Policy and Ideology, 1933; Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, 1941; official Nazi philosopher and author of many other treatises on Nazi doctrine besides The Myth. Inclusion of The Myth on the Catholic

director of ideological training for the NSDAP hindered further negotiations concerning practical application of the Concordat. The Vatican looked upon his appointment as a confirmation of German plans to exterminate Christianity and to replace it with a united Germanic Church under the leadership of National Socialism. The Reich merely explained that the Vatican need not worry since no one was obliged to read the book. During the summer of 1934 the Nazi "Roehm Purge" of military elements in opposition to basic Reich policy, including many Catholics, and an abortive Nazi putsch in Austria overshadowed direct concern about this appointment.

In May, a month after Rosenberg's appointment, Ambassador Bergen became quite anxious about the deterioration of Reich-Vatican relations and sent a long communique to the Foreign Minister to that effect. Bergen pointed out that a clash with the Vatican was inevitable because German maneuvers to frustrate implementation of articles of the Concordat not favorable to the Reich had become less effective. The Concordat was a major treaty with a foreign power which led Bergen to conclude that if an actual discharge of obligations was

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Index over-joyed Rosenberg who believed this contributed greatly to its circulation. The work evoked many violent attacks from the bishops which might otherwise have been avoided. Many circles maintain that Hitler's failure to read and censure the book was a blunder on his part.

not carried out the Vatican would discredit German fidelity. Bergen knew this would encourage other foreign powers to cast "doubt on the credibility of all the political agreements and commitments proposed by us [Germany]." <sup>31</sup> Such an action would also have an unwanted reaction in the highly Catholic countries and hinder German plans to re-occupy the Saar.

The Reich accepted Bergen's advice and intensified relations with the Vatican aimed mainly at reaching some agreement over the Concordat that would satisfy the Holy See. Negotiations, although rather unproductive, proved successful enough to pacify the Vatican for the moment. By August 5, Minister of the Interior Goering felt that problems arising from Nazi interference in Church matters had dissipated enough to order all State and Party authorities "to refrain from making any kind of disparaging remarks either about the Church's religious and moral doctrines or about ecclesiastical institutions and persons." <sup>32</sup> Thereafter, when Hitler became Fuehrer and Reich Chancellor as well as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces upon Hindenburg's death, Reich-Vatican relations returned to more normal channels.

Throughout 1935 and early 1936 conditions remained

<sup>31</sup>DGFP, C, II, 841-42.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., III, 291-92.



much the same. Germany continued to impose National Socialist principles and totalitarian ideals upon the Church, but open friction became less obvious. Discussions of Article 31 virtually disappeared as the Foreign Ministry continued to promise settlement of outstanding questions, and the Vatican steadfastly demanded practical proof of the German intention. The situation matured into a German-Vatican rapprochement because the Vatican feared that Communist-supported Popular Front governments in Spain and France would allow atheistic communism to sweep into Europe. By January 28, 1936, Germany pursued the eradication of political Catholicism and co-ordination of the Church only to a degree that would not develop into open conflict with the Vatican.<sup>33</sup>

Yet, pressures to incorporate Catholic organizations into the State and to replace Christian beliefs with those of the NSDAP continued. Article 31 neither satisfactorily defined what associations could remain active nor to what degree the youth movements could retain religious instruction outside of the standard State supported program.

As the years passed and the totalitarian State became more cohesive, the Reich more and more believed

<sup>33</sup>DGFP, C, IV, 1010.

that Catholic youth associations over-stepped their vaguely described bounds into the realm of political action. Here they clashed with the Hitler Youth. Minor prohibitions placed on the Church organizations, without interference by the German Bishops or the Vatican, accumulated until complete abolition of the Catholic youth caused grave concern at the Holy See.

On December 1, 1936, Hitler outlawed the Catholic Youth Association and named Baldur von Schirach as "Youth Leader of the German Reich." The Nuncio to Berlin, Monsignor Cesare Orsenigo,<sup>34</sup> reflected Vatican opinion by strongly protesting against what amounted to compulsory enrollment of the entire German youth into the Hitler Youth. Indeed, the 108,000 Hitler Youth of 1932 swelled to 5,400,00 by the end of 1936 and to 7,700,000 in 1939.<sup>35</sup> Catholic rights to religious instruction in schools and to maintenance of theological schools and seminaries as stipulated in Articles 20, 21, and 23 of the Concordat steadily lost ground and protesting Catholics were confined to concentration camps. These and other pressures culminated in 1937 when the Reich-Vatican conflict reached a peak.

<sup>34</sup> Cesare Orsenigo (1873-1946): Apostolic Nuncio to Hungary and Poland, 1929; Papal Nuncio to Berlin, 1930-1945; influential in negotiation of the German-Vatican Concordat.

<sup>35</sup>NCA, V, 113.

The more courageous leaders of the episcopate sent a delegation to pressure Pope Pius XI into taking a stand on German suppression of Catholics. The Pope needed no urging because the Reich repeatedly failed to respond to his communications and had now all but terminated negotiations over the Concordat.<sup>36</sup> Pius XI penned an encyclical concerning the condition of the Church in Germany entitled Mit Brennender Sorge ("With Burning Anxiety"). The Vatican instructed that the document be smuggled into Germany, to prevent a ban on its being read. Copies were made and sent to all the parish priests and bishops to be read from the pulpits.

The specific and explosive character of the anti-German pronouncements caught the Reich by surprise. The encyclical of March 14, 1937, went directly to the heart of German fears that lack of agreement over, and breeches of, the Concordat would be placed before the world as an unfulfilled treaty. Pius XI devoted lengthy passages to the Reich's "unwritten law" of arbitrary misinterpretation, evasion, and open violation of conditions agreed upon by the two powers.

Governments are rarely named in encyclicals regardless of what offenses they have inflicted upon the

<sup>36</sup>U.S., Department of State. Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945, Series D, (1937-1945), (Washington: 1950-1964), I, 936. Hereafter cited as DGFP.

Church. In this way the Vatican can maintain a neutral position by making humanitarian appeals to the world at large. But "Anxiety" minced no words and the Government of the Reich saw its title in print. Clearly, the Vatican had no intention of compromising with a state that sowed the seeds of hatred and hostility while persecuting the Church with "machinations that from the beginning had no other aim than a war of extermination."<sup>37</sup>

The Reich's reaction would determine the fate of the Catholic population in Germany. Various authorities suggested diverse methods of coping with this delicate problem. Ambassador Bergen informed the Foreign Ministry that the encyclical must be ignored, and the unfavorable effects neutralized by timely factual replies in the hope that the storm would pass over.<sup>38</sup> The Foreign Ministry, rejecting this view, regarded "Anxiety" as a call to battle but reserved its official opinion until a later date.<sup>39</sup> Hans Kerrl,<sup>40</sup> responded by accusing clerics of hostile acts against National Socialism that had jeopardized any possible agreement in the preceding years. The

<sup>37</sup>For the complete text of "With Burning Anxiety" see: Harry C. Koenig (ed.), Principles for Peace: Selections from Papal Documents, Leo XIII to Pius XII (Washington, 1943), 498-510. Hereafter cited as Koenig, Principles.

<sup>38</sup>DGFP, I, 934-35.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 938.

<sup>40</sup>The post of Reichsbischof originated in 1933

official response followed none of these lines.

Action taken at the top of the Reich hierarchy came directly from leaders of the Nazi Party. The men who reflected the ultimate hostility toward the Church had now gained control of all aspects of German life and government. The official line accused the bishops and archbishops of violating Article 16, the compulsory loyalty oath stating that they must strive for the interests of the Reich while endeavoring to avoid acts detrimental to it. Reich leaders failed to halt the reading of "Anxiety" from the pulpits but, using the "breeches" of Article 16 as their justification, absolutely forbade any reproduction or dissemination of the encyclical.<sup>41</sup>

To neutralize its effectiveness Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda and Popular Enlightenment, launched a campaign of accusation against occupants of the monasteries. Two old charges left dormant since the Concordat negotiations of July 1933 were now reopened.

with Pastor Ludwig Mueller in that position. On September 28, 1935, Hans Kerrl was made Minister for Church Affairs and, displacing the Protestant Mueller, began a program to incorporate all German churches into a Nazi National Church with a Christian basis. The divergent views of Hitler, Ribbentrop, Himmler, and Bormann sabotaged his every effort. Kerrl was also Minister of Space Planning which resulted in his dubious unofficial title of "Minister of Space and Eternity." Kerrl died in 1941 and the post remained vacant.

<sup>41</sup>DGFP, I, 935.

The Reich again claimed that the clergymen committed treason by illegally exporting money from Germany and resumed the so-called "immorality trials."<sup>42</sup> Few currency violation cases came to court but the immorality trials appeared by the hundreds. Nazi controlled daily newspapers ground out sordid details of alleged illicit relations between priests and nuns and charges of homosexuality among the clergy. Restrictions on the mass media greatly hindered Catholic refutation of these charges. The campaign effectively caused a large segment of the German population to regard the clergy as sex criminals.

Nevertheless, in May of 1937, the means of diplomatic communication remained open in an effort to find some basis for an agreement that would relieve the great tension that had built up. On May 29, even this last hope of achieving a reconciliation was extinguished. George Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago delivered a speech charging the "paper-hanging" Fuehrer and "crooked Propaganda Minister" with engineering atrocious propaganda methods concerning the morality trials.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup>DGFP, I, 945; Gerhard Ritter, The German Resistance: Carl Goerdeler's Struggle Against Tyranny (New York, 1958), 54. Hereafter cited as Ritter.

<sup>43</sup>DGFP, I, 968; Cianfarra, 101-102.

Enraged at this personal attack, Hitler prompted a declaration stating that "the conditions necessary for a normal state of relations between the Reich Government and the Holy See' no longer existed."<sup>44</sup> Bergen tried to persuade the Vatican to reprimand Cardinal Mundelein. The Vatican answered that it was powerless because of the irrefutable facts, and that though he was a Catholic Cardinal he was not an official of the Roman Curia. Hitler then ordered the suspension of the immorality trials until further notice, but the damage was done. In his Christmas speech of 1937 the Pope forcefully denounced the brutal, violent, and deceitful religious persecution throughout Germany.

Throughout 1938 and early 1939, Germany embarked on a consistently negative course to consolidate its position against the German Catholic Church. The Reich closed down the remaining Catholic schools, forbade publication and circulation of papal messages, and relentlessly denounced alleged Vatican violation of rights defined by the Concordat. Martin Bormann,<sup>45</sup> Deputy of

<sup>44</sup>DGFP, I, 993.

<sup>45</sup>Martin Bormann (1900- ): Head of the Party Chancery; Secretary of the Fuehrer (succeeding Rudolph Hess in 1941); Reich Leader and Reich Minister; member of the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich; General in the Secret State Police (S.S.); appointed Party Chancellor in Hitler's political testament of April 29, 1945; missing and rumored killed in an attempt to escape from Berlin on May 2, 1945.

the Fuehrer, issued a regulation banning members of the clergy from the NSDAP on the grounds that conflicts of an ecclesiastical-political nature must be avoided. He later amended the decree to include all Germans who were even "closely connected" with the Church.<sup>46</sup> This significant step affected a very large part of the German population. Soon the Catholic students' associations throughout Germany folded, the national Young Men's Association collapsed, and the last distinct traces of the German Catholic political apparatus passed into obscurity.

It is significant that the German Catholics so easily accepted repression of the Church in Germany. Acquiescence existed because of the not uncommon belief that a new and greatly improved era was coming into existence. All of Germany felt the impact of revolutionary years that produced hope, self-confidence, pride, and the establishment of a new military might that had been lost in the frustrating wake of the Peace of Versailles after World War I. Much of this hope was fulfilled between 1933 and 1939. New jobs were created and prosperity returned while Germany moved from one triumph to another under its new foreign policy. Most people realized that sacrifices had to be made in

<sup>46</sup>NCA, III, 606.



other areas if the dream were to come true. One of those areas was the German Catholic Church.

In retrospect, it appears that reduction of Catholic influence in Germany was a gradual and methodical de-Christianization of Germany at the order of Hitler. More truthfully, this reduction occurred as National Socialism gradually matured within a totalitarian state, which, by its very nature, had to subvert the Church to the State. This is nothing unique in history. Totalitarianism cannot condone the existence of another strong and hierarchical organization--the Catholic Church had become a state within a state--inside its borders.

By 1938, the Nazi Party controlled all aspects of German activity. One of the few remaining avenues of opposition revolved around traditional aspects of Christianity such as individual beliefs, family life, and the Church itself.<sup>47</sup> In 1939, the Party effectively removed this treat. Strong Nazis like Bormann and Rosenberg now even rejected the idea of a State Church. They argued that no close relationship of any kind could exist between a National Socialist State and the Catholic Church. Furthermore, they believed that the Church hierarchy rejected National Socialism and would not help the State

<sup>47</sup> Ernst Weizsaecker, Memoirs of Ernst von Weizsaecker (Chicago, 1951), 169. Hereafter cited as Weizsaecker.

in time of crisis.<sup>48</sup>

Hitler believed the same thing but had a much different attitude about how the Vatican should be handled. Whereas Bormann, Rosenberg, and their followers truly wanted to uproot the Church and its members, Hitler knew that this would cause it to pull together. He also knew that it was greatly to his advantage to keep the Vatican from taking a public stand against Germany. He solved the problem of eradicating the Catholic Church without alienating the Vatican by tactfully manipulating negotiations concerning implementation of the Concordat.<sup>49</sup> By opportunistically opening, intensifying, and suspending negotiations it was possible for the Reich to suppress political Catholicism.

Hitler also had the insight to refrain from direct attacks on the international Church. Rather than entirely severing communications with the Vatican and brutally closing down Church activity altogether, he used indirect methods.<sup>50</sup> Reich take-over of Catholic youth and schools on the grounds that it was necessary to further the Hitler Youth and NSDAP doctrine is one example. By cautiously

<sup>48</sup>NCA, III, 167-69.

<sup>49</sup>Waldemar Gurian, "Hitler's Undeclared War on the Catholic Church," Foreign Affairs, XVI, 270. Hereafter cited as Gurian.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 264.

infringing on traditional Church rights and justifying the infringements by narrowly interpreting the Concordat, Hitler reduced the Church to submission.

## CHAPTER II

### GERMANY USES CATHOLIC SUPPORT FOR TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

To understand fully the mood of "new era" confidence that helped the National Socialists co-ordinate the German Catholics, one must examine the simultaneous triumphs of Hitler's territorial expansion. Less than a month after the signing of the Concordat, Hitler announced that because of the denial of moral and material equal rights to Germany he was withdrawing from the Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations. On the same day, October 14, 1933, the Fuehrer announced that Germany would hold a plebiscite on November 12 to allow the German people to voice their opinion of this action. There was no doubt that the people, remembering the loss of the First World War and the humiliating Treaty of Versailles, would react favorably in this instance and that an adverse stand by the German episcopate would have no decisive effect on the outcome. Nevertheless, the new government took measures to assure that the bishops would conform.

The principle method used to bring the bishops into line was to extol the virtues of German nationalism while indirectly repressing any opposition. Vice-Chancellor Papen, the Catholic protagonist of the Concordat, accompanied Hitler to a mass meeting in Essen and urgently requested his "Catholic fellow-citizens" to

reward the new Chancellor's recognition of Germany's Christian basis with their vote of confidence in the upcoming plebiscite.<sup>1</sup>

Most bishops believed that the regime's foreign policy merely expressed the German nationalism of which they themselves were an intricate part and needed no convincing. Yet, the few prominent clergymen who could not forget Nazi ill-treatment of their brethren and the difficulties arising under the Concordat demanded that concessions be made for their support. These sparse demands immediately met with National Socialist reprisals in the form of prohibitions on their press outlets and restrictions on the content of their sermons.<sup>2</sup> On November 12, 1933, the overwhelming majority of the bishops, reflecting public opinion of the German people, followed their nationalistic instincts and supported Hitler, the Nazi Party, and rearmament by voting their approval in the plebiscite.

German ambition to re-occupy the Saar, a mining area placed under control of the League of Nations after World War I, caused a more difficult problem. Initially, the Saar, with its nationalistic German population, could have easily been incorporated into the Reich with no

<sup>1</sup>NCA, VI, 102-03.

<sup>2</sup>Lewy, 181.

objections from the Vatican. The area was seventy per cent Catholic and strongly predisposed to Germany because its Catholic population looked to the bishoprics of Trier and Speyer<sup>3</sup> for leadership. Ambassador Bergen, aware of the tendency of these people to follow the German bishops and the pope, requested that the Holy See refrain from signs of partiality toward France because it would turn the people of the Saar against Germany.

Pacelli, the Vatican Secretary of State, laid bare the problem by informing the Ambassador that Pius XI and the Saar clergy no longer welcomed German advances in that area. This attitude arose because of delays in carrying out the Concordat's provisions in Germany.<sup>4</sup> On December 8, 1933, Bergen informed Pacelli that the government intended to conciliate questions arising from the Concordat as quickly as possible and to consider the Vatican's ideological objections to the sterilization law.<sup>5</sup> Further efforts to influence the Vatican included

<sup>3</sup>The bishoprics of Trier and Speyer were within the Reich proper. These bishops followed the typical policy of the German bishops which was to support the state to which they owed allegiance. See: Appendix B, 192-93 for locations of German diocesan boundaries.

<sup>4</sup>DGFP, C, II, 167-70.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., II, 196. This is the July 25, 1933, "Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring." Germany had proclaimed the law despite strong Vatican opposition.

the special appointment of Papen to rally support in the Saar. By the year's end, conditions stabilized to such a degree that the Vice-Chancellor sent a highly optimistic message to the Foreign Ministry. He reported that the Vatican's representative to the Saar viewed the territory as a German country which should be returned to the Reich.<sup>6</sup>

Events during the first half of 1934 caused the accommodating Catholic outlook to decline rapidly. Continued deliberation over implementation of the Concordat, the "Roehm Purge" that took Catholic lives, and the assassination of Austria's Catholic Chancellor caused the Vatican to disregard German attempts to secure its support in the Saar. German foreign policy now became more intertwined with Vatican reaction to the condition of the German Catholic Church. Successful reoccupation of the Saar with a minimum of hostility from the population was desirable. This necessitated a relaxation of conflict in the Reich in order to secure Vatican approval which would, in turn, insure a favorable plebiscite from the Catholic population.

With this in mind, the government again swayed the Vatican by undertaking intensified negotiations toward settlement of Concordat disputes and relaxing pressure on the Church in Germany.<sup>7</sup> Again, the bishops thought of

<sup>6</sup>DGFP, C, II, 195-96.

<sup>7</sup>Lewy, 127.

their patriotic duty to the country to which they owed allegiance and, influenced by the intense pro-German feeling within the Saar, gave their support to Hitler. On January 13, 1935, the Saar plebiscite indicated a resounding approval of the new expansionistic foreign policy by producing a ninety per cent vote for the Saar's return to Germany.

The final phase of Hitler's reclamation of land lost in Western Europe under the treaty of Versailles succeeded without opposition from the Vatican. By this time, Germany had achieved a general rapprochement with the Vatican and the German Catholics.<sup>8</sup> Hitler replied to a Franco-Soviet treaty of February 27, 1936, by invading the demilitarized Rhineland and denouncing the Locarno Pact as incompatible with the treaty. The Rhineland bishops joined the crowds that enthusiastically greeted the troops as they crossed the Rhine bridges.<sup>9</sup>

By July 18, Reich-Vatican relations remained relatively good as another totalitarian-minded leader destined to play an ambiguous role in the fate of Hitler's Germany marched his Nationalist troops against the Loyalists of Republican Spain. Generalissimo Francisco Franco<sup>10</sup> recognized the importance of having

<sup>8</sup> DGFP, C, IV, 1010. Also see: Chapter I, 25.

<sup>9</sup> Lewy, 201.

<sup>10</sup> Francisco Franco (1892- ): made a General,



the Spanish Catholic's support for his plans while, at the same time, creating a commonly acceptable ideology among the various fighters for liberation that he had assembled.

At the outset, the Vatican supported Franco because of persecution the Republican government had earlier directed against Catholicism. The Vatican's support was reinforced by the fact that Franco fought against a government that was backed by Russia. Russian projection of atheistic communism into any area of Europe alarmed the Vatican. In 1936, the Holy See upheld the Rome-Berlin Axis for the very reason that it too appeared to be a bulwark against communism. But, since Germany granted aid to Franco's Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War, and Spain had a predominately Catholic population, problems inevitably resulted because of the Reich's treatment of its Catholics.

The Vatican's mood of benevolence toward Franco paralleled developments in the Reich and could not help but change as Germany more clearly supported the Nationalists while increasing suppression of German Catholics.

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1926; returned to Spain from Morocco as a Rightist War Minister, 1934; exiled to the Canaries by Leftist forces, 1936; became head of the revolutionary forces, June 1936; defeated the Loyalists in August 1939; despite his claim of neutrality in September 1939, he remained close to the Axis; given life tenure in Spain and can elect his own successor by a law of July 6, 1947.

Thus, the Vatican's natural tendency to ally with Germany in the mutual fight against Russian ideology and the Spanish government became untenable because of conditions in the Reich.

In December, it became clear that even though Germany participated in the British sponsored neutrality agreement to keep the Spanish Civil War local, it continued to supply Franco with military aid. The Vatican's attitude toward the Nationalist cause waned because of Germany's obvious intent to remain involved in the war<sup>11</sup> and the conditions in Germany that gave rise to the encyclical "With Burning Anxiety." Franco adopted the German view that the Vatican must not be allowed to interfere with governmental operations and banned the document from Spain.<sup>12</sup> The Holy See's hostile policy perplexed both Germany and Italy. They could not understand how the Vatican justified such a position while they carried on a fight against communism.<sup>13</sup>

What promised to become an open Reich-Vatican break with dire consequences for Franco was smoothed over by further diplomatic maneuvering by the Reich. After September 13, 1937, Hitler repeatedly referred to

<sup>11</sup>Hugh Thomas, The Spanish Civil War (New York 1961), 358. Hereafter cited as Thomas.

<sup>12</sup>DGFP, III, 293-95.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 267.

National Socialism as the ideology that would cause the destruction of communism and Spanish soil as the battlefield upon which this war would be waged. Also, German suppression of the Pope's encyclical, resumption of the immorality trials, and demands upon the Vatican concerning Cardinal Mundelein resulted in a Vatican policy of reserve designed to promote a compromise over the internal German situation.<sup>14</sup>

On August 28, the Holy See committed itself to the support of the Nationalists.<sup>15</sup> The Spanish Catholic hierarchy, exclusive of the Loyalist Basques, never wavered from this stand. However, the commitment did not relieve Germany from frustrating experiences induced by Vatican actions. In December of 1937, Pope Pius XI again denounced the persecution of Catholics in the Reich.

Throughout 1938, the German Ambassador in Spain sent reports to the Foreign Ministry advising that the Church's influence on Franco greatly added to Germany's difficulty in bringing him directly and concretely into the Reich's orbit. Germany's main efforts to advance totalitarian aims in Spain revolved around the Falange.

<sup>14</sup>For events taking place in the Reich see: Chapter I, 27-30. The reserved Vatican policy did not result in better relations. In 1938-39, conditions in the Reich became worse.

<sup>15</sup>DGFP, III, 482; Thomas, 450-51.

Franco wholeheartedly supported this organization but refused to implement its principles in a rapid and explicit manner as desired by Germany because of objections from the Vatican.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the Ambassador reported, the Vatican swayed the Generalissimo's brother-in-law and Minister of the Interior, Serrano Sũner, so profoundly that he allowed the State to be subjugated to the Church.<sup>17</sup>

Germany believed its co-ordination of the German Catholic Church to be more important than trying to appease the Holy See in an effort to take Church pressure off the liberation movement. In 1937-38, while the Vatican did its utmost to exert pressure on Franco and his followers, the Reich reached the peak of its suppression of the Church. During this time, the Reich made no conciliatory moves toward the Holy See as a direct result of hindrance of its policies in the Spanish Civil War.

The only impediment Germany used to stem Vatican interference in Spain was the constant reference to a united front against Russian communism. Even this call arose as a common idea in Europe rather than being directed exclusively toward Rome. On March 27, 1939,

<sup>16</sup>DGFP, III, 660.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 848.

it looked as if this would be enough to cement German-Italian relations with Spain without causing either a German or Spanish break with the Vatican.

Disregarding Vatican pleas for a truce, Franco launched a campaign, long desired by Germany, in Catalonia. In early March, the Nationalists secured their objective and on March 27 Spain joined Germany, Italy, and Japan in their pact against communism. The Spanish Civil War brought these nations much closer together ideologically. The Vatican indirectly lauded Germany by profusely congratulating Franco and the forces that supported him.<sup>18</sup>

Franco turned his attention to achieving harmony within Catholic Spain after his victory. It could not be assumed that the Nationalists would continue to overlook the ill-treatment of Catholics in Germany once their position was consolidated, when the Vatican remained an integral part of their life and culture.<sup>19</sup> In relation to events in Spain, the German-Russian Non-Aggression Pact of August 23 was a blunder. The German movement toward Russia decreased the Spanish desire to continue to seek German aid. The German invasion of Poland and suppression of its Catholics later in 1939 did not help

<sup>18</sup>Principles, 563-64; Lewy, 312.

<sup>19</sup>Allison E. Peers, The Spanish Dilemma (London, 1940), 36.

the German cause either. On September 4, 1939, Spain declared strict neutrality. Franco's New Year's Eve speech implicitly confirmed Spain, Italy, and the Catholic Church as the defenders against the common enemy, Russia. It made no mention of Germany.

From 1939 to 1943, Hitler unsuccessfully tried to bring Spain into the war on the side of Germany. Spain's adherence to the Axis in 1941 would have greatly enhanced German possibilities in North Africa. Hitler, not wishing to risk an invasion of Spain, could not get Franco's voluntary help. This is partly attributable to the refusal of Serrano Suner to forget his reservations toward the Third Reich as a result of its persecution of German Catholics.<sup>20</sup> In 1941, Hitler confided to Mussolini that this man, and the improved position the Church had gained in Spain after Franco's victory, frustrated his preparations to occupy Gibraltar.<sup>21</sup> Hitler did not blame Franco for not allying with Germany, but "the systematic sabotage perpetrated by his Jesuit brother-in-law. . . ." Serrano Suner.<sup>22</sup>

In 1942, Goebbels' placed the blame for Spain's

<sup>20</sup>DGFP, X, 97-8.

<sup>21</sup>Galeazzo Ciano, Ciano's Diplomatic Papers (London, 1948), 419. Hereafter cited as Ciano's Papers.

<sup>22</sup>Adolf Hitler, The Testament of Adolf Hitler: The Hitler-Bormann Documents, February-April 1945 (London, 1961), 47-8.

refusal to aid Germany squarely on Franco and the Vatican.<sup>23</sup> It is clear that Hitler's failure to ease conditions in Germany for the Catholics and to pacify the Vatican was an integral aspect of his inability to bring Spain into the war. In spite of this, Hitler's neglect did not alter the total picture that evolved since the beginning of the Spanish Civil War.

Germany and the Vatican were more gravely concerned with events that developed in another area. Germany's need to absorb Catholic countries, and the Vatican's desire to forego any repetition of conditions now present in the Reich collided. On March 12, 1938, Germany's annexation of Austria caused the first instance of grave hostility on an international scale.

Vatican officials looked upon Austria as a Catholic stronghold against communism as well as socialism. They directly supported its independence. In 1934, the Nazi regime began to supplant this defense against communism with anti-Christian ideologies and lay grounds for a struggle that would last into the latter years of the war. Throughout May and June of that year, Austrian Nazis bombed vicarages and the residences of archbishops. The Nazis later found the Catholic Church to be one of

<sup>23</sup>Joseph Goebbels, The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943 (New York, 1948), 63, 119, 166. Hereafter cited as Goebbels.

the strongest organizations opposing them.<sup>24</sup>

The May-June bombings subsided at the insistence of Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss' staunch advocate, Benito Mussolini. Mussolini found Hitler in a conciliatory mood because of his involvement in the June 30 "Roehm Purge" and the question of succession to Hindenburg. The Fuehrer needed a period of tranquillity to consolidate his position. The February declaration of France and Britain to support Italy in an attempt to uphold Austrian independence also influenced the decision to stop the bombing. But overzealous Austrian Nazis failed to heed the Reich's policy and undertook a putsch. On July 25, the putsch abruptly failed but the Nazis murdered Dollfuss.

The Reich found itself in aggravated tension with the Vatican and facing the loss of Mussolini's backing. Germany immediately took successful steps to correct this turn of events. While the Reich appeased both opponents by reducing anti-Catholic decrees in the Reich,<sup>25</sup> the crowning touch was the dispatch of Papen as Minister-Extraordinary to Austria. The mere presence of Papen—former Center Party member, non-Nazi, devout Catholic, and instigator of the Concordat—sufficiently

<sup>24</sup> NGA, IV, 310.

<sup>25</sup> For the status of events in the Reich during this period see: Chapter I, 24.



comforted both factions in Rome to bring about a quiet ending to the year.

From 1934 to 1935, Papen, feeling that he appeared like a "Catholic in wolf's clothing,"<sup>26</sup> worked diligently for the German annexation of Austria. Despite constant frustration by the Vatican's most vociferous Austrian representative, Theodor Cardinal Innitzer,<sup>27</sup> Papen exploited not only his own reputation as torch-bearer of the Catholic cause but that of his wife.<sup>28</sup> During July of 1936, Papen instituted many political manipulations to promote a peaceful annexation of Austria. On July 11, an Austro-German agreement stated Hitler's recognition of Austrian sovereignty while Kurt von Schuschnigg,<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Papen, 351.

<sup>27</sup>Theodor Innitzer (1875-1955): Cardinal, 1933; Archbishop of Vienna, 1938; censured by Pope Pius XI for his political recommendation of Austrian union with Germany, 1938; threatened by German occupying forces, 1939.

<sup>28</sup>In his memoirs, Papen unswervingly claims that he remained in power and carried out his duties only in order to deter Nazi brutality toward the Catholics and to secure the best interests of the German people. A few scattered sources substantiate this idea. The majority of sources maintain that Papen, although somewhat of a dullard, consciously and voluntarily worked directly for the best interests of the Third Reich and all its ramifications. For the latter view see: NCA, VII, 105 and NCA, Supplement B, 1149-50. One of the main affidavits filed against Papen at Nuremberg was submitted by the American Minister in Vienna, Mr. George Messersmith (NCA, IV, 319). Hitler awarded Papen the "Golden Party Badge" and made him a Nazi member for his fine collaboration in Austria.

<sup>29</sup>Kurt von Schuschnigg (1897- ): Minister for Justice in the Dollfuss Cabinet, 1932; Chancellor of Austria, 1934-1938; imprisoned by the Nazis, 1938-1945.

Dollfuss' successor, declared Austria a state dedicated to formulating policies in line with those of Germany. This, and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War a few days later, brought the Vatican and Mussolini much nearer to recognizing German policy in Austria.<sup>30</sup>

Other attempts met with failure. Papen suggested that Nazi attacks on the Church be stopped to assure a peaceful Anschluss. Although Hitler accepted this idea, Goebbels and Martin Bormann later negated it.<sup>31</sup> On another occasion Bormann suppressed Papen's plea to allow an article,<sup>32</sup> written by a prominent Catholic and depicting a conciliation of National Socialism and the Christian viewpoint, to be distributed in Austria. Papen viewed the use of the article as "a political necessity of the first order. . . ." <sup>33</sup> The Vatican was hostile to this work, and Germany missed a chance to enhance itself in the eyes of Austrian Catholics in regard to annexation.

The most important event of this period was a reorganization of the German Foreign Office which began as a purge of "undesirable" elements in the army. By

<sup>30</sup>Papen, 369-71.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 357.

<sup>32</sup>Bishop Alois Hudal, then residing in Rome, wrote the article "The 11th of July from the Catholic Point of View."

<sup>33</sup>NCA, Supplement A, 466.

February 4, 1938, the office of Foreign Minister passed to Joachim von Ribbentrop,<sup>34</sup> while Ernst von Weizsaecker<sup>35</sup> later became State Secretary of that office. Simultaneously, the Reich recalled three key ambassadors: Herbert von Dirksen arrived from Tokyo, Ulrich von Hassell<sup>36</sup> — replaced by Hans von Mackensen<sup>37</sup> — from Italy, and Papen from Vienna. The purge allowed Hitler to gain supreme command of the army and to place the Foreign Office under control of men who would do only as told. Hassell had seldom agreed to opinions of the Reich when they became more noticeably under the influence of the NSDAP. Papen experienced the same thoughts and his astonishment at the recall gave way to thoughts of being replaced by more active members of the Party.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Joachim von Ribbentrop (1893-1946): Hitler's advisor on foreign policy, 1933; Ambassador at Large, 1935; German Ambassador to London, 1936-1938; Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1938-1945 (succeeding Nuerath).

<sup>35</sup> Ernst von Weizsaecker (1882-1951): Head of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry, 1936-1938; State Secretary, April 1, 1938-April 1943; German Ambassador to the Holy See, April 1943-1945.

<sup>36</sup> Ulrich von Hassell (1881-1944): German Ambassador to Italy, 1932-1937; became diplomatic advisor to anti-Nazi underground; took part in the July 20, 1944 plot to assassinate Hitler; tried and condemned, executed in 1944.

<sup>37</sup> Hans von Mackensen (1883-1947): son of Field Marshal von Mackensen; German Minister in Hungary, 1933-1938; State Secretary to the Foreign Ministry, 1937-1938; Ambassador in Italy, 1938-1943.

<sup>38</sup> Papen, 406-07.

Just as the government used this period to consolidate its totalitarian position within the Reich proper, so did it strive to transmit this principle into the out-lying, contiguous traditional German states. In 1937, Chancellor Schuschnigg realized the impossibility of maintaining a dictatorial one-party government that excluded Nazis from the Cabinet. Nazi demonstrations continued to break out in Austria against both the Chancellor and the Church. Hitler met Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden and demanded that he grant an amnesty to Austrian Nazi political prisoners and, more importantly, include the pro-Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart<sup>39</sup> in the cabinet as Minister of the Interior. Schuschnigg had no alternative.

Germany feared no resistance from the Vatican as political reports disclosed that the Catholics also pressed for the resignation of the Austrian Chancellor in favor of their own candidate, Provincial Governor Franz Gleissner.<sup>40</sup> Although the Church aided the Nazi oriented change, it was not prepared for the appointment

<sup>39</sup>Arthur Seyss-Inquart (1892-1946): Councillor of State, 1937; appointed Minister of Interior and Security, 1938; post-Anschluss Chancellor, March 11-15, 1938; Reich Governor of Austria (Ostmark), March 1938-May 1939; Deputy Governor General of Poland, 1939-1940; Reich Commissioner for the Occupied Netherlands, May 1940-1945; appointed Foreign Minister in Hitler's political testament, April 1945.

<sup>40</sup>NCA, VI, 271.

of Seyss-Inquart. This caused grave apprehension at the Vatican.

Schuschnigg's continued insistence on the independence of Austria finally resulted in the mobilization of German troops on Austria's border. Increased pressure from Germany forced the resignation of the Chancellor and the Austrian president. The Nazis elevated Seyss-Inquart to Chancellor. Within two days, March 12-13, 1938, Germany completed the Anschluss and declared Austria a province of the German Reich.

The 100 per cent Catholic nation lost its independence. The Vatican became pessimistic because of fear of German intransigence against the Austrian Catholics. The appointment of Seyss-Inquart, rather than Gleissner, as Chancellor of Austria furthered this frame of mind. So did thoughts of National Socialism as the predominant ideological force behind German foreign policy. These circumstances could only result in the same sort of Catholic suppression that now prevailed in Germany. Yet, as Hitler stated, the Anschluss was merely the application of the World War I Wilsonian principle of self-determination.

Papen declared that the inclusion of such a great number of Catholics in Greater Germany would strengthen its Christian front. He said that a strong Christian front would benefit both the Church and Germany by

creating a stronger buffer against communistic infiltration of Europe.<sup>41</sup> In truth, Hitler had made up his mind on this question more than a decade earlier. In Mein Kampf he noted that the Hapsburg monarchy used religion as a purely political idea to oppose Orthodox Russia which, from the German viewpoint, was "a catastrophic idea."<sup>42</sup> The Fuehrer carried out the thoughts in Mein Kampf rather than the verbal statements made by himself and Papen.

From the first day of the Anschluss until the end of the war, Germany followed the same policy toward the Church in Austria as it did in the Reich. Catholic youth organizations fell under German control, schools were closed, and the Nazis took over the Catholic press. Germany experienced the same difficulties with the Holy See in Austria as it did in the Reich, and Hitler called for the always successful plebiscite to be held in Austria on April 10. Bergen informed the Foreign Office that the Austrian Foreign Minister's placing of his entourage under the jurisdiction of the German Legation caused nothing more than official recognition at the Vatican. He also reported that the Holy See would not

<sup>41</sup>Papen, 348.

<sup>42</sup>Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf (Boston, 1943), 93. Hereafter cited as Hitler, Mein Kampf. Hitler is here discrediting the idea of "political Catholicism."

take an official stand on Reich action in Austria until after the plebiscite.<sup>43</sup>

Hitler wasted no time in gathering support from the Austrian episcopate for the upcoming plebiscite. He sent Papen back to Vienna (with no explanation), where he arranged a meeting between the Fuehrer and Cardinal Innitzer. The Fuehrer surprised everyone by reversing his policy of invariably avoiding any conversation with high Church dignitaries<sup>44</sup> and accepted this meeting. Innitzer, urged on by thoughts of German patriotism and Hitlerian expressions of the right of self-determination, promised the undivided loyalty of the Austrian Catholics in return for the extension of Concordat guarantees to Austria.<sup>45</sup> The terms included: freedom of religion, youth membership in Catholic organizations, and Catholic rights in youth education. Hitler, encouraged by the support of such a prominent Vatican representative,

<sup>43</sup>DGFP, I, 1026-27.

<sup>44</sup>NCA, Supplement A, 501.

<sup>45</sup>In June of 1933 Austria concluded a Concordat with the Vatican. Innitzer correctly assumed that Germany would not honor this treaty when Austria was incorporated into the Reich and attempted to have the German Concordat extended to Austria. Germany did not want this because it would further the Vatican's power in German territory. In the final analysis the Reich did not extend its Concordat to Austria. Furthermore, it rescinded the Austrian treaty. Various German authorities found diverse legal methods to achieve this end and the intra-departmental communications for this period are quite interesting. See: DGFP, I, 603-04; NCA, III, 483-95.

astonishingly agreed to every provision.<sup>46</sup>

In regard to the forthcoming plebiscite, the Reich won a huge success at the conference. In March, the Austrian episcopate issued a declaration urging support for union with Germany. Innitzer's authorization moderated the indignation of United State's Catholics concerning German policy.<sup>47</sup> On April 10, Austrians polled a vote of nearly 100 per cent in favor of incorporation of their country with the Reich. Bishop Johannes Sproll was the only prominent Prelate to oppose the incorporation by failing to vote at all.

The Vatican's decision to await the plebiscite before taking a stand on Germany's entrance into Austria gave Hitler an opportunity to sway the episcopate. The Vatican tardily took steps to correct the impression that it, through the Austrian hierarchy, condoned Germany's aggressive tendency toward the Austrian Catholics. The Vatican summoned Innitzer to Rome where his reception, first by Secretary of State Cardinal Pacelli and later by the Pope himself, was anything but cordial. Recalling the Cardinal's earlier anti-Nazi posture and opposition to Papen, Pius XI asked for an explanation of his sudden political somersault. Innitzer related the premises

<sup>46</sup>NCA, Supplement A, 501; Papen 442-43.

<sup>47</sup>DGFP, I, 619.



made to him by the Fuehrer.

On April 6, Bergen reported to Berlin that Innitzer was virtually forced to retract his support of the annexation of Austria because of the Pope's "morbid irritation" with policies of the Reich.<sup>48</sup> The Vatican said that the Austrian bishops had acted without the knowledge of the Holy See and that Innitzer, acting as head of the Austrian Church, now rescinded his encouragement of the Anschluss. From this time forth, no changes regarding concordat negotiations in Austria could be undertaken by the local bishops without the agreement of the Vatican.<sup>49</sup>

Further Vatican attempts to regain control of the situation in Austria came too late as the all-persuasive March episcopal declaration gave Germany a political victory from which the Holy See could not recover. Germany viewed the Anschluss as a resounding victory in which the Austrian Catholic Church fully participated. Any other efforts by the Vatican to interject stronger authority over these Catholics would seem offensive to German rights. As the weeks passed, and Pope Pius XI became convinced that he could negotiate

<sup>48</sup> DGFP, I, 1031; Cianfarra, 116-18. There are many accounts describing to just what extent Innitzer had to be "forced" to retract. It is quite evident that he still believed in Hitler's assurances at this time.

<sup>49</sup> Cianfarra, 118.

no concrete guarantees for the Austrian clergy, his statements turned more anti-German.

On May 3, 1938, the Pope hoped that a visit by Hitler to Mussolini would be extended to the Vatican so that new negotiations might be opened. However, Hitler decided to punish the Pope for his belated pressure in Austria and turned down the opportunity to see him. As the Fuehrer quieted Mussolini's fear of the new German conquest, the Pope ostentatiously retreated from Rome. He closed the Vatican galleries and museum, which Hitler planned to visit, and commented that the prominently displayed swastika was not the cross of Christ.

Amid the Nazi-Fascist display of light, music, and color, the darkness of the papal state across the Tiber stood out as a vivid reminder of the acute Reich-Vatican tension now prevailing. Reports from the Ambassador to the Holy See confirmed the German hope that this maneuver, directed at impressing the Pope with German power in Italy, proved successful.<sup>50</sup> Bergen aptly expressed the attitude of the Reich: "In view of the present German-Vatican tension and the repeated brusque statements of the Pope, omitting the visit appeared to me appropriate and the only dignified

<sup>50</sup>DGFP, I, 1036-37.

course."<sup>51</sup>

Adhering to this attitude, the Foreign Office directed Bergen to demand that the Vatican recall Bishop Sproll, the only bishop not voting in the April plebiscite. Pacelli received Bergen coldly before refusing the request on the grounds that, although Sproll's action may have been inept, participation had been voluntary so there could have been no violation of a legal obligation. In early July, the Gestapo led Nazi Party members in demonstrations against the bishop's residence.<sup>52</sup>

Nuncio Orsenigo complained to the Reich government only to be answered with grossly false charges that the demonstrations merely exemplified how low the bishop's position had sunk in relation to the people he supposedly served. On the 23rd, the Party imported a crowd of over two thousand to march on the residence, but the action got completely out of hand. The violence and destruction alienated the Rottenburg non-Nazi populace and greatly embarrassed the Gestapo.<sup>53</sup>

The Vatican continuously refused to recall Sproll. Pending negotiations between the Reich and the episcopate encouraged Bergen to request that the recall be forgotten

<sup>51</sup>DGFP, I, 1036-37.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 1038-39.

<sup>53</sup>DGFP, I, 1049; NCA, III, 613.

in an effort to decrease the resistance of the Holy See.<sup>54</sup> By taking his advice the Reich could have continued to consolidate its position in Austria without great animosity from the Vatican. But the Party obviously considered the situation well enough in hand to make an example of the bishop. The Political Department of the Foreign Ministry overruled Bergen and decided to remove Sproll forcibly from his residence in Rottenburg. Goebbels received instructions to enlighten the public about Sproll's gross violations of civic duty as the Gestapo executed the removal.<sup>55</sup>

The negative attitude Germany adopted toward the Vatican when Hitler refused to visit the Pope in May of 1938 continued throughout the summer in the same pattern as that manifested toward Bishop Sproll. This policy placed great pressure on the Holy See to maintain some semblance of diplomatic contact with the Reich in order to protect German and Austrian Catholics.

Having placed the Vatican on the defensive, Hitler's movements in Czechoslovakia proceeded with no notable interference from the Holy See. Germany now controlled Austrian economic resources and Catholics, while being in a position to outflank Czechoslovakia on three sides. As in the Saar, the Rhineland, and Austria,

<sup>54</sup>DGFP, I, 1052-53.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 1056-57.

the Sudetenland population was overwhelmingly German Catholic. Bergen had earlier reported that Pius XI refused to heed France's request that he protest against German activity in the Sudetenland on the grounds that it was a process of self-determination in which the Church could have no political interest.<sup>56</sup>

The secular nation's attempt to appease Germany, as exemplified by the Munich Agreement, hinged on the same consideration. On October 1, 1938, Germany exercised her rights under the Agreement and, to the applause of the Fulda Bishops' Conference, increased the Catholic population of Greater Germany by ten per cent.<sup>57</sup> The Sudetenland came under German control.

In March of the following year, Hitler upset the diplomatic equilibrium by occupying the rest of Czechoslovakia which had been guaranteed protection by France and Britain. For the first time the Reich extended its rule to a non-German population. It was a momentous demonstration of Hitler's readiness to extend Germany's need for "living space" beyond racial boundaries. Ironically, the only major concession went to a Catholic priest, Monsignor Joseph Tiso, Premier of Slovakia. He gained autonomy for his state while the rest of Czechoslovakia became a German protectorate. Germany had now

<sup>56</sup> DGFP, VI, 74.

<sup>57</sup> Lewy, 218-19.

established a large, consolidated land mass in Central Europe that gave it a strategic position to threaten the entire continent.

Directly after Hitler's failure to visit the Pope on May 3, 1938, the Ambassador to the Holy See began to take an entirely different attitude concerning Reich policy than did the Reich authorities working with the Vatican. By May 25, Bergen came to the conclusion that the Pope had been sufficiently put in his place and that the time had come for Germany to develop a positive attitude toward the Holy See. He emphatically believed that Germany should not incur the wrath of this great spiritual power, but should make the influence of the Church serve the interests of the Reich's foreign policy. Bergen also wanted to keep the clergymen in the German camp in order to "utilize them for our Germany's national aims."<sup>58</sup> Surely this policy had been most effective in negotiations ranging from implementation of the Concordat all the way to the plebiscite in Austria.

Reich authorities, under the hold of a now mature National Socialism, insisted upon following a negative policy throughout the year. The Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs adopted the view that the international Church was detrimental to National Socialism and, therefore, took little account of proposals from the

<sup>58</sup> DGFP, I, 1041.

Vatican Embassy while not answering communications from the Holy See at all.<sup>59</sup> The few exceptions were insufficient and biased.

The Foreign Ministry followed the same course as the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs. Ribbentrop made it clear to Orsenigo that some day the problems with the Church would be solved, but that the time for such a settlement had not yet come.<sup>60</sup> Weizsaecker, the new State Secretary, informed Bergen that in the eyes of Berlin a positive attitude was being pursued and, in regard to the German clergy, the fight with the Church was not a frontal attack but was restricted to separating "the sheep from the goats."<sup>61</sup>

Germany's victory in securing near complete dominance over the German Catholics as well as those in the annexed territories was now obvious. In short, Germany inflicted a political defeat upon the Vatican by subjecting its faithful to the will of National Socialism without precipitating a Reich-Vatican split. A rupture in relations would very probably have resulted in a Vatican appeal to the Catholics of the world to share in its enmity toward Germany. Now Germany was in a position to consolidate its new position in relation

<sup>59</sup>DGFP, I, 1041.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 1045.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 1046.

to the Vatican just as it had done in the Reich proper.



### CHAPTER III

#### GERMAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE VATICAN DURING THE POLISH CRISIS

March-October 1939

From 1933 to 1939, German leadership laid the ground-work that provided a lever for negotiations with the Vatican during the Polish Crisis. The Reich's authority now extended over the Saar, the Rhineland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. Germany had consolidated a formidable land mass in Central Europe. The Reich itself was a highly totalitarian state directly responsive to the principles of National Socialism. The Concordat proved to be the vehicle by which the Nazis dictated their wishes to the German Catholic Church.

Quite often, the Vatican objected to harsh measures used by the Nazis and to their overriding authority in areas, particularly Catholic education, that traditionally belonged to the Church. However, Vatican desire to co-exist with Nazi Germany remained paramount, and the position of the Catholic Church in all the Reich territories was gradually subordinated to German domination. By March 1939, the Catholic Church struggled for survival in the Reich's sphere of influence. Germany had maneuvered the Vatican into a dilemma. If the Holy See took an anti-Nazi stand, the Reich could easily nationalize the German Catholic Church.

Germany's advantageous political position was

compromised by the personality of Pope Pius XI. The Pope desired good relations with Germany but had violently opposed Nazi co-ordination of the German Catholic Church. While facing the difficulties of implementing the Concordat, Pius XI often pushed his demands to the point of nearly causing a severance of Reich-Vatican diplomatic relations. Secretary of State Pacelli always came to the rescue and tried to smooth over the crises.

Nazi intervention in Catholic education intensely angered Pius XI, and the repeated failure of Germany to answer his communications prompted the Pope to issue a politically oriented encyclical accusing Germany of fostering war.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Vatican, although it did not contest the annexation of the Sudetenland, could not be relied upon to refrain from siding with the Western Powers if Germany made further advances in the East.

On February 10, 1939, Pius XI's death gave Germany an opportunity to better its political position in relation to the Vatican. Ideological conflict divided Europe into opposite camps--totalitarian and democratic--each of which wanted the Pope's moral authority on its side if a crisis occurred. February was a time of feverish diplomatic activity in Rome because both factions tried to influence the choice of a pope politically

<sup>1</sup> NCA, V, 1079. This is the encyclical "With Burning Anxiety." The Reich regarded it as a call to battle. Also see: DGFP, I, 938.

predisposed to their activities. Diego von Bergen urged the Sacred College of Cardinals to select a pope sympathetic to Hitler's plan for expansion in the East. He asserted that Germany wanted to assist "in elaboration of a new world which wants to raise itself upon the ruins of a past which, . . . has no longer any reason to exist."<sup>2</sup>

The Sacred College of Cardinals would make the final decision and their deliberations took Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli into consideration. Pacelli, a former Papal Nuncio to Berlin, was Germany's favored candidate.<sup>3</sup> On March 2, 1939, the Sacred College elected Cardinal Pacelli, who became Pope Pius XII, as their Supreme Pontiff. Vatican officials rejoiced, and Mussolini, whom Pius XI tormented because of his close relationship with Germany, "promised to send the Pope some advice on how he can usefully govern the Church."<sup>4</sup>

The German outlook toward Pius XII was optimistic. Pius's diplomatic experience and his knowledge of international political affairs indicated that he understood

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Cianfarra, 23. By November 5, 1937, Germany had begun to develop its plans for "living space" in the East. See: G.M. Gilbert, The Psychology of Dictatorship: Based on an Examination of the Leaders of Nazi Germany (New York, 1950), 100. Hereafter cited as Gilbert.

<sup>3</sup>Saul Friedländer, Pius XII and the Third Reich: A Documentation (New York, 1966), 8. Hereafter cited as Friedlaender.

<sup>4</sup>Galeazzo Ciano, The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943: The Complete Unabridged Diaries of Count Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1936-1943 (New York 1946), 36. Hereafter cited as Ciano, Diaries.

the causes of war. Furthermore, the Pope had signed the Concordat when he was Secretary of State and grasped German political conditions as a result of his nunciature in Germany. The Reich hoped that he would use his international acumen and understanding of German conditions to appreciate its need for expansion in the East. Leaders of the Third Reich regarded Pius XII as very "Germanophile."<sup>5</sup>

Succeeding events justified German optimism. Pius XI had often shown that his moral duty, rather than political expediency, dictated his actions. On March 6, the new pope reversed this tendency by writing to Hitler and expressing his desire to come to terms over problems in Germany.<sup>6</sup> He also ordered the Vatican press to temper its anti-German position.

Further negotiations involved the appointment of a Secretary of State, the Vatican Foreign Minister. Pius XII had the authority to make the appointment, and the Axis launched a drive to secure a sympathetic man in this capacity. Ultimately, Pius appointed the former Nuncio to Paris, Luigi Cardinal Maglione,<sup>7</sup> to this

<sup>5</sup>Ciano, Diaries, 5. Cf., Cianfarra, 47-50 and Oscar Halecki, Eugenio Pacelli: Pope of Peace (New York 1951), 138.

<sup>6</sup>DGFP, VI, 601.

<sup>7</sup>Luigi Maglione (1877-1944): Representative of the Holy See in Switzerland, 1918-1920; Titular Archbishop in Palestine, 1920; Nuncio Apostolic to Switzerland, 1920-1926; Nuncio Apostolic to France, 1926-1936; Cardinal,

position. Press reports released by the Western Powers claimed a victory, asserting that Maglione was pro-French and prone to favor the West.

Ambassador Bergen told a different story to Berlin. He explained to the Foreign Ministry that Maglione had always maintained good relations with the Embassy at the Vatican and that he held a friendly attitude toward Germany. The Ambassador, aware that Maglione's sentiment must be fostered, recommended that the German press be restrained in its assessment of him.<sup>8</sup> The NSDAP controlled the press and, because of doctrinal conflict with the Church, editorialized hostility toward high-ranking Catholic leaders. Germany carried out this request during the next few days. By March 13, 1939, the German Foreign Ministry believed its relations with the Vatican to be the best since 1933.

On March 15, Germany occupied Bohemia and Moravia in Czechoslovakia. Pius XII and Maglione were visibly dismayed as this action not only hindered Pius XII's conciliatory policy toward Germany but subjected another six million Catholics to Nazism. More importantly, this deterioration in the European situation ominously foreshadowed the crisis now developing in Poland. The Polish

1935; Perfect of the Sacred Congregation, 1938-1939; Secretary of State, 1939-1944.

<sup>8</sup> DGFP, VI, 29.

population was seventy-five per cent Roman Catholic, and various estimates placed the number of Poles residing throughout Europe between fifteen and twenty millions. Poland's predominant Catholicism was one of the reasons for the country's traditional anti-German sentiment.<sup>9</sup>

For Germany to advance further in this direction without becoming subject to the Vatican's power, it had to be conciliatory enough to appease the Holy See. German-inspired "incidents" occurred in many Polish cities, adding to the Vatican's dejection. On March 17, Bergen cabled the Foreign Ministry. He disclosed that recent developments threatened to cause an undesirable change in the attitude of the Holy See. Bergen also stated that the Vatican press had stopped attacks against the Reich and that "there was no question that the German press must continue a restrained objectivity towards Vatican affairs."<sup>10</sup> Again, the National Socialists in charge of the press complied and immediately put the recommendation into effect. This effort temporarily appeased the Vatican. These events, although only a portion of the total picture that aided in formulation of Germany's strategic plans, were considered in the deliberations for Hitler's next move.

<sup>9</sup>Ciano, Diaries, 33.

<sup>10</sup>DGFP, VI, 29.

On March 21, Hitler demanded the return of Danzig and extra-territorial rights in the Polish Corridor. The Non-Aggression Pact signed by Germany and Poland in 1934 was endangered, and a subsequent Anglo-Polish Agreement to defend Poland brought the situation to near crisis proportions. However, Germany had now established cordial relations with the Holy See and a new Vatican policy arose. The Pope abstained from intervention in German affairs on the political level and avoided the more personal in-fighting that Pius XI had engaged in. Vatican criticism of German treatment of Catholics became doctrinal.<sup>11</sup>

In April, Germany and the Vatican established better relations, more as a result of American policy than of German instigation. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had asked Germany and Italy to abstain from aggression against thirty states for ten years. The proposal was public, addressed to the two specific heads of government, and asked for a guaranteed time limit before any country took further action. The time limit would allow America to strengthen her armaments if so inclined. Bergen telegraphed Berlin to inform the

<sup>11</sup>Cianfarra, 149. Pius XII always tried to disregard purely temporal problems in favor of protecting the Vatican's neutrality by not naming names and staying on the world-wide humanitarian level. See: DGFP, IV, 598 (telegram from Bergen to Berlin) and Lewy, 250. Bergen regarded Pius XI as inflexible and unpredictable. See: DGFP, C, II, 3. Weizsaecker believed that if Pius XI had lived any longer relations between the Reich and the Church would have failed completely. See: Weizsaecker, 282.

government that the Vatican severely criticized this proposal because it viewed all three points as being conducive to hostilities.<sup>12</sup>

On April 25, the Foreign Ministry again received an indication that the Vatican would remain inactive concerning the Polish question. Pius XII received a group of German travelers in audience on that date and Bergen reported the Pope's statement: "We rejoice at the greatness of Germany, at her resurgence and her prosperity, and it would be false to maintain that We do not desire a flourishing, great, and strong Germany."<sup>13</sup>

A great Germany was precisely what Hitler had in mind. Three days later, the Fuehrer delivered a blistering speech to the Reichstag denouncing Roosevelt, repudiating the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935, and declaring the German-Polish Non-Agression Pact of 1934 void. Secretary of State Weizsaecker, the person in the Foreign Ministry most intimately involved with Reich-Vatican relations, was alarmed at this development. It was unreasonable, he thought, to proclaim the Polish Pact void publicly when it had already been rescinded in fact.<sup>14</sup> But Reich strategists considered developments

<sup>12</sup>DGFP, VI, 300.

<sup>13</sup>Quoted in Friedlaender, 16.

<sup>14</sup>Weizsaecker, 181.



in Poland more important than the rapprochement with the Vatican.

Hitler's Reichstag speech, as surely must have been expected, caused new problems with the Vatican. The Holy See moved toward purely political pronouncements by asking Berlin, Warsaw, Paris, London, and Rome to abstain from rash decisions that might lead to war. All the nations agreed, and the seemingly innocuous request became the first step in up-grading Pius's attempts at peace from a specific concern with Germany to international importance. The Vatican now embarked on an effort to secure world peace rather than peace between Germany and Poland specifically. This left the Reich to wonder whether or not it would be included in further negotiations.

On May 4, the Fuehrer received Cesare Orsenigo, the Papal Nuncio to Berlin, who had been detailed by the Pope to present a plan for a conference of five Great Powers of Europe. The conference would include Germany, Italy, France, Britain, and Poland—but not Russia. Hitler realized his distressing position and spoke to Orsenigo with unusual charm. He expressed "his real gratitude to the Holy See" and promised that he would get in touch with Mussolini at once to discuss the problem.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup>DGFP, VI, 426-27. The only other occasion on

Hitler sent Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, on a personal mission to Italy. Ribbentrop told the Italian Foreign Minister that the conference could not be accepted because it would place Germany and Italy in a numerically inferior position to an English-French-Polish block which would inevitably follow.<sup>16</sup> When Ribbentrop instructed his State Secretary to convey the news to Orsenigo many changes were made so as not to offend the Vatican. Weizsaecker delivered the message in unfathomable terms. The "points of dissention" of the German-Polish dispute had not yet been "properly ascertained, . . . the present atmosphere also did not seem to be sufficiently favourable," and finally, the conference "must unfortunately from the beginning be considered as not too promising."<sup>17</sup>

Orsenigo anticipated such an answer and chided Weizsaecker with remarks pertaining to the Vatican's recent stoppage of press attacks against Germany and the very grave points of friction that still existed in German relations with Austrian Catholics.<sup>18</sup> Now, on May 23, it was apparent that German refusal of the

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which Adolf Hitler personally met with a high Church dignitary was in Austria. There he conferred with Cardinal Innitzer to secure his support for the Anschluss.

<sup>16</sup>Ciano's Papers, 283.

<sup>17</sup>DGFP, VI, 481-82.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 519. Germany now used the treatment of Austrian Catholics as a bargaining point just as it did with the German Catholics.

Vatican's peace proposal had alienated the Holy See. However, this tense mood could not last long.

On May 22, Germany had signed a treaty of military alliance with Italy, and the Rome-Berlin Axis reached its peak of solidarity. German-Italian relations became much closer. The Reich could now gain by maintaining good relations with Italy and with powers that could influence or be influenced by Italy. The Vatican's inseparable entanglement with the city of Rome and Italy's overwhelmingly Catholic population caused the Reich to reassess its policy. Another source of pressure on the Reich to resume friendly negotiations with the Vatican arose from the desire to bring Spain solidly into the Axis sphere. Any friendship between Germany and the Holy See would make the preponderantly Catholic Spanish people more disposed toward Germany.

Bergen realized as early as May 16 that the Holy See must be placated and told the Foreign Ministry his views in no uncertain terms. He sent a memorandum reviewing the fact that since the accession of Pius XII many quarters steadfastly hoped for a lasting friendship between the Reich and the Catholic hierarchy. To this, he added that the Italian people desired a normalization of German-Vatican relations because the new tension caused great anxiety among these people and the Papacy. The most unsettling disclosure of the message pointed out

that Italy blamed Germany for causing the Vatican to turn toward France. This put "a heavy strain on the Axis."<sup>19</sup>

Because of this situation, Bergen deemed a settlement with the Curia as "desirable and expedient on grounds of foreign policy" and suggested a plan of action. He wanted to clear the air of all existing mistrust and displeasure by proclaiming a press truce. The National Socialist press had only haphazardly applied the previously ordered restraints. Then it would be possible to undertake a solution of individual problems arising under the Concordat when Germany annexed Austria.<sup>20</sup> Bergen believed that these measures would lead to a solution of all problems with the Vatican.

The Foreign Ministry was extremely slow in analyzing the memorandum, but by June 8 Bergen had the authority to seek a settlement of problems outstanding with the Vatican. Ribbentrop even supplied him with the contents of the proposals he should communicate. The Pope admitted Bergen to a private, prolonged audience wherein he received Bergen with great delight after the Ambassador made it clear that he was seeking friendly relations. The Reich had taken note of the gestures of good will expressed by the Vatican, stated Bergen, and the Foreign

<sup>19</sup>DGFP, VI, 516-17.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 518.

Minister had decided that "a new epoch had dawned for German-Vatican relations."<sup>21</sup> The Pope replied that he desired friendly relations with Germany although he wanted Nazi measures in Austria curtailed. The Pope did not speak of the Polish problem in detail which indicated that he would earnestly accept Bergen's offer. The meeting resulted in a benevolent understanding that conditions would improve.

In reality German feelings toward a settlement was divided. Heinrich Himmler,<sup>22</sup> Reichsfuehrer-SS, indicated that the circle of men around him at this time favored an understanding with the Vatican and believed that Church and State could dwell peacefully together.<sup>23</sup> Ribbentrop, Weizsaecker, and Bergen were all members of the Foreign Ministry involved in the initiation of the June 8 settlement. It must be assumed that Hitler supported the actions of that agency because Ribbentrop seldom undertook anything on his own.

<sup>21</sup>DGFP, VI, 690.

<sup>22</sup>Heinrich Himmler (1900-1945): took a leading part in the "Roehm Purge", 1934; Chief of the German Police; Reich Minister of the Interior, 1943; Reich Commissioner for the Strengthening of German Folkdom; Chief of the Waffen SS; made unsuccessful peace overtures to the Allies, 1945; expelled from the Party, dismissed from all offices, and ordered arrested for treason by Hitler in 1945; committed suicide after capture by British troops, May 1945.

<sup>23</sup>Ciano, Diaries, 86.

On the other hand, secrecy shrouded the settlement as if it might be considered a step backward by certain Nazis in the Reich. Ribbentrop instructed Bergen to inform the Pope that discretion was absolutely necessary to carry out the agreement successfully. Bergen's report to Ribbentrop after the audience carefully noted that the Pope promised strict prudence from the Vatican. Opposition centering around Hermann Goering, Joseph Goebbels, and Alfred Rosenberg did exist.<sup>24</sup> Hostile anti-Vatican feeling centered around the inner members of the NSDAP which could not reconcile itself to Vatican demands in Germany and Austria. All three were closely connected with the National Socialist Party and executed orders emitting from the Party Chancellery.

By June 10, the Polish situation again flared up as a result of various accusations made by the pro-Nazi Danzig Senate and the denial of such by the Polish government. The German Foreign Ministry's attempts to pacify the Pope were not completely effective, and Pius disregarded all other problems to concentrate exclusively on initiating diplomatic activity designed to promote

<sup>24</sup> DGFP, VI, 690; Friedlaender, 22-24. All three men held various offices at this time. Most importantly, Goering was Trustee for the Four Year Plan and number two official in the Nazi regime, Goebbels held his usual title of Minister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, and Rosenberg remained head of the Nazi Party Office for Foreign Policy and Ideology.

peace.

His Holiness declared himself available to act as an intermediary between Poland and Germany. Yet, the Foreign Ministry's anticipation of Vatican hostility resulted in a beneficial effect in another area. Weizsaecker met with the Nuncio to Berlin and commented on the anti-German attitude of the West Poland clergy. On July 6, the Nuncio returned the visit and informed Weizsaecker that the matter was being corrected by higher authorities.<sup>25</sup> This achievement eased religious tension further and corresponded to the general improvement of German-Polish relations between early July and mid-August.

Before mid-August, Germany could combat Vatican activities against it when the Holy See expounded moral appeals to the world. At that time Germany did not want the Vatican involved in political affairs of the Reich. When the Polish Crisis deepened, the government changed its policy. At this point, Britain became intensely involved in the negotiations and developments leading directly to the outbreak of hostilities. The Vatican now achieved a new respectability in international affairs as the Western Powers began to gather strength from all quarters. It became the spiritual leader of efforts to maintain peace, and diplomatic activity between the Vatican

<sup>25</sup>DGFP, VI, 865-66.

and the major powers of the world increased tremendously. Germany now recognized the Holy See's humanitarian attempts to keep the peace on a world-wide, doctrinal level as a definite threat. The Reich now wanted to draw the Vatican into the political affairs of Germany so that concessions could be made which would keep the Holy See from declaring an anti-German stand to the world.

The Foreign Ministry, on August 17, received information that the Vatican had consulted with the Polish Ambassador to the Holy See, and it looked as if the Pope might intervene for Poland. Bergen reported that the Polish Ambassador was convinced that a territorial change in the Free City of Danzig would be answered by military occupation by Poland, and that Britain and France would come to Poland's aid.<sup>26</sup>

Following events surprised both the Foreign Minister and Bergen. The Vatican restrained its policy of seeking peace through international moral pronouncements and negotiated directly with Germany and Poland in the Danzig affair. The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs became aware of the situation when he received a communication from the British Ambassador to Italy. The Italian Ambassador to the Holy See informed the British Ambassador that the Vatican intended to nego-

<sup>26</sup>DGFP, VII, 104.



tiate with Poland because a successful mediation of the Polish question would make Germany prone to discussions about the condition of Catholics within the Reich. The Vatican apparently asked Poland to let Danzig revert to Germany.<sup>27</sup>

This information unsettled the British Foreign Ministry because it indicated that the Vatican now supported German policy in Poland. Britain dispatched its Ambassador to the Vatican to ascertain if the plan existed. The Holy See categorically denied it. The Papal Secretary of State contradicted this denial by telling the same British Ambassador that he had sent a telegram to the Nuncio in Warsaw. The telegram instructed the Nuncio to tell the President of Poland that if he returned Danzig to the Reich, Hitler would negotiate on questions of the Corridor and minority problems.<sup>28</sup> The Vatican had reverted to intervention in the political affairs of the Reich so that it could maintain its protection of Catholics in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.

On August 30, the German State Secretary for

<sup>27</sup>Great Britain, Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939 (London, 1949-1955), VI, 293-94. Hereafter cited as DBFP. The Vatican will not release its documents for this period so it is not absolutely certain that it wanted Danzig to return to Germany. Nevertheless, the British believed that the Vatican offered this solution.

<sup>28</sup>DBFP, VII, 403.

Foreign Affairs was still analyzing his information and considering the possibility of negotiations with the Holy See as the intermediary.<sup>29</sup> Weizsaecker must have been befuddled by Orsenigo's visit and his request that the State Secretary remind the proper authorities that certain Catholic clergy and students were exempt from military service in case of mobilization.<sup>30</sup> Orsenigo's actions reflected the Vatican's feeling that war could not be avoided. The Vatican had returned to intervention by moral appeals to the world powers.

Weizsaecker did not know that the Holy See had curtailed its political involvement with Germany a few days before. During this period, the British Foreign Ministry had more information about German diplomacy with the Vatican than did the German Ministry. The latter had also been by-passed when Germany made the decision that caused the Vatican to resort to international moral appeals.

Hitler, the German High Command, and upper echelon Nazi leaders had undertaken a pro-Russian campaign without regard to the Foreign Ministry's opinion of the Vatican's reaction. The threat of atheistic communism infiltrating Western Europe was the most dreaded of Vatican

<sup>29</sup>Friedlaender, 31.

<sup>30</sup>DGFP, VII, 426. A secret agreement to the Concordat of which Weizsaecker had never been informed stipulated this exemption.

dreams, and with the possibility of this becoming a reality the Holy See stopped negotiating with the Foreign Ministry about internal German political affairs.

On August 23, Germany and Russia signed a ten year Non-Aggression Pact which high-lighted German disregard for the Vatican's desires in this area. The Pact was signed because of political expediency. The desirability of a friendly Russia on the eastern border was more advantageous to the Reich than trying to stop Vatican moral appeals. Moreover, the Foreign Ministry could be relied upon to attempt to pacify the Vatican.

Pius XII fully understood the consequences of the Pact. The next day he broadcast an appeal to all governments and mankind to refrain from a bloody conflict and return to conscientious understanding.<sup>31</sup> The British government reacted favorably to the appeal, but Hitler and Mussolini completely ignored it.<sup>32</sup> It was clear, for the time being, that the strategists who directed the German government had slight regard for any pressure the Vatican might apply. While the Foreign Ministry

<sup>31</sup>Great Britain, Documents Concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities Between Great Britain and Germany on September 3, 1939 (New York, 1939), 139. Pius XII took this step only after his personal appeals to the German and Polish governments failed. See: Cianfarra, 182-83.

<sup>32</sup>Cianfarra, 185.

evaluated its information about Polish negotiators and Papal mediation, the Reich made the decision to attack Poland.<sup>33</sup>

On August 31, Pope Pius XII made a final pre-war appeal. Again, he directed it at Germany and Poland, but this time designated each by name.<sup>34</sup> All prior appeals had been worded in general terms and theoretically directed to all mankind, but now Germany's attitude forced the Pope to the extreme position of chastizing individual governments. Copies were sent to the major powers of Europe, and the British continued their advocacy of the Vatican's effort. But the Pope appealed too late, and the Party leader's belief in conquest overshadowed all problems that the Vatican's power might cause. Hitler overruled his professional soldiers and on September 1 invaded Poland without a declaration of war.

Germany did not disregard the possibility of the Holy See's indignation entirely. On August 22, the Reich had made plans for pacification of the Vatican after the attack on Poland. An official proclamation by the Fuehrer would be issued, when time allowed, to guide such activities. The Reich proposed to develop

<sup>33</sup>DGFP, VII, 442.

<sup>34</sup>Principles, 586.

basic principles as guidelines to be followed until the Fuehrer could act. The government would issue a statement to the Vatican couched in friendly terms emphasizing assurances that there would be no more expropriation of Church property in Austria.

Germany also planned to tell the Holy See that the Reich wished to settle many other minor problems immediately. The Papacy considered one such problem as particularly important. It concerned Bishop Rusch, the Vatican appointee as Apostolic Administrator for Innsbruck-Feldkirch, who had been appointed without the consent of the German government.<sup>35</sup> Innsbruck-Feldkirch was not in Germany, and the Vatican continuously struggled to salvage its rights to appoint administrators in these outside territories. Germany maintained that the Concordat, which supposedly guaranteed the Church's right to make these appointments, did not extend to these areas. Thus, Germany had the sole right of approval. If Bishop Rusch remained, it would be a Catholic victory and a precedent that would be difficult for Germany to overcome.

<sup>35</sup> DGFP, VII, 196-97. This conflict of views arises from Article 14 of the Concordat and Article 14, Paragraph 2 of the Supplementary Protocol. See: Appendix A, 188, 191. This Article maintains that the Vatican can make the appointment only if there is no objection "of a general political nature" by the government. Confusion arose when it could not be decided if the Concordat extended to certain areas outside the Reich.

The proposal further suggested that, with the Fuehrer's approval, details of the plan should be sent to the Reich Minister for Church Affairs and the Reichsfuehrer-SS for implementation. Viewed in its entirety, the proposal proved to be the most far-reaching and impressive consideration ever undertaken by any agency of the Reich.<sup>36</sup> Hitler and his subordinates knew that the Vatican would be agitated and unpredictable when Germany occupied Poland and that steps would have to be taken to placate the Holy See before it reciprocated with rash actions.

By September 6, Pius had neither appealed for world peace nor bemoaned the fact that another Catholic country had fallen to German advances. Two idealistic considerations influenced the Vatican in this respect. First, a period of little international activity might help to urge Germany to make peace with Poland and, secondly, Germany might set up a buffer zone in Poland against Soviet Russia. The Director of the Political Department, within the Foreign Ministry, took a more practical stand in his communication to Bergen. The Director informed the Ambassador that France and England

<sup>36</sup> DGFP, VII, 196-97. The plan to pacify the Vatican was one part of a general outline describing how the various European countries should be handled after the invasion of Poland. Unfortunately, it is unsigned so that the issuing agency cannot be determined.

had asked the Vatican to declare Germany the aggressor in the conflict, but that the Pope refused to do so. The reason was that he did not wish to jeopardize the Catholics already under German authority.<sup>37</sup>

Germany's hold on its Catholic population placed the Papacy in an embarrassing position. National Socialism influenced all Germans. The bishops within the Reich and the annexed territories were Germans who adhered to German policy. These persons sympathized with Reich policy toward Poland and publicly declared their position. The German Army Bishops caused even more embarrassment to the Vatican. They boosted the soldier's morale by being readily available to administer Extreme Unction. They, too, were German by nationality and did not hesitate to urge the soldiers on to a swift and total victory. Vatican doctrine condones "just" wars only, and the bishops assured their flock that a "just" war existed in Poland.

Germany's co-ordination of the German Catholic Church and imposition of authority on Catholics in the outside territories without causing a split with the Vatican now paid off. If Pius XII took a stand against

<sup>37</sup>Friedlaender, 33. These facts come from the text of a telegram from the Director of the Political Department to Bergen. It is a manuscript from the relatively unpublished Bonn archives. These are not documents captured after World War II, but papers that often relate specifically to government relations with bishops and the Vatican.

German aggression, he would alienate the National Socialist Catholics and risk increased suppression of those who resisted the regime.<sup>38</sup>

Anti-Catholic suppression increased after the invasion of Poland, and Nazi authorities improvised rather unique methods to subordinate the Church within the Reich to a greater degree. They closed down churches with the excuse that they were too far from air raid shelters and that the occupants would be injured in an attempt to reach safety. Germany reduced the number of previously muzzled Catholic reviews and journals because it needed paper for the war effort.<sup>39</sup>

The Fuehrer introduced more extreme measures in Poland when he decided that the clergy, along with various other groups, must be exterminated in an effort to induce unconditional surrender.<sup>40</sup> By September 18, the Pope could no longer remain silent. He addressed a pilgrimage in Rome with a didactic speech against the totalitarian state and the men who lead it. The address definitely referred to Germany and Italy. But Germany had now entered a new phase of activity which nullified any plans Pius may have entertained.

<sup>38</sup>Friedlaender, 35.

<sup>39</sup>Cianfarra, 190.

<sup>40</sup>NCA, VIII, 590. From an affidavit by Erwin Lahousen, Chief of Abwehr Section 2, relating the events of a conference in the Fuehrer's train.



The Reich and Russia launched a "peace-offensive" designed to place responsibility for continuation of the war on the Western Powers.<sup>41</sup> On September 19, 1939, Vatican circles took a particular interest when Hitler said that the West did not have to fear world conquest by Germany. The German Ambassador to Italy instructed Mussolini to make open statements that conditions in Poland would not lead to war. As a result Italo-Vatican relations became much better.

The Vatican, in effect, supported the Axis by urging England and France to accept a settlement.<sup>42</sup> Although the Vatican's motive may have been the desire to end the war and save the Polish Catholic population, the result was support of the Axis' need for a breathing spell under the banner of a compromise peace. However, Germany could not take full advantage of the Vatican's wavering attitude because its major concern changed from Poland to Russia.

On September 29, the Reich and Russia partitioned Poland. The partition subjected Polish Catholics to a state that decried religion in any form and threatened the West with communism. The Vatican faced the most

<sup>41</sup>Bullock, 573.

<sup>42</sup>Cianfarra, 192. The Vatican newspaper reproduced portions of Mussolini's statements.

serious dilemma of the Polish Crisis.<sup>43</sup> Mussolini and his Foreign Minister also abhorred the turn of events, but German evaluation of the political scene placed the need for Russian participation above the combined importance of Italy and the Vatican. Yet, the Vatican only mildly denounced the partition.

The Pope merely observed that: "Despite unjust persecution, the Polish Catholics must persevere in prayer, and in the practice of good works."<sup>44</sup> The Vatican's placid reaction may be partly attributed to Mussolini's great expectations for a favorable solution of the problem of Russia's westward advances. He based his hopes on a speech Hitler planned to deliver on October 6.<sup>45</sup> Neither Mussolini nor the Vatican knew that the speech was a façade, and that Hitler, having secured his eastern border with Russia, was making plans for the invasion of the West.

Germany's grandiose plans for Eastern "living space" relegated consideration of the Vatican to insignificance. The day following his speech, Hitler took the step that precipitated an irreparable schism between Church and

<sup>43</sup>Cianfarra, 190-01. Mussolini and his Foreign Minister, Galeazzo Ciano, were just as taken back as the Vatican. As leaders of a Catholic country they could not condone communism. See: Ciano, Diaries, 152-53.

<sup>44</sup>Principles, 589.

<sup>45</sup>Bullock, 554-55. The dates of the "peace-offensive" are September 19-23, 1939. Hitler was still committed to a speech on October 6 as a result of commitments made during this period.

State by appointing Heinrich Himmler Reich Commissioner for the Strengthening of German Folkdom in the annexed portion of Poland. Himmler's belief that National Socialism must destroy Christianity at all costs<sup>46</sup> made him suitable for his duty. He intended to eliminate the Polish intelligentsia, the Jewish population, and the clergy, with the ultimate goal of implanting National Socialism as the supreme ideology. A week later, Germany organized the Government General to maintain public order and life amid the confusion.

Hitler decided upon retributive justice for the Catholic Church in recompense for the Vatican peace proposals of August and the role the Church played in undermining German culture and tradition in Poland.<sup>47</sup> Throughout Poland, the Reich closed down many Catholic institutions, including monasteries, schools, and charities, in an effort to simulate procedures that had already taken place in Germany.<sup>48</sup> It made Poland the prototype of a "New Order" that was to prevail in all Eastern territories under the Reich's authority by initiating a policy to subjugate "inferior races," neutralize or exterminate the clergy, and use forced labor to exploit natural resources.

<sup>46</sup>Weizsaecker, 281.

<sup>47</sup>Adolf Hitler, Hitler's Secret Conversations, 1941-1944 (New York, 1953), 381. Hereafter cited as Hitler, Conversations.

<sup>48</sup>NCA, Supplement B, 1391.

The Fuehrer took little or no precaution to ease the reception of this radical action at the Vatican. Political strategists at the Holy See pondered different methods of approach to the situation until Pius resolved to abandon the tradition that a new pope's first encyclical explain the program to be followed under his guidance. By October 20, his staff had drafted an encyclical to suit the state of affairs, but His Holiness rewrote it many times. On October 27, Pope Pius XII delivered the most politically oriented speech to be released from the Vatican during his reign.

His first encyclical castigated the totalitarian state and the state that rescinded treaties unilaterally. He then turned to an indictment of conditions, implying National Socialism and communism, that directed youth toward a goal that would turn them from Christ. The Pope extended sympathy to countries that might be placed under such circumstances without any mandate. Finally, the Pope condemned conditions that raised "a piteous dirge over a nation such as Our dear Poland."<sup>49</sup>

Explicit extension of sympathy to a country designated by name moved the encyclical to the political sphere. His implicit censure of Germany and Russia was too obvious for even a political dullard to misconstrue. The world

<sup>49</sup>Principles, 592-615. This is the encyclical Summi Pontificatus.

knew that the Vatican had declared that it neither gave up the struggle for world peace on the doctrinal level nor the rights of individual Catholics on the political plane. All the ill-will, suspicion, and mistrust that was latent between Germany and the Vatican now came into the open. This caused many quarters to be apprehensive of the German reaction.

The Reich government quickly understood the significance of the document and took immediate steps to suppress the undesirable influence it would have on Catholics in Germany and the annexed territories. Nazi publications printed a distortion of the text in an effort to lessen its effect.<sup>50</sup> Reinhard Heydrich,<sup>51</sup> Chief of the Security Police and Himmler's assistant, reported his precautions and views to the Reich Chancellery. Heydrich showed how well Germany summed up the situation by observing that:

The encyclical is directed exclusively against Germany, both in ideology and in regard to the German-Polish dispute. How dangerous it is as regards our foreign relations as well as our domestic affairs is beyond discussion.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup>Cianfarra, 200.

<sup>51</sup>Reinhard Heydrich (1904-1942): Chief of the Security Police; head of the Reich Security Main Office; Himmler's assistant until 1942; Reich Protector for Bohemia and Moravia, 1941; in revenge for his assassination in Prague in 1942 the Czech village of Lidice was obliterated.

<sup>52</sup>Quoted in Friedlaender, 37. This is a letter from Heydrich to the Chief of the Reich Chancellery, Hans Lammers.

On November 5, the reading of the Pope's words from the pulpits caught Heydrich off guard. His report stated that only scattered readings occurred on that day because the lesser Catholic hierarchy were informed too late to disseminate the message. He now proceeded to take preventive measures, under directives already established for such occasions, and issued orders to hinder all churches from having the encyclical read. He stopped all other forms of communication entirely. The Reich Ministry for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment took appropriate steps to prohibit discussion of the Pope's words by the press.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, Reich leaders did not want to cause a direct break in relations with the Vatican. Prevention of dissemination of the encyclical was carried out in a legalistic and relatively mild manner.<sup>54</sup>

Throughout this period Germany viewed the Vatican as a supra-national state with the power to influence international decisions and intervene in local political affairs at will if not checked by a secular power. The Vatican proved its ability to do this time and again during the Polish Crisis. Finally, the Reich concluded that the Holy See was a de facto secular state and must

<sup>53</sup>Friedlaender, 37.

<sup>54</sup>For confirmation of this view see: Friedlaender, 38. He concluded "that the Nazi leaders wished to avoid, for the duration of the war, an open and irremediable rupture with the Holy See, with all the consequences that this would involve."

be treated as such in order to gain concessions on a quid pro quo basis.<sup>55</sup>

By November 1939, German political leaders, fortified by National Socialism, had greatly strengthened their hold on Germany and its territories. They could effectively combat even the most extreme Vatican attempts at political maneuvers to ease the Catholic burden. Economically and militarily, Germany had become so powerful that the Vatican's peace proposals were drowned in the clamor of secular nations to assert their materialistic diplomatic strength.

<sup>55</sup>Germany's treatment of the Vatican as a secular power is quite apparent in a March 11, 1940, meeting between Ribbentrop and the Pope. See: DGFP, VII, 896-97.

## CHAPTER IV

### GERMANY ENCOUNTERS MINIMAL VATICAN OPPOSITION IN THE WEST

For Germany to continue its aggression, or even to consolidate its newly gained position, without Vatican interference, the Reich would have to again placate the Holy See. Germany had seriously offended the Vatican because of its co-operation with communist Russia. The Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 23, 1939, and the partition of Poland between the two stunned the world. This policy continued in February of 1940, when Germany entered into new economic agreements with Russia. The Soviet Union's advances into Finland added to the dejection of all concerned Catholics. In February and March, the Vatican launched a propaganda campaign against Germany via its radio station and instructions to the clergy.<sup>1</sup>

On March 11, 1940, Hitler sent Joachim von Ribbentrop to attend an audience with Pope Pius XII in an effort to smooth over the discord arising from recent events. The Fuehrer told Ribbentrop what course to take and what ideas to present.<sup>2</sup> At the outset, Ribbentrop expressed concern for the fundamental relationship between

<sup>1</sup>Cianfarra, 208. The Vatican supports its own radio station in Rome. Confidential instructions are issued from the Holy See to the clergy of all countries. In this manner, policy decided upon at the top of the Catholic hierarchy can be spread throughout the clergy.

<sup>2</sup>DGFP, VII, 896.



National Socialism and Catholicism. He related that the Fuehrer believed a basic settlement to be possible, but that any such agreement must be comprehensive and lasting, not transitory as the Reich Concordat had proved to be. However, two obstacles stood in the way of a lasting agreement at this time. One was the predominant view of the Catholic clergy in Germany that they should engage in political activity. The other, that Germany was now involved in a struggle that demanded all its efforts and which did not permit Hitler to be interested in any other problems at this time.

What the Fuehrer did want, Ribbentrop explained, was a continuation of the present truce with the Vatican.<sup>3</sup> Ribbentrop stated that the Fuehrer had made the preliminary concessions of paying one billion reichsmarks to the Church and stopping 7000 indictments of Catholic clergymen in Germany. He did this because he wanted to expand the truce.

Ribbentrop ended the conversation by pointing out what Germany had done for the Catholic Church. He noted that never in history had such a radical revolution done so little injury to the Church than did the Nazi take-over of Germany. In fact, he said, it was only due to National Socialism that communism did not destroy church life in

<sup>3</sup>"Truce" was a strange word for Ribbentrop to use. The Reich-Vatican conflict in the East had become very bad by this time. Obviously, the Foreign Minister wanted to convey feelings of optimism.

Europe altogether. Nevertheless, the Foreign Minister admitted that Germany and Russia had established a lasting relationship. He said that this was possible because National Socialism had become so strong that it made the German people immune to communism.<sup>4</sup>

Pius XII tried to question Ribbentrop about problems in Poland, Germany, and other territories, but did not insist on this discussion because the Foreign Minister repeatedly emphasized the possibility of a fundamental understanding at a later time.<sup>5</sup> Ribbentrop declared that he and the Pope had had a cordial talk in which Pius agreed to all that he said.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup>DGFP, VII, 897-98. This information comes from an unsigned memorandum found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. It is generally believed that Ribbentrop wrote it himself. In 1966, the Pope's secretary and personal confidant, Father Robert Leiber, stated that this document was unknown to him. He believes that Ribbentrop had it "fabricated by someone in the Foreign Office." For the complete report of Leiber's comments on this meeting see: "Pius XII and the Third Reich," Look (May 17, 1966), 34-50. Leiber is here commenting on excerpts from Freidlaender's Pius XII and the Third Reich. Cianfarra also presents an entirely different view than does this document. See: Cianfarra, 209-10.

<sup>5</sup>DGFP, VII, 897. Leiber said that the Pope also raised specific questions about the controversy between Catholicism and National Socialism. To these inquiries, Leiber reported, Ribbentrop answered that since the German effort was concentrated on war, he could not answer them at the present. See: "Pius XII and the Third Reich," Look (May 17, 1966), 37.

<sup>6</sup>The former Ambassador to Italy, Ulrich von Hassell, says the meeting was entirely fruitless. Ulrich von Hassell, The von Hassell Diaries: 1938-1944 (New York, 1947), 131. Hereafter cited as Hassell.

Later that day, the Foreign Minister met with Mussolini to promote a meeting between Axis dictators. The two men discussed the audience with the Pope and the contents of a letter sent to Mussolini from Hitler. Ribbentrop dispelled Mussolini's fears of the German friendship with Russia and discontent with the Vatican in the same manner as he did the Pope's. He told the Duce that a lasting solution between Church and State would come when the Church solved the problem of political Catholicism. The Foreign Minister explained that he would deal further with the matter through the Nuncio to Berlin, but that religious peace had meanwhile been arranged.<sup>7</sup>

Hitler had written to Mussolini about another reason why the Vatican should be grateful to Germany. He contended that if Germany had not retained control in the Government General of Poland, the Church could not carry out its basic function because of the hostility of the local populace there. Then the Fuehrer calmed Mussolini's dread of communism by stating that it was becoming a national, as opposed to international, ideology which implied that it did not endanger the rest of Europe.<sup>8</sup> Mussolini believed

<sup>7</sup>Ciano's Papers, 358-59. Mussolini detested the Pope and the influence the Vatican had in Italy. Yet, when communism threatened, he sided with the Holy See in order to keep the favor of the Italian Catholic population.

<sup>8</sup>DGFP, VII, 876, 78.

the Fuehrer and decided that Germany and Italy had a common destiny.

Ribbentrop's journey to Rome was a success. The Vatican and Mussolini believed Hitler's statements about the weakness of communism. They also found comfort in the idea that Germany wanted to continue the religious stalemate rather than to oppose the Holy See. On March 12, 1940, the Russo-Finnish Armistice added to the pacification of Vatican anxiety about German-Russian aggression. By March 15, Europeans generally thought that the Armistice, Ribbentrop's meeting with Mussolini, and his audience with Pius indicated the coming of peace.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, Ribbentrop's visit opened the way for the internal German Opposition<sup>10</sup> to make inroads through the Vatican. The Holy See, temporarily unworried about advancing communism and the persecution of Catholics, became receptive to overtures designed to reduce German military success.

<sup>9</sup>Hassell, 123.

<sup>10</sup>The German opposition was made up of diverse groups not in close touch with one another. Most members were military men. All were against the regime because they thought Hitler would lead the German nation to ruin. Three groups stand out. The "Goerdeler circle," built around Dr. Karl Goerdeler, General Ludwig Beck and Hassell. The "Kreisau circle," led by Count Helmuth von Moltke, and one that frequently operated in connection with the Vatican, the "Canaris circle." The latter group included Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, head of the Abwehr (counter-intelligence department of the OKW). Other members were Dr. Joseph Mueller and General Hans Oster.

On May 1, 1940, members of the opposition used the Vatican as an intermediary to warn Holland and Belgium of the impending invasion of the West. Dr. Joseph Mueller, working in conjunction with Admiral Wilhelm Canaris and General Hans Oster, told the Belgian Ambassador to the Holy See the exact date of the planned invasion.<sup>11</sup> The Belgian Ambassador told the governments of Belgium and Holland. They informed the British and French.

A week later, the German Security Service had intercepted and deciphered the message. Hitler and the German High Command did not know the actual extent of the damage because the Security Service could not trace the persons responsible for the leak. Plans for the Western invasion were already being executed, and Hitler decided to go ahead. French and British passivity during the Polish Crisis, the easy elimination of Poland, and the German-Russian Agreement that secured the eastern frontier were indicative of good military results regardless of the warning to Holland and Belgium.

On May 10, 1940, the German Army carried out, with some modification, General Fritz Erich von Manstein's adaptation of the Schlieffen Plan. The Army assaulted the

<sup>11</sup> Ian Colvin, Chief of Intelligence (London, 1951), 112-13. Hereafter cited as Colvin. Also see: Walter Schellenberg, The Labyrinth: Memoirs of Walter Schellenberg (New York, 1956), 350-51. Hereafter cited as Schellenberg. Canaris had dispatched a branch of his intelligence network to operate directly through the Vatican.

Low Countries and France. The German Opposition's warning turned out to be a benefit rather than a burden. The Meuse defense system had not been linked with the Maginot Line because Belgium insisted that its neutrality must be violated before it would ally with France and Britain. Now, the Low Countries called for help.

The Anglo-French Army responded by racing into the area around the Dyle and Meuse Rivers. This action added to the effectiveness of the German plan. The Low Country offensive was a diversionary movement, and the main German force prepared for a thrust through the Ardennes Mountains into France. Even though Holland and Belgium had received the Vatican sponsored warning, and Anglo-French troops mobilized in the Low Countries, Germany overran the Dutch and Belgian defense systems in five days.

Pope Pius XII took a strong stand and officially pledged the Vatican's spiritual support to the Low Countries. Three messages came from the Holy See simultaneously. One went to King Leopold of Belgium, one to Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, and the last to Grand Duchess Charlotte of Luxemburg. Although the form of the three telegrams differed, the political implications of their content was the same.<sup>12</sup> The Pope was quite angry about

<sup>12</sup>Principles, 668-69. Pius XII called for the re-establishment of Belgium independence and extended his sympathy to the countries that had been invaded "against their will and their rights."

the violation of Dutch and Belgian neutrality and expressed his sympathy to all three countries. He clearly expressed Vatican opposition to German aggression.

Vatican concern for the Low Countries did not affect the German bishops who continued to stand behind Germany in the war effort. The German press ignored the messages, and some National Socialist Catholic newspapers denounced Pius because of his anti-German posture.<sup>13</sup>

The German Foreign Ministry feared that the Pope had sent the telegrams in reply to King Leopold's appeal to the Vatican. If this were true, Germany would have to withstand the full onslaught of Vatican opposition because Leopold had made specific charges against the Reich. Thus, the Vatican's statement would be a unilateral condemnation of Germany.<sup>14</sup> The next day, May 11, 1940, Bergen informed the Foreign Office that Pius did not intend the messages to be regarded as political intervention. A week later, Bergen was informed that the Vatican statement was not a reply to King Leopold's appeal but had crossed it in transmission.<sup>15</sup>

Hitler, bolstered by the great military victories, remained calm throughout. It was Mussolini who became

<sup>13</sup>Lewy, 228.

<sup>14</sup>Friedlaender, 49. Telegram from Bergen to Berlin, May 11, 1940.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 52. Telegram from Bergen to Berlin, May 18, 1940.

incensed at the Vatican's early anti-German position. The Duce sent his Ambassador to the Holy See, Dino Alfieri, to demand an explanation of the Vatican's one-sided stand. On May 13, Alfieri had stressed that the Vatican's attitude was irrevocably against the Axis.<sup>16</sup> However, when he encountered the Pope six days later, Pius told him that he had personally edited the words "Germany" and "invasion" in order to keep the Vatican aloof.<sup>17</sup> The German Foreign Ministry received this information from Italy. In nine days, May 10-19, the Vatican's strong stand against Germany withered away in the face of military victory, and Axis demands that the Pope refrain from condemning Germany.<sup>18</sup>

The Vatican also tried to keep Italy from joining Germany. Pope Pius XII and his Secretary of State, Maglione, asked President Roosevelt numerous times to appeal to Mussolini. The United States sent a special representative, Myron C. Taylor, to the Vatican. Taylor's

<sup>16</sup>Ciano, Diaries, 249.

<sup>17</sup>DGFP, IX, 378-79.

<sup>18</sup>There is no doubt that Pius XII changed his attitude in the days following the telegrams to the Low Countries. Friedlaender, on page 52, attributes this to growing caution at the Vatican as a result of German military victories. Cianfarra, 227-29, gives two other plausible reasons. One is that the Vatican is in the heart of Italy and Mussolini could easily have isolated it. The other, that the Holy See gave up initiative in the West because it knew that military conditions would change in the long run. In either case, the Vatican's submission in the West preserved its ability to intervene under more favorable circumstances later.



mission was to aid the Vatican in bringing about peace and to collect intelligence information from Vatican sources.<sup>19</sup> Roosevelt finally agreed and asked Mussolini to remain a non-belligerent. The effort failed.

By June 10, 1940, Germany had overrun Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Luxemburg. The well-planned thrust through the Ardennes caused France to rapidly crumble. Italy declared war on France and England. Six days later, the Axis thoroughly defeated France. The patriotic German bishops applauded by ringing church bells throughout Germany.<sup>20</sup>

Germany met no resistance from the Vatican during the conquest of France. The Vatican's weak support of that country parallels, and may well be a result of, the inability of the French Catholics to counter Germany in any effective way.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, reports received by the Foreign Office encouraged the government more than did

<sup>19</sup>Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York, 1948), 713, 777-79. The United States did not have an Ambassador to the Holy See. Correspondence between President Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII was largely ambiguous and accomplished nothing. See: Eugenio Pacelli (Pope Pius XII) and Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wartime Correspondence Between President Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII (New York, 1947).

<sup>20</sup>Lewy, 228.

<sup>21</sup>Cf., Ciaffarra, 243. Relations between France and the Holy See had been good since World War I, so the Vatican's lack of support cannot be said to come from an ideological disagreement between the two. See: DGFP, I, 1040. The French national Catholics readily backed Marshal Henri Philippe Petain's (the Nazi sponsored leader of Vichy France)

Pius XII's retreat on his stand in the Low Countries. In late May, Bergen reported that confidential sources had informed him that the Vatican believed that France should conclude a separate peace and leave Britain to carry on the battle alone.<sup>22</sup> On May 29, he told the Foreign Ministry that the Vatican's Secretary of State thought that Belgium should have capitulated in the beginning and that France should do so now.<sup>23</sup>

It soon became evident that Pope Pius XII had concluded that the war in the West would continue regardless of Vatican attempts to keep the peace. Early in June, Pius turned to pleas for humanization of the war. He asked the belligerents on both sides to abide by the rules of international law when dealing with non-combatants and occupied countries. After Italy's entry into the war, the Vatican's appeals became more specific. While still urging Germany to show generosity to France, Papal messages indicated that the gruesome reality of a European War had found its way to the Vatican. Pius began calling for abstention from indiscriminate

"national reconstruction" policy. The weakness of the French Catholics to put up a serious fight against the Nazis is a result of the factionalized French political atmosphere. The Catholics had no political education and never formed a political party for any effective resistance. For a good review of this subject see: Jacques Maritain, "Religion and Politics in France," Foreign Affairs (January 1942), 266-81.

<sup>22</sup> DGFP, IX, 444.

<sup>23</sup> Friedlaender, 53.

bombing, the use of gases, and persecution of peoples in occupied areas.

On June 28, 1940, Pius XII made one last try for peace. The countless dead and great devastation prodded the Pope to make plans to address himself to the governments ~~of~~ Germany, England, and Italy. Before undertaking this initiative, he sounded out the individual governments first. Maglione asked Bergen to determine German feeling in regard to a mutual conciliation and an end to hostilities. At the same time, Nuncio Orsenigo approached the Foreign Ministry in Berlin.<sup>24</sup> Germany refused the Pope's effort. The peace feeler failed because the Reich learned that London had not accepted the overture. The Foreign Ministry and the Nuncio placed the blame for this failure squarely on Britain.<sup>25</sup>

Although Germany faced many problems with the Catholic population in Belgium and Holland,<sup>26</sup> it had no

<sup>24</sup>Pius' peace proposal had exactly the opposite effect he had expected. It encouraged Hitler to open the Battle of Britain because he interpreted it as an admission that Germany could not be stopped in the West.

<sup>25</sup>DGFP, X, 49-50; DGFP, X, 318-19. It is extremely doubtful that Hitler would have accepted the proposal under any circumstances, but the German government was absolved of the blame in this instance.

<sup>26</sup>The Belgian Catholics made up the core of patriotic resistance to Nazism in that country and actively opposed Germany until their liberation in 1944. Political Catholicism was at its best there. See: DGFP, VII, 499; DGFP, XI, 343; Arnold Toynbee (ed.), Hitler's Europe: Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946 (London, 1954), 484-85, 493.

great problem with the Vatican in the West. Graver conflicts arose elsewhere. Germany and the Vatican continued to have major disputes concerning Reich measures in Poland.

Hereafter cited as Toynbee, Hitler's Europe. High Commissioner Seyess-Inquart was constantly plagued by Catholic resistance in Holland. See: DGFP, XI, 1216; Toynbee, Hitler's Europe, 503-04; Werner Warmbrunn, The Dutch Under German Occupation, 1940-1945 (Stanford, California, 1963), 137, 156-60, 189. French Catholics only, did not greatly resist the Nazis.

## CHAPTER V

### GERMANY TERMINATES NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE VATICAN IN THE OUTSIDE TERRITORIES

#### I

After the invasion of Poland in 1939, and particularly after the German advance in Russia on June 22, 1941, the Reich attempted to mold its new territories into manageable divisions. The Reich ultimately settled on three separate entities. The first included the annexed lands adjacent to the Reich. They were called the Incorporated Territories and consisted of Austria, most of Czechoslovakia, the Polish area around Poznan, Lodz, and the Reich district of Danzig-West Prussia. The second took in occupied Poland and was referred to as the Government General. The Government General included Warsaw and Cracow. The third area covered portions of old Poland lying even further east and parts of Russia. Germany called this the Occupied Eastern Territories.<sup>1</sup>

The formation of such a plan took time. During the interval, a great deal of confusion arose. It was not clear whether the Incorporated Territories should include Western Poland to the same degree as Austria, the Sudetenland, and other areas which were traditionally

<sup>1</sup>United States, Civil Affairs Department, Trials of Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg, 1947-49), IV, 510-11. Hereafter cited as TMWC.

German. If Poland were included on an equal basis, did this mean the annexed area, the occupied area, or all of that nation? On the other hand, should the administration of the annexed portion of Poland be similar to that of the Government General? Should decrees made in Poland and the Government General extend to Austria? When the Reich informed the Vatican of the government's position in regions not included in the Reich, it was ambiguous as to which lands were or were not involved. The resulting dilemma is clearly seen in Austria, Poland, and Russian lands occupied by Germany.

Since May 13, 1938, the date of the annexation of Austria, the Reich had followed a very strict anti-Catholic policy in that country. It closed most churches and schools while divesting many priests of State subsidies and the right to teach religion to children. Many priests were arrested and some sent to concentration camps.<sup>2</sup> Germany instituted many of these suppressive actions to prepare Austria for a significant role in the war effort. On March 20, 1941, Deputy of the Fuehrer Martin Bormann decreed that the Reich must continue to seize the property of clergymen who violated laws set up to regulate the war economy in Austria. The offenses encompassed hoarding, malicious attacks against the

<sup>2</sup>Cianfarra, 220.

State, and illegal possession of firearms. Bormann  
Confiscated refused to pay any compensation for the property.<sup>3</sup>

Confiscated property included convents, monasteries, and schools as well as churches. The Vatican regarded these incidents as incompatible with the Reich Concordat.

A continuous battle between the Reich and the Holy See as to whether or not the Concordat extended to Austria had begun some time before. In August 1941, State Secretary Weizsaecker relayed his government's opinion about this question to the Vatican. He pointed out that the Concordat extended only to the Reich as it existed in 1933 when they ratified the document. Weizsaecker emphasized that this did not include Austria, the Sudetenland, the Government General, or any other areas not in the Reich at that time. The Vatican never accepted this decision and continued to try to gain concessions in the Incorporated Territories on the grounds of the Concordat.

Germany's attack on Russia in June 1941 caused new problems for the Reich. One problem was the necessity of sustaining the morale of the troops and civilian population of Germany and the outlying districts. Of course, this demand meant that the Reich must include the Catholics in its plans. From September 1941 to February 1942, Hitler followed a course of restraint toward the Vatican. Germany's definitive decree

<sup>3</sup>NCA, VIII, 250.

of the exclusion of Concordat provisions in areas adjacent to the Reich was tempered by the Fuehrer. His support of this exclusion was moderated by his belief that "the main thing is to be clever in this matter and not to look for a struggle where it can be avoided."<sup>4</sup>

Hitler openly blamed the persecution of the Church on staunch Party members. In September 1941, he ordered Martin Bormann to stop his campaign against the Church in order to boost the morale of Catholics in the German domain.<sup>5</sup> The Fuehrer's table talks with such men as Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, and Goebbels indicated that he had not given up his idea to eliminate the Catholic religion in the German areas completely. However, the Fuehrer stated that he could not cope with the Church at this time. He also noted that he would not "be able to go on evading the religious problem much longer."<sup>6</sup>

Hitler's determination to postpone a final solution of the religious problem was weakened by Bormann. On May 10, 1941, Rudolf Hess, head of the Party Chancellery, flew to Scotland for unknown reasons. Bormann replaced Hess and began to draw the lines of internal administration tightly around him. His unrelenting anti-Vatican beliefs and ability to gain a position to

<sup>4</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 49.

<sup>5</sup>Papen, 481-82.

<sup>6</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 117, 247.



influence Hitler's actions was determinant of future Reich policy toward the Holy See. Before the end of the year, Bormann became second only to Hitler in leadership of the Nazi Party.

On February 21, 1942, Bergen began a drive to ease tensions between the Reich and the Vatican. His analytical report of Reich-Vatican relations asked for a "radical, all-embracing solution" to all questions outstanding with the Vatican. To achieve this end, Bergen stated that he wanted the National Socialist leaders to withdraw measures that hindered such a solution.<sup>7</sup> Goebbels entertained thoughts along the same line. He believed that the Party enforced too strong a policy against the Church. This made it too easy for the Catholic hierarchy to attack the State.<sup>8</sup>

Influenced by Bormann, Hitler took no notice of these observations. The Fuehrer's conversations of this period reflected the policy of the highest Party leaders. In April, he reiterated statements reminiscent of the early years of co-ordination of the Catholic Church. He spoke of the priest's attempts to undermine the policy of the Nazi Party. He thought it scandalous that the Reich should subsidize the Church with 900 million

<sup>7</sup>Friedlaender, 158-59.

<sup>8</sup>Goebbels, 141.

marks annually when the money could be spent for farms to be given to soldiers who wanted to retire into agricultural service. The Fuehrer even wanted to reduce the subsidy to fifty millions annually to be paid directly to the "princes of the Church." In this way, he thought they could be bought off and would wholeheartedly support the Reich.<sup>9</sup> Hitler had adopted the hard-line Party stand.

Hitler's order of June 22, 1942, severed Reich relations with the Vatican in all areas except the Germany of 1933. The severance was handled in a tactful but complicated manner. The Vatican had already refused to recognize any political change in territory after September of 1939.<sup>10</sup> From the Reich's point of view, the Holy See had therefore automatically excluded itself from any official connection with these territories. Since the Reich controlled these areas, it meant that there could be no relations concerning them between the Reich and the Vatican. The Fuehrer now wanted to expand this state of affairs to include the

<sup>9</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 332-33.

<sup>10</sup>Friedlaender, 160-61. Telegram from Weizsaecker to Bergen on June 22, 1942. On January 18, 1942, the Vatican had sent a note informing Berlin that it would not recognize any territory taken by German aggression after September of 1939. This note was not found in the Wilhelmstrasse files. Again, the Holy See's refusal to release its documents for this period makes it impossible to confirm this assertion.

regions annexed before September 1939. This would include Austria, the Sudetenland, and Bohemia-Moravia.

Since September 1939 was the date of the Polish invasion, and Hitler wanted to include the territories annexed before that date, relations would be non-existent in any new land under German control. The order further pointed out that the only competent German authorities in this area would be the appropriate local representative of the Reich. The only competent Church authority would be the local representative of the Church.

The aim was to by-pass the Vatican completely. Thus, the Party Chancellery, which had taken over the Reich's political affairs, would have no political or diplomatic links with the Vatican. The only contact would occur through the now moribund Ministry for Foreign Affairs.<sup>11</sup> The Fuehrer thought that an answer to any Vatican note would be an admission of Vatican rights in German issues and an encouragement for it to maintain official contact with Germany.<sup>12</sup> Communications between the two powers rapidly tapered off.

<sup>11</sup>Friedlaender, 160-61. Hitler, Conversations, 448. Friedlaender calls Hitler's action of June 22 an "inexplicable decision." It is apparent that the decision was influenced by the Party and Germany's military victories during this period.

<sup>12</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 450. Weizsaecker emphasized that in answering notes from the Vatican concerning the outside territories "officials should not refer to the Fuehrer's decision but should simply draw attention to the note from the Curia of January

By July, Hitler began formulating plans to negate the Reich Concordat altogether. If this happened, and the Fuehrer decided to recall the present German representatives to the Holy See, they would never be replaced.<sup>13</sup> He also found pleasure in the manner by which he withdrew himself from personal contact with the Vatican by shunning the Papal Nuncio in Berlin.<sup>14</sup>

During this period, German conquest on the Eastern Front reached its height. This placed the Reich in a position to make demands upon the Holy See and to insist that they be carried out. But from October to December, the military superiority of Germany decreased. In October, the British assaulted El Alamein. The next month, an Anglo-American invasion force launched a three-pronged attack on North Africa. In December, the Russians

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18, 1942, stating that, for the duration of the war, the Curia did not intend to recognize territorial changes which had taken place in the interim; and that they should represent the refusal to negotiate on the questions raised as a logical consequence of that note. Church representatives of the regions outside the frontiers of the old Reich had no authority to negotiate as representatives of the Vatican with the local German authorities." See: Friedlaender, 162. The author paraphrased the remainder of Weizsaecker's telegram to Bergen (June 22, 1942) here.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 447.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 450. Hitler used various ruses to avoid Nuncio Orsenigo's pointed questions. He would amiably ask about the Pope's health, quickly turn to greet the rest of the diplomatic corps, or "fob him off on Lammers instead." This is Hans Lammers, Chief of the Reich Chancellery.

broke through at Stalingrad. The German attitude toward the Vatican temporarily became more tolerant.

Vatican officials sensed the changed atmosphere and retaliated with demands of their own. In October, Maglione instructed Bergen to warn the German government that if the situation worsened the Holy See "would find itself compelled to emerge from the attitude of reserve which it has so far maintained, . . ." <sup>15</sup> The Papal warning was directly related to Hitler's June 22 severance of relations with the Vatican in the Incorporated Territories. The Vatican made it clear that if Germany made further demands in these areas, the Holy See would begin making public protests against the Reich. A letter from the Archbishop of Breslau to the Papal Secretary of State placed the blame for the Reich's policy on the National Socialist Party. Now, the Vatican looked to Hitler and the Foreign Ministry to reverse this policy.

With military reversals plaguing Germany, it looked as though Hitler would relent and allow the Catholic Church more freedom of action. The Fuehrer realized the heightened prestige of the Church at this time. He told Weizsaecker that the Pope was definitely the strongest man in Rome. <sup>16</sup> Although the official line still ignored

<sup>15</sup>Friedlaender, 165-66.

<sup>16</sup>Weizsaecker, 284. The Fuehrer respected the power of the Pope much more than that of either Mussolini or the Italian King.

the Holy See, it was tempered by an easing of persecution of Catholics. Bormann issued orders to avoid "petty annoyance" of the Church.<sup>17</sup> Goebbels adopted tactics of "going easy on the church question" and treated requests by the Pope accordingly. Hitler heartily approved of his action.<sup>18</sup> By March 1943, Hitler wanted to achieve a covert truce with all churches. The truce would include a cessation of attacks on religion and tolerate legal procedures against the clergy only upon express authorization, and then only against individuals rather than either Church as an institution.<sup>19</sup>

Hitler's desire to achieve a covert truce never went into effect. The most outstanding reason for the failure was the appointment, in April, of Martin Bormann as Secretary to the Fuehrer. Bormann now decided to whom the Fuehrer should talk, what he should read, and what instructions he should send out. Ernst Kaltenbrunner,<sup>20</sup> who had just succeeded Heydrich as Chief of the Reich Security Main Office, attempted to implement Hitler's policy of restraint toward the churches. In fact, he wished to make it especially moderate in regard to the

<sup>17</sup>Lewy, 254.

<sup>18</sup>Goebbels, 285.

<sup>19</sup>TMWC, XI, 287.

<sup>20</sup>Ernst Kaltenbrunner (1903-1946): Austrian Nazi; Commander of S.S. in Austria, 1933-34; S.S. and Police

Vatican. Bormann, acting in concert with Heinrich Himmler, not only blocked Kaltenbrunner's efforts but opposed Hitler's policy and urged a continued fight with the Church.<sup>21</sup> Wilhelm Hottl, an advisor to the Reich on Vatican affairs, experienced the same set-back as did Kaltenbrunner. He wanted to make the government's policy toward the Holy See more lenient so that it could be used as a peace negotiator should the occasion arise. His idea came to nothing and Bormann placed him under surveillance.<sup>22</sup>

In April, another appointment rivalled Bormann's in importance. Ernst von Weizsaecker was sent to the Holy See to replace Bergen as Ambassador. The Pope and the Papal Secretary of State were surprised and upset. Bergen had done a good job for both powers in this capacity. His reports were reliable, fair, and not often influenced by the emotions of either side. Originally, Hitler had opposed this change.<sup>23</sup> However, Weizsaecker

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Leader of Austria and Chief of Security in Seyss-Inquart government, 1939; Chief of the Security Police and S.D., Chief of the Reich Security Main Office, 1943-May 1945.

<sup>21</sup>TMWC, XI, 288.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., XI, 238.

<sup>23</sup>Weizsaecker, 276-77. Weizsaecker thought that the Party leaders regarded him as a neutral. Hitler, at first, surely thought that Weizsaecker was prone to encourage Vatican interests. At any rate, in April of 1943, the new Ambassador pointed out that the Reich leaders "did not by any means trust our old diplomatic personnel."

had been asking for this post for over a year and his closeness to Ribbentrop resulted in his appointment. When taking leave of the Fuehrer, Weizsaecker outlined his plan as: "'Mutual non-intervention, no discussions on fundamentals, no quarrels.'"<sup>24</sup> Hitler agreed.

Germany had won another political victory over the Vatican. Bormann, with or without the consent of Hitler, now directed a National Socialist campaign to keep the Church from regaining anything it had lost in the previous years. More importantly, Hitler's insistence of June 22, 1942 that the Vatican have no authority in the Incorporated Territories now became a reality.<sup>25</sup> The Reich had gained every point proposed by Hitler at that time. Diplomatic relations between the Reich and the Holy See were limited to the "old Reich" only. Austria, the Sudetenland, Bohemia-Moravia, and all the Western areas were included with the regions taken by Germany since September 1939. Germany recognized no Vatican authority in any of them.

The warning that the Vatican had given the Reich about the Incorporated Territories in October 1942, was

<sup>24</sup>Weizsaecker, 284.

<sup>25</sup>Rolf Hochhuth theorizes that Hitler refused to give the Church authority in the incorporated territories because he hoped to blackmail the Vatican into recognition of the new borders. Rolf Hochhuth, The Deputy (New York, 1964), 295. Hereafter cited as Hochhuth.



now regarded as a hollow threat. The Holy See had failed to make any public protest concerning this area. A directive sent to Bergen by Ribbentrop earlier in the year clearly outlined Germany's present feeling toward the Vatican about negotiations in these territories:

. . . It seems that the Vatican, too, had not deemed it appropriate to translate into deeds the statements it made then because no indication has come to my knowledge of any attempt on the part of the Vatican to stir up feeling against us by claiming that there has been any deliberate sharpening of our attitude towards the Catholic Church. . . . If the Vatican wishes to see a sharpening of tension in the fact of our having limited diplomatic discussions with the Vatican to questions relating to the old Reich, then the Vatican itself has brought about this state of affairs by refusing . . . to recognize territorial changes that have occurred in recent years. The Government of the Reich has done nothing more than to draw the appropriate conclusions from this attitude on the part of the Vatican. . . . However, should the Vatican, for its part, threaten to undertake, or perhaps carry out, a political or propaganda campaign against Germany, the Government of the Reich would naturally be compelled to react accordingly.<sup>26</sup>

## II

Further problems arose in the Incorporated Territories because of Poland. Reich decrees often included all of Poland rather than either the annexed area or the Government General alone. Again, the inclusion of annexed Poland in the same category as Austria, the Sudetenland,

<sup>26</sup>Friedlaender, 167-68. Telegram from Ribbentrop to Bergen, January 13, 1943.

and Bohemia-Moravia caused confusion. Poland itself created a situation unique to the Incorporated Territories.

Germany intended to establish Poland as an integral part of its New Order. The New Order, as relative to Eastern Europe, was conceived of as early as November 5, 1937, when Hitler outlined his plans for "living space" to Goering and other military leaders in what is called the Hossbach Document.<sup>26</sup> The Reich planned to exploit Poland's natural resources and resettle the inhabitants in an effort to "Germanize" this area. The western area annexed to Germany underwent the process first. The Government General was to be used as a refuge for displaced persons, that is, persons who could not quickly be absorbed into the Reich or placed under controls sufficient enough to "Germanize" them in their original location.

In the second phase, the Reich subjected the Government General to the same measures. Germany attempted to eliminate the intellectual elite, including the clergy, to assure lowered resistance to Reich policies. Further measures provided for the pillage of public and private property in Poland to increase assets

<sup>26</sup>Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, German Occupation of Poland (New York, n.d.), 4. Hereafter cited as German Occupation.

necessary for the war effort. Various laws pertaining to rates and taxes, exploitation of labor, and property emitted from the Reich over the years following the invasion of Poland.<sup>27</sup> Polish inhabitants not capable of making a personal contribution to the war effort were exploited for their labor ability. The Reich considered this area as a "territory accessory to the Reich" with a status similar to a colonial possession.<sup>28</sup>

The Vatican found Hitler's concept of a New Order repugnant. Pope Pius XII worried about Axis domination of Europe because of it and believed that no new world order could be established without "superhuman wisdom to light up the way. . . ." <sup>29</sup> With Germany in mind, he thought that those who try to set up a new order prepare the way for destruction of the people they allegedly serve and do so by the exploitation of human life. By December 23, 1939, Pius XII had violently criticized German persecution of the Church and accepted President Roosevelt's appointment of Myron C. Taylor as his personal representative to the Holy See.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup>German Occupation, 8-9. The numerous laws instituted in Poland are well outlined in this work.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>29</sup>Principles, 749; Cianfarra, 256.

<sup>30</sup>Germany never believed that Roosevelt wanted to establish close co-operation with the Vatican. The Reich thought it a tactical move for the upcoming elections. See: DGFP, VII, 579-80.

One of the Pope's Christmas addresses had enumerated the factors necessary for a reconciliation, but Germany was not ready, and Goebbels concealed the speech from the public.<sup>31</sup> The Pope placed the responsibility for the German-Polish war on Germany and observed that the uncompromising attitude of the Reich made it impossible to improve relations with Germany.<sup>32</sup>

During the winter of 1939-40, when little fighting took place in Europe, the Vatican took the leadership in seeking peace. At this time, the German Opposition again negotiated with the Vatican in an effort to achieve peace for Germany.<sup>33</sup> In November 1939, Admiral Canaris had transferred his political intelligence network to the Vatican. The Abwehr, a counter-intelligence branch of the OKW, did not have the authority to delve into political intelligence, and the Vatican provided a safer refuge for this operation. Canaris then sent Joseph Mueller, the liaison for the Opposition's warning to the Low

<sup>31</sup>Weizsaecker, 219; Friedlaender, 39-41.

<sup>32</sup>Ciano, Diaries, 184.

<sup>33</sup>It must be remembered that the Opposition did not want to promote peace for the sake of making Germany lose the war but to save the nation from destruction and the suppressive policies of Hitler. They negotiated through the Vatican in an effort to get a guarantee from Britain that it would not mete out a harsh peace if the Army revolted against Hitler. A revolt would cause confusion and make Germany vulnerable to occupation.

Countries, to make contact with the Pope.<sup>34</sup> Negotiations went on from November 1939 to the beginning of February 1940. Mueller not only kept the Vatican informed of atrocities committed in Poland but collaborated with his old friend Father Robert Leiber. Leiber was the Secretary to the Pope, and the two began work on a peace proposal, the "X-report," to be presented to the Allies.

The Vatican drafted the document and set forth the basis for negotiations. Various accounts of the contents of the "X-report" do not agree, but the underlying theme is clear. The Nazis were to be eliminated from the government, and Britain promised not to take advantage of an internal political crisis should one arise. There would be a solution of the Eastern territorial problems favorable to Germany. This meant that Austria and the Sudetenland would remain annexed to Germany while Poland, and this point is vague, would simply remain in the German sphere.

Finally, there would have to be a German avowal of Christian morality, and the preliminaries to a peace and armistice agreement could not be negotiated directly.

<sup>34</sup> Colvin, 98. Joseph Mueller is just as enigmatic of a character as is Canaris. He was a Munich lawyer brought into the Opposition for the express purpose of making contact with the Vatican. This attempt for peace was called "Operation X," and Mueller was the confidential agent known only as "X". His name is mentioned in none of the reports. See: Hassell, 125 fn.; Ritter, 147.

but only through the Holy See.<sup>35</sup> Inclusion of the Vatican placed the entire plan on an official diplomatic basis. Thus, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Halifax, and the British Ambassador to the Holy See negotiated with the Opposition.<sup>36</sup>

Generals Hans Oster and Ludwig Beck offered the document to Ulrich von Hassell, the ex-Ambassador to Italy, and asked that he give it to General Franz Halder, the Chief of the Army General Staff. Halder refused to see Hassell and the job of explaining such a treasonous overture fell to General Georg Thomas. Halder studied the "X-report," conferred with Beck, and then gave it to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Field Marshal Walter von Brauchitsch.<sup>37</sup> Here the proposal failed. Brauchitsch was mentally and spiritually unable to break from his Prussian heritage and give the full support of the Army to such a plan. Brauchitsch said that the younger officers and troops could not be relied upon to take action against the Fuehrer because they rejoiced in his Polish victories.<sup>38</sup> Without the Army no plot to overthrow the

<sup>35</sup>Hassell, 125; Ritter, 162; Jacques de Launay, Secret Diplomacy of World War II (New York, 1963), 19-20. Hereafter cited as De Launay. The full account of the course of these negotiations fell into the hands of the Gestapo in September 1941. It has not been seen since.

<sup>36</sup>Ritter, 162.

<sup>37</sup>Hassell, 125-26, 136; Colvin, 100; De Launay, 19-20.

<sup>38</sup>Colvin, 100; Ritter, 163-64.

regime could be successful. The German Opposition's feeling that the Vatican could help them to return Germany to peace with a minimum of retribution from the Allies again met defeat.

Meanwhile, the S.S. had begun to solve the Polish problem by executing the intelligentsia. The clergy was the first to go. As early as September 21, 1939, Cardinal Hlond, the Primate of Poland, personally informed Pope Pius XII of the atrocities. He told of the murder of priests, the sacking of churches, the sending of the clergy to concentration camps, and the use of the Church of the Lazarist Fathers for Gestapo organized orgies with Polish girls. Hlond also referred to the plight of the civilian population which consisted of the breaking up of families, brutal beatings, and indecent gynecological examinations of women who might be hiding valuables. Those who could not be processed in annexed Poland were sent to the Government General where conditions were worse. Hitler sent a sharp protest to the Vatican when it released excerpts of the report.<sup>39</sup>

In January 1940, Cardinal Hlond added a supplement to bring his report up to date. The new report offered detailed information concerning the murder, deportation, and ill-treatment of priests in Poland.<sup>40</sup> The Vatican

<sup>39</sup>Cianfarra, 193-97.

<sup>40</sup>NCA, V, 1078.

radio also released excerpts of this report. By January 29, Ambassador Bergen had delivered another sharp protest from the German government. The Papal Secretary of State ordered an immediate suspension of the broadcasts.<sup>41</sup>

Earlier in January, the Reich had begun to take action to relieve the Vatican's abhorrence of communism. Pressure for this decision came from the Vatican, Italy, and Russia as a result of Germany's close relationship with the Soviets. Political reports to the Reich indicated that the Italians had an aversion to National Socialism because it disregarded the Catholic apprehension about communism. The Italian Foreign Minister was quite explicit on this point.<sup>42</sup>

Italy also conducted diplomatic activity to protect the Balkans from communist infiltration because it feared the fall of Rumania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia. This would place Russia next to Italian held Albania and the Adriatic Sea. The result was an Italo-Vatican front based on the common bond of dread of communism. Still, Italy remained in the Axis with Germany. This caused Russian worries about Italo-German relations because of

<sup>41</sup>Lewy, 246. Incidents such as this, when the Vatican, for no apparent reason, yielded to German demands soon gave way to beliefs that the Vatican was "fence-sitting." The Holy See did not seem to take a firm stand on the many inhumane circumstances that arose. Many observers began to think that Pius XII was biding his time so that he could join the victors, regardless of who they might be.

<sup>42</sup>DGFP, VII, 612; Ciano, Diaries, 151.



the Vatican's stand on communism and its influence in Italy. Russia so informed the Reich.<sup>43</sup>

Hans Georg von Mackensen, Ambassador to Italy, brought the problem to the attention of the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The situation was so grave that Weizsaecker passed the information on to Ribbentrop.<sup>44</sup> The Foreign Minister watched the Vatican's efforts to degrade the German partnership with Russia very attentively and pleaded his case for an understanding with the Holy See to Hitler. The Fuehrer refused to listen because of problems with the Church in Austria and lingering disapproval of the Vatican peace proposals at the time of the Polish invasion.

Ribbentrop concluded that the dilemma stemmed from the Reich's propaganda policy in Italy which boasted about German agreements with Russia. He worked out a "special solution" for Italy. A more forceful propaganda program to play down Germany's friendship with Russia was introduced to placate Italy and the Vatican.<sup>45</sup>

Germany's new propaganda policy failed to impress the Vatican.<sup>46</sup> However, the campaign helped bring Italy

<sup>43</sup>DGFP, VII, 712. Russia did not want its Allies quarreling among themselves.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 652-55.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 742-47.

<sup>46</sup>The decision to introduce a propaganda policy in Italy that strongly played down Germany's closeness

fully back into the German fold. Hitler met with Mussolini on the Brenner Pass in March, and Italy joined Germany in the war in the West a few months later. In May 1940, Germany invaded the Low Countries, and the attention of Vatican officials turned to that arena.

Regardless of the propaganda campaign, the Reich did not relax its efforts to make Poland a purely German territory in the months preceding May 1940. On March 1, Germany extended its military system to the annexed portion of Poland. A week later, Reich Minister for Church Affairs Kerrl approved Himmler's request that Polish nationals attend special segregated church services. Kerrl warned that the segregation of Poles from Germans would be opposed by the Vatican. To deter this probability, he "made appropriate state police measures to deal with any conduct of the clergy which is contrary to these principles."<sup>47</sup> This meant forceful suppression of any objections.

In the first months of 1941, the Reich decreed that no religious associations in the Incorporated Territories would be recognized as corporations by public law. The decree further established that no collections

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to Russia occurred in January 1940. Later that year, in March, Ribbentrop did indeed placate the Vatican by making a trip to Rome to see the Pope and Mussolini.

<sup>47</sup> NCA, VIII, 259, 267-68.

could be made in favor of the Church without Reich permission.<sup>48</sup> By mid-summer, the Reich had accepted Governor General Hans Frank's request that the Vatican be stopped from making appointments to high Church offices. Germany thought the Vatican was taking advantage of the deficiencies of the Reich Concordat in these instances and warned the Holy See that such actions must be stopped.<sup>49</sup>

Further developments revolved around Himmler's need for land in Poland so that he could resettle the German oriented Poles in certain areas while using other land to support the less promising Poles acting in a labor capacity. In May 1941, the Foreign Ministry informed Nuncio Orsenigo that Catholic lands would be taken over by the State under directions issued for the confiscation of property "whose administration was predominantly influenced by members of the former Polish state, . . . ."<sup>50</sup> Since there had always been such close connections between the Catholic Church and the Polish people, Germany considered that the Church qualified under this rule.

The next month, Germany invaded Russia. Just as Hitler had ordered Bormann to stop his Austrian

<sup>48</sup>NCA, V, 1024.

<sup>49</sup>DGFP, XIII, 211-12.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., XII, 915-16.

anti-Church campaign to prepare that country for the war effort, he now directed the head of the Party Chancellery to quit taking Church property in the East without the Fuehrer's personal permission.<sup>51</sup> This, too, was a measure to help boost the morale of the Catholic population in an attempt to aid the war effort. Now, an uneasy truce existed between Germany and the Vatican.<sup>52</sup>

On June 6, 1941, Martin Bormann caused a predicament that hindered this policy and cost the Reich a great loss of prestige with the Catholics of foreign countries. Bormann wrote a circular to be sent to all Reich district leaders. He clearly stated that National Socialist and Christian concepts were absolutely irreconcilable. He also attributed "business shamelessness" or "naivete" to the belief that prayers could influence a world force that was concerned with the fate of every single being on earth.<sup>53</sup>

Bormann said that the Church's influence limited the Fuehrer and the NSDAP in their leadership of the people and must be eliminated.<sup>54</sup> Although he intended that the circular be secret, Catholic sources reproduced

<sup>51</sup>DGFP, XIII, 536.

<sup>52</sup>Lewy, 253-54.

<sup>53</sup>NCA, VI, 1035-36.

<sup>54</sup>Toynbee, Hitler's Europe, 36.

it in great quantities and distributed the message throughout the world.<sup>55</sup> Only Bormann's esteemed position as head of the Party Chancellery saved him from the damning criticism of other Reich leaders. Bormann managed to shroud the Reich in silence whenever the subject came up. Vatican protests never received answers.

After publication of the circular, Clemens von Galen, Bishop of Muenster, made numerous speeches that came close to causing a breach between Germany and the Vatican. Although the Vatican gave no open support to his actions, the Bishop proceeded with the blessing of the Fulda Bishops' Conference which proposed to sponsor a line of increasingly sharp opposition to the Reich. In July and early August 1941, Galen harshly attacked the Gestapo for closing several Jesuit houses and many convents. He called Gestapo officials "thieves and robbers." Then, amid sermons against German persecution of the Church, he denounced the Reich government for its use of euthanasia to rid the country of feeblemindedness. Bishop Galen also claimed that the Reich killed its wounded soldiers because they were no longer productive to the State.<sup>56</sup>

German officials reacted in varying ways, but the concensus was that drastic measures must be taken against

<sup>55</sup>NCA, VI, 1035-46; Goebbels, 98.

<sup>56</sup>NCA, VI, 406-7; Hassell, 210.

the Bishop. Himmler viewed the attack as a violation of State security and asked that Galen be shot or disposed of by some other suitable means.<sup>57</sup> A Division Director for Propaganda suggested that Bormann ask the Fuehrer "whether the camouflage of Euthanasia thus far in practice ought to be modified" so a defense against Galen's claims could be prepared. Walter Tiessler, Leader for National Socialist Propaganda, did not think that such an enlightenment campaign would be sufficient and demanded that Galen be hanged.<sup>58</sup> Bormann agreed with Tiessler and wanted an open breach with the Vatican. The matter rested on what Hitler would instruct Bormann to do.

Goebbels and Hitler acted more rationally than anyone else in this instance. Both realized the necessity of Catholic co-operation in furthering the war effort. Goebbels feared that drastic measures against Galen would alienate the population of Muenster, if not all of Westphalia. The Propaganda Minister wanted to "preserve appearances" and try to steer the Church according to the interests of the State. The Church, he felt, could be dealt with after the war.<sup>59</sup> In this belief, the Party Chancellery violently opposed Goebbels. Nevertheless, Hitler supported Goebbels rather than Bormann.

<sup>57</sup>Hassell, 210.

<sup>58</sup>NCA, VI, 405-6.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 408.

The Fuehrer settled the matter by calling Bormann in and "quite in line with tried-and-tested procedures, held it to be tactically correct to retreat a few steps for the present, . . ." <sup>60</sup> Hitler believed that the attitude of Galen presented just one more reason why the Concordat should be terminated, but he thought it best to act "shrewdly" and bide his time. On orders from Hitler, the Reich did not counter Bishop Galen's speeches, but the Fuehrer reiterated his belief that all problems with the Catholic Church could be solved with impunity after the war, and said that he would extract retribution from Galen "to the last farthing." <sup>61</sup>

Reich officials now increased the machinery to deal with political Catholicism. Most executive and intelligence offices concerned with the Vatican and the Catholic Church in its international role originally fell under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Office for the Security of the Reich. In late 1939, this agency set up Section IV B I to deal with political Catholicism.

In October 1941, a new intelligence service emerged to deal with the political Church. Reinhard Heydrich, Chief of the Reich Security Main Office, undertook the formation of a group of "Church Specialists"

<sup>60</sup>Hassell, 210.

<sup>61</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 74, 451.

to be organized within the State Police system. They were to keep the "opposition" under constant observation and to undertake the study and treatment of the Catholic Church in its struggle with the State.<sup>62</sup>

The specialists sought to learn the identities of all Catholic ecclesiastics in Reich territories, in order to find which were employed as "agents" of the Vatican. Heydrich also demanded the names of ecclesiastics of German origin who worked in important posts at the Vatican.<sup>63</sup> Presumably, he intended to recruit them for counter-intelligence work against the Holy See. Having stemmed the opposite ends of communications between the Vatican and its local hierarchy, Heydrich intended to eliminate the middlemen. The specialists were to discover who the papal couriers between the bishops and the Vatican were and stop this method of reporting.<sup>64</sup>

Throughout 1941, the outlawing of religious associations and the confiscation of Church property in Poland continued. Weizsaecker told Nuncio Orsenigo that he "would hardly have the hope of prevailing" against Germany in the incorporated eastern territories because he believed in canon law as a legal theory. The

<sup>62</sup>NCA, IV, 422.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 424.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 423.



State Secretary pointed out that canon law was void where no contractual agreement with the State existed.<sup>65</sup>

The Catholic Church lost all of its corporative legal rights with the result that most of its property in annexed Poland reverted to the Reich controlled "Roman Catholic Church of German Nationality in the Reichsgau Wartheland."<sup>66</sup> Germany informed the Vatican that it had transferred the Church's property to "a juridical person of a private character" so that it could be recognized as non-Polish property. If it were non-Polish, the Reich could not confiscate under the present laws. However, by November, Secretary of State Maglione regarded the Polish property as lost.<sup>67</sup>

Germany continued to impose new measures in Poland to win back the racial Germans and their children who had been "Polandized" by the Catholic Church. The adults had to join associations sponsored by the NSDAP, and the children had to enroll in the Hitler youth.<sup>68</sup> Secretary Maglione and Nuncio Orsenigo repeatedly presented their grievances to the Foreign Ministry. The

<sup>65</sup> DGFP, XIII, 415.

<sup>66</sup> NCA, V, 1024-25. The Reichsgau Wartheland is annexed Poland only.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 1025.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., VII, 110-12.

Vatican also still insisted upon the return of the confiscated land, but now added restoration of freedom of religion to its pleas. All complaints by the Vatican met with delaying tactics from the Reich.

Finally, on January 18, 1942, the Vatican took advantage of an opportunity to enforce its rights. Germany had earlier wanted the Holy See to place only German priests, or at least priests of German origin, in the Sees in Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland. Now the government stated that because of the importance of conferring the high offices of the Roman Catholic Church, it must demand its rights under Article 14 of the Reich Concordat.<sup>69</sup> This article allowed Germany to ascertain that "no objections of a general political nature exist" before the Vatican appointed Archbishops, Coadjutors, or Praelates Nullius.<sup>70</sup>

The Reich also wanted to extend this right to include Apostolic Administrators and Vicar Capitulars who administered these offices beyond a reasonable time. Germany requested that an "appropriate communication" be sent to the government before any of these offices were filled "anywhere in the entire new territory of

<sup>69</sup>This is before Hitler severed relations with the Vatican concerning the outside territories. See: Chapter V, 114.

<sup>70</sup>See Appendix A, 188.

the Reich."<sup>71</sup> Bergen's note made it clear that this would include the Government General, and it was later determined that Austria fell into this classification.

Although Germany did not ask for any great concession from the Vatican, the Holy See responded with a caustic denial of the request. It gave numerous reasons why the Church could not grant Germany's wishes. First, the Reich had initiated measures and acts in Germany, the occupied territories, and the annexed countries which violated the rights of the Church and the existing Concordats.<sup>72</sup>

Secondly, the Roman Catholic Church was founded by Christ which makes the Church supreme in its jurisdiction by virtue of divine right. It then follows, the denial explained, that a state's right to influence episcopal appointments is a privilege granted by the Vatican and does not establish a specific right for the civil authority. Therefore, the right of the government to make objections of a political nature is a "pure concession" founded on the Reich Concordat, and Article 14 expressly limited this concession to Archbishops,

<sup>71</sup>NCA, V, 1037-38.

<sup>72</sup>The Reich held firm to the opinion that the Reich Concordat did not extend to the outside territories. The Vatican continued to insist that it did, and that the Concordats with Prussia, Baden, and Bavaria still existed as contractual obligations.

Coadjutors, and Praelates Nullius.<sup>73</sup>

Finally, the argument, as expressed in the German request, that the choice of a candidate for these offices contributes to the good of the State and thus has an interest for the government is not a sufficient reason for the State to intervene.<sup>74</sup> Certainly, the Vatican got great satisfaction from issuing this long and sharply worded refusal, but it also strengthened the Reich's decision to sever relations with the Vatican in the outside territories.<sup>75</sup> In June 1942, Orsenigo reported that the government had not responded to the denial, but that Vatican communications relating to the new territories were "submitted to unusual delays" or lost in the "bureaucratic procedure" of the Reich.<sup>76</sup>

In October 1942, the religious situation in Poland reached its lowest point. Maglione sent a specific list of tragic conditions faced by Polish Catholics to the German Embassy. He noted that the episcopate had been almost entirely eliminated, the secular and regular clergy had been deported and exiled to the point that they were absolutely inadequate, education of clerics

<sup>73</sup>NCA, V, 1011-13.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 1011.

<sup>75</sup>This occurred on June 22, 1942, in communications relevant to Austria. See Chapter V, 114.

<sup>76</sup>NCA, V, 1016-17.

was forbidden, and, among numerous other complaints, Catholic intellectual and charitable institutions had been destroyed.<sup>77</sup> But the Vatican could no longer communicate through the German Embassy to the Holy See because its chain of command came directly through the Foreign Ministry. The Foreign Office had lost whatever authority it may have had to the Party Chancellery and now had no control of German policy.

German circumvention of the Vatican to negotiate only with the local hierarchy proved successful in Austria. The same condition now prevailed in Poland. Having received no response from the Reich government, Maglione resorted to the use of local Vatican representatives to carry out the policy of the Holy See. Nuncio Orsenigo had earlier requested that interned Polish priests be allowed to emigrate to America and neutral countries in Europe. Germany refused this request but collected them all in the one camp of Dachau and promised that they would be treated better in the future.<sup>78</sup> The Reich feared that emigrating priests would spread news of the conditions in Poland which would be detrimental to the government and the Party.<sup>79</sup>

Maglione now wrote to the Archbishop of Breslau,

<sup>77</sup>NCA, V, 1017-18.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 1030.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 1036.

Adolf Cardinal Bertram. He requested that Bertram intervene in favor of the priests at Dachau and work toward securing the right for Polish Catholics to profess their faith without hindrance. Bertram replied that he had been working toward this goal all along and, in his capacity "as spokesman for all the hierarchy," had even sent a formal document to the Fuehrer. All such attempts had been met with silence.<sup>80</sup>

On December 7, 1941, Cardinal Bertram gave his views as to why this was so. He stated that all communications from the Vatican, the bishops, and himself were intercepted by the Party Chancellery and the S.S. These two agencies now executed the supreme power in directing the Reich's Church policy. Even attempts to correspond with the Fuehrer and the Supreme Office for the Security of the Reich met with negative replies because of this interference.<sup>81</sup>

On March 2, 1943, the Reich's refusal to reply to Vatican complaints about conditions in Poland culminated in a harshly worded letter from the Vatican to Ribbentrop.

<sup>80</sup> NCA, V, 1031. It is interesting to note Hassell's diary entry for November 1, 1941. He thought of Bertram as a pacifist who led the majority of the German episcopate. Hassell stated that: "People such as Bertram will get nowhere at all with people such as Hitler and Himmler." Thus, Hassell believed that the Church should conduct a "political" struggle with the Reich rather than a "religious" one.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 1032-33.

The Holy See took this opportunity to unleash all of its hostility at one time. Maglione sent the letter and stated that during the occupation of Poland members of the secular clergy were shot while hundreds more were imprisoned. He observed that while priests from annexed Poland were detained in Dachau, intensified police measures caused the imprisonment and deportation of hundreds more, and of the six bishops residing there, only one remained. He was interned in his own home.<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, the rights of the Catholic Church to education and religious instruction of youth was usurped by Germany, and Catholic schools were closed.<sup>83</sup> The Vatican also denounced the segregation of Catholics of Polish nationality from those of German nationality because the demand that they attend separate services deprived many of the faithful of religious consolation. Finally, the letter noted that the "temporary" measure of placing nuns in a special concentration camp at Bojanowo was never rescinded.

Even though the Reich had severed relations with the Vatican concerning the outside territories on June 22, 1942, Nuncio Orsenigo was instructed to deliver the letter. Weizsaecker, not knowing that the letter contained demands about Poland, accepted it. Hitler thought

<sup>82</sup>NCA, V, 1018-20.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., 1021.

the Foreign Ministry had violated his order of severance because of "its greed for fields of fresh authority" and left the Ministry to handle the problem in its own way.<sup>84</sup>

Having reviewed the content of the letter, the Foreign Ministry adhered to the established policy for such occasions. Weizsaecker was instructed to give the letter back to Orsenigo with the instructions that it be returned to the Vatican. The reason being that he could not present it to the Reich government as it dealt with matters in which the Holy See did not have territorial competence.<sup>85</sup> Such an action would surely cause a termination of relations between Germany and the Vatican.

The Holy See demanded that Orsenigo deliver the letter, and German policy just as steadfastly demanded that it not be accepted. Weizsaecker and Orsenigo wanted to prevent a rupture of relations and somehow clear themselves of the blame for this precarious situation. Orsenigo wanted an official statement that Weizsaecker had returned the letter to him. Weizsaecker refused

<sup>84</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 448.

<sup>85</sup>Weizsaecker, 282-83. It is still uncertain who made the decision to return the letter to Orsenigo. Weizsaecker indicates that it was Ribbentrop. At Nuremberg, Ribbentrop claimed that he could not recall the document, but under further interrogation remembered "a whole desk full of protests from the Vatican." Ultimately, he decided that Hitler had told him what to do. See: NCA, Supplement B, 1235, 1238-39.



and told Orsenigo that the best thing to do would be to treat the letter as if it had never come into his hands. Orsenigo did as the Foreign Secretary suggested but doubted that he would officially survive this affair.<sup>86</sup> Weizsaecker believed that he had warded off "the evil which the breaking-off of relations would have brought on the thirty-five million German Catholics. . . ." <sup>87</sup>

The Vatican had no intention of letting the matter rest. Maglione instructed Nuncio Orsenigo to inform the Reich, in writing, that the Vatican considered Weizsaecker's act as "not a friendly one" and that it considered the document as having reached its destination. Orsenigo wrote to the Foreign Minister on May 5 and explained that because of the "way in which the transmissal of the message was carried out and the time during which said message was retained, . . ." the Vatican considered it as accepted by the Reich.<sup>88</sup>

Ribbentrop answered the letter of May 5 personally. He denied that he had read the letter of March 2, and stated that Weizsaecker had acted in accord with established Reich policy toward the Vatican. The Foreign

<sup>86</sup>Weizsaecker, 283. Orsenigo feared that he would be recalled to the Vatican. Rolf Hochhuth says that the Nuncio was persona non grata at the Vatican after 1945 so his fears may have been borne out. See: Hochhuth, 296.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>NCA, V, 1042-43.

Minister approved his action and confirmed the Reich's stand that it would engage in no negotiations with the Holy See over the Incorporated Territories. Ribbentrop was careful to point out that such territories included annexed Poland as well as Austria.

He also referred to the Government General as being in this category.<sup>89</sup> This was the first instance in which the Government General was specifically named as an area where the Vatican did not have authority to deal with the government. Ribbentrop also adopted the same solution to the quandary as did Weizsaecker. He told Orsenigo that it would be best for all concerned to regard the letter as non-existent.<sup>90</sup> Here the matter ended.

By the end of May 1943, Germany made it absolutely clear to the Vatican that it would harbor no interference from that institution in regard to the Incorporated Territories. This confirmed the position taken by the Reich in communications relevant to Austria. There could be no doubt that Austria and annexed Poland were considered equally outside the Vatican's sphere of influence and that negotiations could be carried on only between the old Reich and the Vatican. In addition, the Government General was now included in the Incorporated Territories,

<sup>89</sup>NCA, V, 1045.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

at least for purposes of eliminating diplomatic activity with the Holy See. The Reich had once more won a victory over the Vatican by implementing its policies while not losing the support of Catholics within its borders because of a final termination of relations between it and the Holy See.

## III

Hitler's plan to build a new world order included the domination of Russia. Poland and Russia were to be the "great experimental field" in the East.<sup>91</sup> By 1941, Hungary and Rumania had accepted the status of German satellites. German forces crossed these countries and forced Bulgaria to conform. On April 6, 1941, Germany invaded Yugoslavia and Greece. On April 17, Yugoslavia capitulated and Greece, after a heroic resistance to the Italians, followed suit a week later.

In April, Joseph Mueller made another of his now customary trips to the Vatican to pass the word to Britain that Germany intended to attack Russia on June 22, 1941.<sup>92</sup> Such a warning should not have been necessary. Although no one believed the outlandish passages of Mein Kampf, Hitler clearly expressed his belief that it was militarily impossible for Germany to be allied with Russia in a long war with the West. The Fuehrer believed that the Reich could obtain no effective support from Russia because the war would be fought on German soil.<sup>93</sup>

On June 22, 1941, Hitler turned his attention

<sup>91</sup>Hitler quoted in Bullock, 319.

<sup>92</sup>Colvin, 138.

<sup>93</sup>Hitler, Mein Kampf, 659.

from the Battle of Britain to the invasion of Russia. Territory occupied in Russia was generally to be treated the same as the Government General. Germany wanted to use part of the native population for slave labor in industry and agriculture and keep all of the inhabitants completely at the disposal of their overlords. Those of education or position who might form an effective center of opposition were to be exterminated.<sup>94</sup>

On July 17, Hitler noted that as soon as military operations were terminated the Army would yield its administrative capacity to the civil authorities. Himmler, as Reichsfuehrer S.S., inherited the duty to lay the racial foundations of the New Order in this area. Goering, as Plenipotentiary for the Four-Year Plan, claimed the right to organize the economic exploitation of the territories. To oversee this administrative network, Hitler appointed Alfred Rosenberg "Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories."

Too many departments had competency, and administrative functions overlapped until petty jealousy among the leaders made the operation completely chaotic. In August, the Fuehrer ordered the Army to keep absolutely out of the religious activity of the population,<sup>95</sup> but the authorities never established to whom

<sup>94</sup>Bullock, 696.

<sup>95</sup>DGFP, XIII, 536.

the direction of Church policy belonged.

The German episcopate, again influenced by patriotism, supported the invasion of Russia.<sup>96</sup> The Vatican followed a more ambiguous course. Weizsaecker reported that the Holy See reacted favorably because a German victory would weaken communism.<sup>97</sup> The Vatican radio, wishing not to harm the German effort, eliminated all unfavorable references to the Reich and asked if there were any further complaints from Germany on this point.<sup>98</sup> Further reports informed Berlin that Pius XII had earlier decided that he could no longer remain silent about the severeness of Reich Church policy, but that he refrained from taking appropriate steps because he did not want to hurt Germany's chances of defeating Soviet Russia.<sup>99</sup>

Axis propagandists called the assault on Russia a benefit to the Church and tried to get the Pope to approve the Russian campaign and "even to declare it a holy war or crusade."<sup>100</sup> The Vatican would go no further than stopping its anti-German pronouncements. The papal refusal disappointed Germany and Italy.

<sup>96</sup>Lewy, 230.

<sup>97</sup>Friedlaender, 76.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 77. Minute by Weizsaecker, June 26, 1941.

<sup>99</sup>DGFP, XIII, 489.

<sup>100</sup>Graham, 372.

Although Germany reduced its anti-Catholic campaign in both Austria and Poland at this time, the Holy See adopted no clear position in favor of Germany's invasion of Russia.

In the following months, Germany adopted a more tolerant attitude toward the Catholics in the Reich. Dino Alfieri, ex-Italian Ambassador to the Holy See, told Goebbels that Reich policy against the Catholics caused a definite strain between Germany and Italy and had an "intensely demoralizing effect" on the large number of German Catholic soldiers.<sup>101</sup> Goebbels encouraged Hitler to declare a general truce with the Church. The Reich had been arbitrarily taking the remaining Church property in Germany and, after the invasion of Russia, Hitler wanted to eliminate internal dissension anyway. On July 7, Bormann followed the Fuehrer's orders and told all district leaders to stop confiscating Church property.<sup>102</sup>

Germany entered into only one area of conflict with the Vatican as a direct result of the Russian campaign. On November 11, 1941, Rosenberg denied access to

<sup>101</sup>Dino Alfieri, Dictators Face to Face (New York, 1955), 127-28. This is one of the few sources that detects an increase in persecution of Catholics in the Reich immediately after Germany's invasion of Russia. See page 126.

<sup>102</sup>Friedlaender, 149. Hitler's order to stop the confiscation of Church property in the Reich is one part of the larger order to stop this practice all together. The repercussions are seen in both Austria and Poland.

the recently occupied Russian lands to all Catholic priests with the exception of Army Bishops.<sup>103</sup> The Vatican had hoped that it would be permitted to function in these territories. It wanted to combat communism, and, more importantly, hoped to gain a foothold from which the Orthodox Eastern Church could be united with Rome.

The Vatican attempted to negate Rosenberg's order by securing the aid of Bernardo Attolico, the Italian Ambassador to Germany. Attolico explained to Berlin that the interests of the Church and the Reich were identical in the fight against communism, and that a proper settlement of this question "was the ground on which a rapprochement between the Reich and the Catholic Church could take place."<sup>104</sup> Although Germany had allowed some priests to emigrate to the Russian territories, it now refused to enlarge on this concession.

In December 1941, the Foreign Ministry issued a memorandum to establish Reich policy on this question. The Ministry warned that because of the importance to the Vatican of the unification of the Eastern Orthodox Church with Rome, Nuncio Orsenigo would probably give the matter his special attention. The memorandum stated that the Nuncio should be told that Catholic priests had

<sup>103</sup>Friedlaender, 151.

<sup>104</sup>Quoted in Friedlaender, 151-52.



formerly been allowed to enter occupied Russia by the Army authorities. But, since the Army no longer had competence in this matter, the practice would cease.

The Ministry also pointed out that there were enough Catholic priests in the formerly Russian area to serve the Catholic population adequately.<sup>105</sup> However, Orsenigo should not be told the real reason why Catholic priests would not be admitted. The actual reason was that the Reich did not want the Vatican to have reason to consider the Russian land as a "new territory."<sup>106</sup>

By March 1942, some high-ranking Germans had become convinced that Hitler had no hope of defeating the combined forces of Britain, America, and Russia. Papen sent a representative to inquire through the Vatican about a possible peace with the Allies. Papal Secretary of State Maglione retorted that this was impossible because there was already fear that Joseph Stalin, who demanded a second front, might ally with Hitler again.<sup>107</sup>

During the winter of 1942-43, Hitler lost the

<sup>105</sup>DGFP, XIII, 952-53.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid. It is not clear whether "new territory" means a new territory for the Church or a new territory for Germany. In either case, the Reich did not want the Vatican to gain any more influence in German held lands.

<sup>107</sup>Papen, 489.

military initiative as the British Eighth Army and the Allied combined forces made advances in North Africa. Three Russian Army Groups also launched a huge frontal attack north and south of Stalingrad, and the German war economy faltered. Some observers believed the end to be near.

When Germany lost the initiative the fear of communist penetration of Central and Western Europe began plaguing the Vatican again. Rather than side with the Allied democracies, combined with Russia, the Holy See continued to refrain from any action that would weaken Germany's war effort.<sup>108</sup>

Weizsaecker, now Ambassador to the Holy See, began flooding the Foreign Ministry with reports of the Vatican's desire for Germany to ward off Russian communism. The Ambassador stated that Pius XII thought that "a powerful German Reich is quite indispensable for the future of the Catholic Church,"<sup>109</sup> and wanted "a strong and united Germany as a barrier against Soviet Russia,"<sup>110</sup> while believing that "the fate of Europe depends on the victorious resistance by Germany on the Russian front."<sup>111</sup>

<sup>108</sup>Lewy, 249.

<sup>109</sup>Friedlaender, 191. Telegram from Weizsaecker to Berlin, September 3, 1943.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 195. October 7, 1943.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., 190. September 23, 1943. One cannot assume that the Vatican's approval of a strong Germany

Although the immediate consequence of the military defeat at Stalingrad was not as great as expected, and the German line remained deep in Russian territory, Germany could take no advantage of the Vatican's willingness to establish a rapprochement with the Reich. Hitler's "stand fast" order for all fronts resulted in a large loss of men and deprived his generals of using their military skill. By the end of 1943, the British blockade of Germany and the Allied air strikes helped to disorganize and strain the Reich's war economy.

The Fuehrer, having taken over the Supreme Command of the Army, remained wholly preoccupied with the tactical and strategic demands of the war. Bormann, Goebbels, Goering, and the other Reich leaders attempted to keep the German war effort operative. This demanded all of their time and effort. All waited for the fulfillment of Hitler's belief that tension among the Allies would cause them to break apart. The German war effort was now total and desperate. Relations with the Vatican became a minor point. The questions of the Concordat and Vatican competency in the annexed and occupied

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necessarily meant that it wanted Germany to win a complete military victory over the Allies. The Holy See's fear of communism was not so great that it would sacrifice the Catholics within Germany's border. More probably, the Vatican was trying to retain its neutrality so that it could protect the most Catholics regardless of how the war ended.

territories had no validity in a changing situation for which the outcome was in doubt.

## CHAPTER VI

### GERMANY ISOLATES THE VATICAN

Throughout 1943, the war continued to turn against Germany despite some successful offensives. Germany had moved into Unoccupied France as the Allied forces made gains in North Africa, and the Eastern Front threatened to collapse. The more pre-occupied the Reich became with the military aspects of total war, the less concern it had for diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Under these circumstances, Reich-Vatican relations were confined almost exclusively to Italy.

Pope Pius XII worried about the possibility of the Allies bombing Rome and requested a statement that this would not happen. Italian Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano recorded D'Arcy Osborne's reply that: "Rome is not only the city of the Catholics, but also the headquarters of the High Command, a large German command, many airports, . . ." and a railway center.<sup>1</sup> The Anglo-American staff intended to retain the prerogative to bomb Rome if it became necessary. But, by January 2, 1943, Pius XII, having received Mussolini's confirmation that the German commands had been removed from Rome, believed that bombing of the Eternal City had been averted.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ciano's Diary, 552.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 556, 565.

The Fuehrer made plans to place Italy fully under German control. This would necessitate occupation of Rome and imprisonment of its leading figures. All Vatican officials would have to be taken into custody too. Goebbels spoke against this possibility and noted that the Pope had stated that he had nothing to do with the military goals of the Allies. Goebbels did not want to provoke the Pope unnecessarily because he might be useful at a later time. The Propaganda Minister and Ribbentrop opposed Hitler's plan to seize the Vatican because they did not want the "whole of world opinion" to turn against Germany.<sup>3</sup> They convinced the Fuehrer to exempt the Holy See from occupation if the Reich moved into Italy.<sup>4</sup>

On July 5, Weizsaecker reported to Berlin about his private audience with the Pope. Pius XII told Weizsaecker, in confidence, that he had always felt close to Germany and that this feeling was strengthened by the Reich's fight against the Communists,<sup>5</sup> who were now extremely active in Northern Italy. Two weeks later, any possible basis for agreement that this audience may have had was negated by an Allied bombardment of Rome.

<sup>3</sup>Goebbels, 303, 409.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 416.

<sup>5</sup>Friedlaender, 179-80. This is one of the few cases when Pius XII definitely condoned German invasion of Russia.

The Allies bombed because of Rome's strategic value and the fact that German outposts had been left in the suburbs. The Vatican now worked for the removal of the outposts and, particularly, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring's headquarters.<sup>6</sup>

On July 25, the Fascist Grand Council, spurred on by Italian discontent with the German Alliance, met and persuaded the King to dismiss and imprison the Duce. The news shocked the Fuehrer and put the Reich's prestige at stake. Hitler quickly realized that Marshal Pietro Badoglio's new non-Fascist government would proclaim its loyalty to the Axis only until it could make a deal with the Allies. The Fuehrer rushed all available men to Northern Italy in preparation to occupy the peninsula.

The Vatican strove to secure the defeat of Mussolini and the establishment of the Badoglio government. Reports of the Holy See's activity reached Berlin<sup>7</sup> which, of course, wanted to re-establish Fascism to save face. On July 26, Germany moved troops toward Rome and completed plans for the occupation. At a two day conference on the matter a German advisor suggested that troops

<sup>6</sup>Friedlaender, 182-83. Albert Kesselring (1885-1960): Commander-in-Chief of German forces in Italy and Military Commander of Italy, 1943-45; Commander-in-Chief West, March 1945; tried for war crimes, death sentence commuted to life imprisonment.

<sup>7</sup>Goebbels, 409-10.

occupy all the exits to the Vatican. Hitler replied that:

That doesn't matter; I'll get into the Vatican any time! Do you think I worry about the Vatican? We can seize that straight away. . . . Then we'll say we're sorry afterwards; we can easily do that. We've got a war on.<sup>8</sup>

Hitler continued to think about a final reckoning, but Goebbels and Ribbentrop persuaded him to spare the Vatican.<sup>9</sup>

On September 8, 1943, the Badoglio government signed an armistice with the Allies. Hitler ordered Field Marshal Kesselring, the Commander-in-Chief of German forces in Italy, to prepare for action. Kesselring was relieved when the Allied Fifth and Eighth Armies landed at Salerno, much further south than Germany dared to hope for. Everyone in Rome thought the Allies would arrive on September 10 and were surprised when German soldiers disarmed the Italians and occupied Italy, including Rome.

German troops did not enter the Vatican, but they immediately isolated it. Isolation of the Holy See reflected a politico-military decision for purposes of stopping the Vatican's flow of important intelligence information to the Allies, rather than an anti-Catholic

<sup>8</sup>Walter Warlimont, Inside Hitler's Headquarters, 1939-1945 (New York, 1965), 356. Hereafter cited as Warlimont.

<sup>9</sup>Bullock, 708.



gesture.<sup>10</sup> Despite the Vatican's support of the revolt against Mussolini, and its gathering of information for the Allies, the Fuehrer agreed to safeguard all rights of the Holy See during the occupation of Rome.<sup>11</sup> General Stahel, the commandant of Rome, posted guards around the Vatican to prevent any violation of the Holy See's extra-territorial rights.<sup>12</sup>

The day before the occupation, Himmler had appointed S.S. General Karl Wolff<sup>13</sup> to keep civil order in the area from north of Naples to the Brenner Pass. Himmler made Wolff his personal representative in Italy and even created the new rank of "Highest S.S. and Police Leader" for him. This title gave Wolff more importance in the eyes of Mussolini and Kesselring and placed him on an equal basis with Kaltenbrunner. Wolff co-ordinated the disposition of S.S. forces with the Army, acted as policy advisor to Mussolini, and consultant to Kesselring. Tales circulated in Berlin that if the Allies attempted to force

<sup>10</sup>Cianfarra, 290.

<sup>11</sup>Goebbels, 444.

<sup>12</sup>Hochhuth, 324.

<sup>13</sup>Karl Wolff (1900- ): General of Waffen S.S. at Fuehrer Headquarters; Chief of Personal Staff of Reichsfuehrer S.S. (under Himmler); Himmler's liaison officer with Hitler's headquarters until 1944; personal adjutant to Himmler, 1941; Chief of S.S. and Police Commander in Italy, 1943; founder and commander of Italian S.S. legion, 1945.

their way into Rome, the S.S. would take Vatican officials as hostages. Wolff established contact with the Vatican and assured the Pope that this would not happen.<sup>14</sup>

The foreign press picked up the story, and the Vatican became extremely worried that Hitler would remove the Papal Court to Liechtenstein and hold the Pope in captivity.<sup>15</sup> The Holy See told Ambassador Weizsaecker of its apprehension, and he drew up a plan to counter any such "rash action."<sup>16</sup>

In mid-October, as the Badoglio government declared war on Germany and American troops crossed the Volturno, Joseph Goebbels discontinued his policy of defending the Vatican and seconded Hitler's plan to exile the Pope.<sup>17</sup> Walter Schellenberg,<sup>18</sup> Chief of the

<sup>14</sup>Allen Dulles, The Secret Surrender (New York, 1966), 61. Hereafter cited as Dulles.

<sup>15</sup>Weizsaecker, 290. Rolf Hochhuth notes that the foreign press sensationalized this story, but claims that his interviews with Vatican officials proved that they never expected Hitler to occupy the Vatican and exile the Pope. See: Hochhuth, 324, 329. On the other hand, Hassell had received information that "if Rome falls, the Pope will be taken along 'for his own protection.'" See: Hassell, 327. Walter Schellenberg believed that "Hitler was seriously considering the deportation of the Pope into a kind of exile at Avignon." See: Schellenberg, 370.

<sup>16</sup>Weizsaecker, 290. The Ambassador did not elaborate on the details of this plan.

<sup>17</sup>Schellenberg, 370.

<sup>18</sup>Walter Schellenberg (1910-1952): Chief of Amt VI of the Foreign Political Intelligence Service, 1941-45; Chief of the unified Intelligence Service (which took over military intelligence functions from the Abwehr), 1944-45; General of Police and of Waffen S.S.

Foreign Political Intelligence Service (Amt VI), opposed Goebbels on this point. He took up Goebbels' old line that the exile of the Pope "would discredit Germany in the eyes of the entire world."<sup>19</sup> Schellenberg approached his superior, Heinrich Himmler, and urged him to avoid the anti-Church policy of Goebbels and Bormann because it would cause him to lose the confidence of foreign nations should he become hier to Hitler's Germany. Himmler took Schellenberg's advice and pointed out to Hitler the degree to which Catholics contributed to the German war effort. Hitler heeded Himmler's warning and gave up his plans to deport the Pope.<sup>20</sup>

The Vatican still worried that Rome would be bombed by the Allies because of German facilities in that city. It conveyed this anxiety to Weizsaecker who informed Kesselring. The Field Marshal, although reluctant to do so from a military standpoint, reduced the Rome garrison to about one battalion. Furthermore, he instructed German troops to detour around Rome rather than marching through it.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Schellenberg, 370.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Weizsaecker, 291. Kesselring was most cooperative during the occupation of Rome. In conjunction with the Vatican and the Italian Ministry of Education, he signed many orders to protect cultural centers and art treasures. See: Albert Kesselring, Kesselring: A Soldier's Record (New York, 1954), 367. Hereafter cited as Kesselring.

When Germany occupied Rome, it withdrew its Italian Embassy. The Embassy at the Vatican was the only remaining diplomatic authority. Ambassador Weizsaecker honored Papal interests and reported that: "Our military authorities respected as a matter of principle all these properties, monasteries, etc., for which our Vatican Embassy had issued letters of protection."<sup>22</sup>

From May 12 to June 1944, the Allies fought their way toward Rome. Kesselring and his troops, short of rations and munitions, retreated. On June 4, the Allies marched quietly into Rome as the Germans departed from the other side. As Kesselring fell back to set up defensive positions, he designated many towns as "open," "neutralized," or "hospital" cities to protect their cultural and ecclesiastical traditions.<sup>23</sup>

German occupation of Rome caused the Vatican much discomfort, but caused no invasion of its neutrality or extra-territoriality. The S.S., knowing that Jews and political opponents of the German regime hid in some religious buildings while others served as broadcasting stations for Italian and American intelligence, did not

<sup>22</sup>Weizsaecker, 289-90. It is doubtful that Hitler condoned these liberties. Speaking of the Vatican, he said: "The whole diplomatic corps will be in there. I don't care a damn but if the whole crew's there, we'll get the whole lot of swine out." See: Warlimont, 356.

<sup>23</sup>Kesselring, 368-69.

invade the Vatican grounds.<sup>24</sup> Long after the war, Father Robert Leiber, the Pope's personal secretary, stated:

I cannot remember the neutrality of the Vatican ever being violated. German troops kept the line closed off so that no one could cross it who didn't have a pass. The Pope, had, therefore, no reason to complain. Everything proceeded in an orderly fashion, almost as a matter of course. Nothing ever happened.<sup>25</sup>

After the Allies occupied Rome, the German Embassy moved into the Vatican. The diplomats had achieved nothing in general political matters between the Reich and the Holy See since June 1943. The Allied occupation severed the Embassy from German Supreme Headquarters. The Embassy received absolutely no information of a political nature from Germany. It was left to operate on its own because the attention of officials in Berlin turned exclusively to the "uncompromising determination to continue the struggle" against the Allies.<sup>26</sup>

The German Opposition had been rendered ineffective as a result of numerous ill-fated security leakages. In December 1942, customs officials had picked up an Abwehr agent on charges of smuggling currency into Switzerland. The agent confessed that he carried

<sup>24</sup>Hochhuth, 328.

<sup>25</sup>"Pius XII and the Third Reich," Look, (May 17, 1966), 50.

<sup>26</sup>Weizsaecker, 293-94, 299.

the money for a group of generals who used the Vatican to sound out the Allies on peace proposals.<sup>27</sup> The resulting investigation, carried out by Himmler's S.S., led back to Admiral Canaris and General Hans Oster. In February 1943, Himmler closed down the Abwehr and took charge of a unified Intelligence Service.

On July 20, 1944, the Oppositions' plot to kill Hitler failed, and the S.S. began to round up all persons suspected of conspiring against the Reich. The investigation led to discovery of the Oppositions' correspondence with the Vatican and the "X-report," the Holy See's proposed peace conditions of 1940.<sup>28</sup> Ultimately, Canaris, Beck, Oster, Halder, Hassell, Joseph Mueller, and many others were arrested.<sup>29</sup> Since the German Embassy to the Vatican had been severed from the Reich and the Opposition folded, there seemed to be no influential German officials to carry on contact with the Holy See.

Between December 1944 and January 1945, a German

<sup>27</sup>Colvin, 188. Also see: William Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich (Greenwich, Connecticut, 1962), 1329.

<sup>28</sup>Colvin, 204-05. For information relating to the "X-report," see: Chapter V, 125-26.

<sup>29</sup>Colvin 202-12; Bullock, 738-79. Canaris and Oster were among those convicted of high treason and executed at Flossenbürg. Although Mueller was at the camp at the same time, the Reich never executed him. It appears that either Himmler had another use for him or an order went astray.

offensive on the Western Front failed to reach its goal, and Hitler reluctantly withdrew his forces from the Ardennes. On January 12, 1945, the Red Army opened an offensive on the Eastern Front from the Baltic to the Carpathians. By the end of the month, Russia was less than one hundred miles from Berlin. On April 12, the United States Ninth Army crossed the Elbe river and four days later the Russians opened the way to Berlin. Under these conditions, many Nazi leaders searched for the means to make peace with the Allies to save Germany from total destruction. The most likely place to originate such proposals was the Vatican, where Pius XII was receiving Allied diplomats and soldiers.<sup>30</sup>

S.S. General Karl Wolff made the final German contact with the Vatican. Wolff held the only important S.S. command outside German territory and had been made military plenipotentiary for Italy. He had proved his good faith by releasing many prominent Italians and ecclesiastics from the Gestapo's hands at the Vatican's request. In May 1944, Weizsaecker had arranged an appointment with the Pope for him. The details of the conversation are not known, but it is clear that this was Wolff's first attempt to be the prime mover for the

<sup>30</sup>Dulles, 49.

surrender of German forces in Northern Italy.<sup>31</sup>

Wolff's direct access to the Vatican was interrupted by the Allied occupation of Rome in June, so he negotiated with Ildefonso Cardinal Schuster, Archbishop of Milan. This channel led to the Allies through the Vatican and the Papal Nuncio in Berne, Switzerland where the United States had a large intelligence organization. It also led to the partisan authorities in Northern Italy who worked for peace and the exclusion of the Germans from Italy.<sup>32</sup>

Wolff and Schuster conceived of a plan to bring peace on the Italian Front. The Northern Italian Committee for Liberation, a partisan group, was to sign a proposed peace document for Italy, while Kesselring signed for Germany.<sup>33</sup> Schuster used the Papal Nuncio in Berne and the Vatican to get the proposal to Allied headquarters in Rome. The terms of the proposal were that the Germans would not destroy Italian industrial

<sup>31</sup>Dulles, 61, 79. Wolff's motive for negotiating through the Vatican will probably never be known, but it was not from any sense of humaneness. He had been extremely active in the persecution of Jews in Europe. At Nuremberg he received a four year suspended sentence for his S.S. activities. Finally, in 1964, a Munich court sentenced him to fifteen years at hard labor. See: "Bureaucrat of Death," Newsweek (October 12, 1964), 57-58.

<sup>32</sup>F. W. Deakin, The Brutal Friendship: Mussolini, Hitler and the Fall of Italian Fascism (New York, 1962), 761-62. Hereafter cited as Deakin.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 763.



and public utility services not of immediate military value, if the partisan forces agreed not to hinder the German withdrawal from Italy.<sup>34</sup> General Wolff later promised Schuster that the Germans would surrender unconditionally in Northern Italy.<sup>35</sup> Ecclesiastical authorities would act as middlemen.

The success of these negotiations depended on the co-operation between Kesselring's army forces and Wolff's S.S. Schuster and Wolff repeatedly contacted Kesselring, who seemed eager to negotiate a peace in Italy, but also continued to follow orders from Berlin. Just as the Field Marshal appeared ready to make the Army a part of Wolff's plans he was made Commander-in-Chief West. Moreover, the Central Committee of the National Committee for Liberation balked at making a deal with any German official not an authority of Berlin at the supreme level.

On April 25 1945, after much undercover (and unrecorded) negotiations, Cardinal Schuster arranged a meeting of the National Committee for Liberation. Mussolini, having been rescued from the Badoglio government by Germany, was to attend the meeting. General Wolff secured the support of Kesselring's replacement,

<sup>34</sup>Dulles, 46.

<sup>35</sup>Benito Mussolini, Memoirs, 1942-1943: With Documents Relating to the Period (London, 1949), 259.

Army General Heinrich von Vietinghoff, and planned to attend the meeting to sign the peace treaty.<sup>36</sup> At this moment, it appeared that a Reich official had finally used the Vatican to make a peace with the Allies that did not include the Hitler regime. Such was not the case.

Wolff had also been negotiating with Allen Dulles, the head of the United States Office of Strategic Services, in Switzerland. Dulles entered into negotiations with Wolff on the Pope's recommendation.<sup>37</sup> Rather than attend the meeting sponsored by Cardinal Schuster, Wolff traveled to Switzerland and met with Dulles' representatives. On April 28, they made final plans for the surrender of all German troops in Northern Italy. The next day, representatives of Vietinghoff, Wolff, and Dulles signed the document. Kesselring relieved Vietinghoff of his command and, on May 2, the day the surrender went into effect, gave his personal approval.<sup>38</sup>

On the same day, Germany announced Hitler's

<sup>36</sup>Dulles, 193; Deakin, 810.

<sup>37</sup>Dulles, 92-3. The subject of Wolff's negotiations with Cardinal Schuster and Allen Dulles has been elaborately traced by many authorities. Most sources, and even the statements of witnesses, are contradictory. Allen Dulles' The Secret Surrender, F. W. Deakin's The Brutal Friendship, and Jacques de Launay's Secret Diplomacy of World War II are the best sources on this topic.

<sup>38</sup>Deakin, 774.

death. The Fuehrer had committed suicide in his bunker as Russian forces arrived in Berlin. Five days later, May 7, 1945, Admiral Dönitz signed an unconditional surrender for Germany.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

Germany's attitude toward the Vatican between 1933 and 1945 did not reflect a pre-conceived policy formulated by the National Socialist German Workers' Party or any one individual. Different factions within the Party held divergent views, and each individual had his own opinion. The preface to the Documents on German Foreign Policy aptly expresses this point:

Readers of these documents will soon become aware of one peculiarity of German diplomacy under Hitler: the fact that for a long period of time there might be not one, but several, German policies, and that the adherents of one policy might be in partial or complete ignorance of what the adherents of other policies were doing.<sup>1</sup>

From the complex inter-action of these different positions, came a constantly changing policy toward the Holy See that may be called the "German attitude."

Ambassador George S. Messersmith (Consul General in Berlin, 1930-34, and Minister to Austria, 1934-37) of the United States filed an affidavit to be used at Nuremberg. The statement accused all officials responsible to Ribbentrop of being ardent Nazis and "criminally responsible for the acts of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs during this period."<sup>2</sup> One must know what beliefs these

<sup>1</sup>DGFP, I, XVI.

<sup>2</sup>NCA, V, 46.

individuals held in order to understand the complexity of the German attitude.

Messersmith specifically implicated Ernst von Weizsaecker as one of those criminally responsible for actions of the Foreign Ministry. Weizsaecker devotes his memoirs to the contradiction of this claim. The truth lies somewhere in between. In the years before April 1943, when Weizsaecker was appointed Ambassador to the Holy See, the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs definitely lacked personal initiative. He tried to take a position midway between Nazi demands that he persecute the Catholic Church and actions that would not make him appear as an opponent of Christian morality. To a certain extent, he was successful. Vatican officials never chided him personally, nor did he get into any grave trouble with his Nazi superiors.

Weizsaecker, as did all other Reich leaders, acted in the best interests of Germany as dictated by his own conscience. While writing letters and sending telegrams, usually drafted by Ribbentrop, to various agencies of the Reich, the State Secretary also kept the German Opposition informed of events and political decisions in the Reich Chancellery.<sup>3</sup> In this way, he fulfilled his duty to the Party while satisfying his own desire to maintain a personal peace with the

<sup>3</sup>Weizsaecker, 182; Colvin, 51.

Vatican.

Nevertheless, Weizsaecker did not make any decisions that represented his personal opinions. He wanted to keep Germany free of the stigma of anti-Church persecution but took no active measures to do so until he arrived safely at the Vatican. Only when Weizsaecker convinced Hitler and Ribbentrop that he should be Ambassador to the Holy See did he take the initiative in protecting the Church's rights and instigating peace proposals.<sup>4</sup> Weizsaecker's primary consideration was not the defeat of Catholicism in German territory but the desire to escape the war years without subjecting himself to adverse criticism from any quarter.

Diego von Bergen, another representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attained the highest degree of professionalism of any Reich official assigned to Vatican affairs. Bergen adopted the National Socialist belief that the Church be absolutely excluded from Reich politics but promoted this idea in a highly diplomatic manner. The Ambassador to the Holy See took a realistic point of view, unaffected by the emotional squabbles of either side. The furtherance of Reich policy was foremost in his mind, but he clearly saw the necessity for compromise with the Holy See in order to carry out German

<sup>4</sup>Weizsaecker, 277, 258-59; Hassell, 332.

wishes to limit Vatican influence in Germany and the world.<sup>5</sup>

Bergen never hesitated to give his personal opinion regardless of whether or not it conformed to Reich policy. He wanted an exchange of explicit details concerning points of conflict between Germany and the Vatican at all times.<sup>6</sup> By clarifying all issues, he thought there would be no misunderstanding, and each power would know exactly what was expected by the other. Bergen's prestige in Germany and the Vatican allowed him to remain as Ambassador until he was considerably past retirement age, despite attempts by his enemies to have Ribbentrop recall him.<sup>7</sup>

Ribbentrop had some vague idea that National Socialism would somehow be substituted for Catholicism in German territory.<sup>8</sup> But he probably did not understand the basic tenets of National Socialism, let alone the intense ideological conflict between it and Catholicism. The Foreign Minister was incapable of making any decision in relation to the Vatican that was not dictated by Hitler. Ribbentrop was not a leader, nor even an effective follower, in the Reich's struggle to eliminate Vatican influence

<sup>5</sup>DGFP, I, 1039.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 936.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., Appendix III, 604.

<sup>8</sup>Weizsaecker, 281.

in Germany. He was a blind adherent to orders whose stock answer at Nuremberg was: "We all believed in the Fuehrer."<sup>9</sup>

Not all agencies of the Reich were led by such weak and irresponsible men. Some were dominated by strong, demanding leaders like Joseph Goebbels, the Minister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment. History has designated Goebbels as one of the infamous leaders of the Third Reich, but this is not true in relation to his Church policy.

He thought it was nonsense for a spiritual power to interfere with political and military questions and flew into a rage when the Vatican voiced its complaints to the foreign press rather than to Germany. Yet, except in a few isolated cases, he did not take direct action against the Church for these "treasonable" offenses. Goebbels believed in National Socialist doctrine completely but did not think that Catholicism should be eliminated during the war. The Propaganda Minister thought that the Vatican should be dealt with after the war.<sup>10</sup>

This position placed him in direct opposition to the extremist group of the Nazi Party which tried to uproot the Church during the war. When the Gestapo,

<sup>9</sup>NCA, Supplement B, 1237.

<sup>10</sup>Goebbels, 166, 382.



at the insistence of the Party, requisitioned Church buildings in Berlin against his orders, Goebbels reprimanded them all.<sup>11</sup> When, against his warnings, Party members attempted to take over certain functions of the Church that later proved unpleasant, he accused them of "driving out the devil with Beelzebub."<sup>12</sup> His stand was that:

The church question is as far as possible not to be discussed at all during the entire war, no matter how recalcitrant the 'sky-pilots' may prove to be in this or that matter. After the war we shall certainly have other possibilities of making them see the light.<sup>13</sup>

Although the political leaders of Germany did not participate as a unit in the elimination of Vatican influence in Germany, the extremist group centering around Martin Bormann did. Of all the documents entered in evidence by the Prosecution at Nuremberg, the largest single author was Bormann. Most other contributions were made by men and organizations that executed directions coming from his Party Chancellery: Alfred Rosenberg, Heinrich Himmler, the S.S., and the Gestapo.<sup>14</sup> Baldur von Shirach blamed him for preventing any agreements between the youth leaders of the Reich and the

<sup>11</sup>Goebbels, 121.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 242.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 121.

<sup>14</sup>TMWC, XXI, 464.

Church. Hermann Goering blamed Bormann, along with Himmler, for all persecution of the Church.

Bormann's authorship of the June 6, 1941 circular which rejected any possible reconciliation of National Socialism and religion made him exceptionally vulnerable to such claims. Yet, Bormann truly could not find any place for Catholicism in his concept of life. H. R. Trevor-Roper, editor of Bormann's letters to his wife, believes that religion is the only area in which this man made a personal contribution. Bormann's hatred of religion spilled over into his personal life. His letters to his wife demand that she "make sure that none of our children gets depraved and diseased by the poison of Christianity, in whatever dosage."<sup>15</sup>

He wrote voluminously to Rosenberg, the author of The Myth of the 20th Century, and increased the original distaste that Rosenberg had for Christianity.

Bormann wanted Rosenberg to work toward substituting National Socialist principles for Catholic instruction in schools, increasing Catholic monetary contributions to the State, and to reject all compromises between Christian teachings and National Socialist ideology.<sup>16</sup>

The leadership for anti-Church policy and refusal to

<sup>15</sup>Martin Bormann, The Bormann Letters (London, 1954), 36.

<sup>16</sup>NCA, III, 154-55, 158-59, 171-72.

compromise with the Vatican cannot lie more heavily on any single person than Martin Bormann.

Nevertheless, final responsibility for Germany's attitude toward the Vatican must rest with Adolf Hitler simply because he was the Fuehrer. Actually, Hitler hated all of the routine work of government. Once he had established National Socialism as the only acceptable German ideology and himself as the Reich's Fuehrer, Hitler only laid down general lines of policy toward the Church. The details of implementation of this policy were left up to the departmental Ministers while Hitler pre-occupied himself with broad ideas in foreign affairs and preparation for war. Except in times of crises, the Fuehrer seldom voiced his opinion about Germany's policy toward the Vatican.

The Fuehrer respected the Catholic Church because it was an international society directed by the Vatican, an authority outside of Germany which was not subject to the Reich's will. He also admired its hierarchical structure that allowed the Vatican to control its vast membership with ease.<sup>17</sup> The Church's ability to survive so long with so little change reminded him of his dream of a thousand year Reich. Hitler thought that National Socialism could learn from the Catholic Church by studying its capacity to maintain a changeless doctrine. He

<sup>17</sup>Bullock, 312-14.

thought an unchangeable, eternal doctrine should be the aim of National Socialism.<sup>18</sup>

Even during the early years of co-ordination of the German Catholic Church, Hitler did not want a break with the Vatican. He foresaw that it would be useful in the event of war.<sup>19</sup> The Fuehrer knew that the Church could be strengthened by persecution and restrained any open anti-clerical outbursts that might impair his political power. Unlike Rosenberg and Bormann, he did not attack the Church publicly.<sup>20</sup>

After the invasion of Poland in September 1939, he continued to follow this policy. Hitler made a point of not openly attacking the Church and camouflaged his distaste for Vatican interference in German affairs unless it obstructed German politics. His constant goal was to maintain peace with the Vatican.<sup>21</sup> Along with Goering and Goebbels, he believed that the Church problem should not be acute during wartime.<sup>22</sup>

It was not that the Fuehrer felt sympathy for Catholicism. On the contrary, he thought it was a

<sup>18</sup>Hitler, Mein Kampf, 459.

<sup>19</sup>Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler was my Friend (London, 1955), 129.

<sup>20</sup>Bullock, 389.

<sup>21</sup>Hochhuth, 310, 333.

<sup>22</sup>Goebbels, 141-42.

"filthy reptile" that struck at any sign of weakness in the State and that it had but one desire, to destroy the Reich.<sup>23</sup> Yet, he thought Catholicism so important to the German nation that whenever he was held personally responsible for persecution of the Church, he blamed it on "irresponsible elements in the provinces."<sup>24</sup> When he did give a direct order to punish members of the Church hierarchy, it was because he truly believed that they were guilty of political Catholicism. Hitler believed that the Church should be eliminated after the war.<sup>25</sup>

In the final analysis, these men and their followers combined to use the Catholic Church in its national form to wage political warfare against the Vatican. German policy toward the Vatican can be seen in two stages. Germany strove to gain complete control over the German Catholic Church and, later, the national Catholic Churches in the areas annexed by the Reich. This control was used as a lever to persuade the Vatican to react in a manner favorable to German policy.

In the first stage, Germany made the first inroads against the Vatican by concluding the Reich Concordat. By manipulating this treaty, promising to

<sup>23</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 508.

<sup>24</sup>Papen, 282.

<sup>25</sup>Hitler, Conversations, 117.

uphold its guarantees when necessary and narrowly interpreting them when advantageous, Germany kept the Vatican constantly on the defensive. Meanwhile, the German Catholics were co-ordinated with the State. They became a part of the totalitarian concept of statehood. No longer could they act independently. If the clergy attempted to act without the authority of the Reich they were immediately suppressed.

In 1939, the beginning of warfare brought the Vatican into direct diplomatic contact with Germany because the Holy See was an international power avowedly dedicated to keeping peace. In this, the second stage, it was too late for the Vatican to make many demands against Germany, because the Reich had control of the Catholics in Germany, the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other areas. The German empire had authority over more Catholics than any other nation in the world.<sup>26</sup> If the Vatican wanted to oppose German policy on the international level, it would have to be willing to accept the consequences of the Nazi reaction at the national level. This it would not do.

When it looked as if the Holy See had reached the point where it might appeal to its world-wide Catholic membership, the German government took steps to

<sup>26</sup>L. H. Lehmann, Vatican Policy in the Second World War (New York, 1946), 43.

pacify the Vatican. The most obvious example is the sending of Ribbentrop to the Vatican in March 1940. At this time, the Reich convinced the Holy See that it did not want to foster communism and, furthermore, wanted to promote a truce with the Church. After Ribbentrop's meeting with Pius XII, the Vatican again reacted favorably to German policy.

From 1940 to 1943, the Reich severed relations with the Vatican in the outside territories.<sup>27</sup> The German government, which now consisted mostly of the Reich Chancellery as the Foreign Ministry was nearly defunct, would accept negotiations over problems in the old Reich only. At this time, there were no outstanding problems in the Reich. The German Catholic Church had been almost fully co-ordinated before 1939, and any remaining disagreements that might arise with the Vatican were far overshadowed by the ill-treatment of the clergy in Austria and Poland. The result was that the Holy See could negotiate only in an area where it could accomplish very little.

Germany would allow negotiations in the outside areas only through the local authorities. Reich representatives in these areas could have diplomatic contact

<sup>27</sup> Relations were severed in Austria by Hitler's order of June 22, 1942. Germany stopped relations with the Vatican in all outside territories, including the Government General, in March 1943. See: Chapter V, sections I and II.

only with the local Vatican representatives of these areas. Thus, the Reich had come full circle. It had started, in 1933, by securing the support of the national clergy and keeping the Vatican out of internal political affairs. In 1943, Germany by-passed the Holy See to deal only with its local authorities. Again, the Vatican was kept out of German political affairs. During the intervening ten years, Germany had increased its capacity to keep the Vatican on the defensive by extending its control over more and more Catholic countries.

Reich leaders generally followed the policy toward the Vatican that Hitler and Goebbels established. They did not provoke the Vatican to the extent that it would completely sever relations with Germany. They bided their time with the thought in mind that the Reich could entirely eradicate the Church and eliminate the Vatican's influence in German territories after the war. Since the Holy See did not break off relations with Germany, no impetus was given to the lower Catholic hierarchy to condemn German policy against the Catholics or in aggressive warfare. The Reich's political victory over the Vatican was total.

On the other hand, Germany lost a spiritual war with the Vatican. National Socialism became the predominant ideology in Germany and the outside territories, but it was only a superstructure. Underneath, in the hearts



of the individuals of the totalitarian State, Catholicism never died. It was never "replaced" by National Socialism as most Nazi leaders had hoped.

Vatican officials used the Concordat as "a juridical basis for their defense, a stronghold behind which to shield themselves in their opposition. . . ." <sup>28</sup> Despite Germany's constant breeches of the Concordat, the Holy See continued to use it as an instrument for negotiation in Germany and the outside territories. The Vatican did not want to break off diplomatic negotiations with Germany because it wished to continue protecting all Catholics by whatever methods remained.

The Catholic Church takes a long range view of historical events and knows that situations change with time. Although the Vatican may experience setbacks and its membership may suffer persecution, centuries of experience have proved that more favorable conditions will eventually present themselves. As one prominent Catholic stated:

The Vatican places no limit of time on the achievement of its ends. It thinks of itself in terms of eternity, and its dealings with foreign powers are, therefore, based on the assumption that the Holy See can afford to wait since men are mortal and the Church is eternal. <sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> NCA, V, 1039. These are the words of Pope Pius XII.

<sup>29</sup> Cianfarra, 68.

The Vatican could afford to wait patiently and watch the rise and fall of the Third Reich from a distance. It did, and the Eternal Church survived Adolf Hitler's National Socialist dream.

APPENDICES  
AND  
BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX A

SELECTED ARTICLES

CONCORDAT BETWEEN THE HOLY SEE AND THE  
GERMAN REICH<sup>1</sup>

His Holiness Pope Pius XI and the President of the German Reich, moved by a common desire to consolidate and enhance the friendly relations existing between the Holy See and the German Reich, wish to regulate the relations between the Catholic Church and the State for the whole territory of the German Reich in a permanent manner and on a basis acceptable to both parties. They have decided to conclude a solemn agreement, which will supplement the Concordats already concluded with certain individual German states, and will ensure for the remaining states fundamentally uniform treatment of their respective problems. . . .

Article 1.—The German Reich guarantees freedom of profession and public practice of the Catholic religion.

It acknowledges the right of the Catholic Church, within the limit of those laws which are applicable to all, to manage and regulate her own affairs independently, and, within the framework of her own competence, to publish laws and ordinances binding on her members.

Article 2.—The Concordats concluded with Bavaria (1924), Prussia (1929) and Baden (1932) remain in force, and the rights and privileges of the Catholic Church recognized therein are secured unchanged within the territories of the states concerned. For the remaining states the agreements entered into in the present Concordat come into force in their entirety. These last are also binding for those states named above in so far as they affect matters not regulated by the regional Concordats or are complementary to the settlement already made.

In future, regional Concordats with states of the German Reich will be concluded only with the agreement of the Reich Government. . . .

Article 4.—In its relations and correspondence with the bishops, clergy and other members of the Catholic Church in Germany, the Holy See enjoys full freedom. The same applies to the bishops and other diocesan officials in their dealings with the faithful in all matters belonging to their pastoral

<sup>1</sup>NCA, V, 1080-90.

office.

Instructions, ordinances, Pastoral Letters, official diocesan gazettes, and other enactments regarding the spiritual direction of the faithful issued by the ecclesiastical authorities within the framework of their competence (Art. 1, Sec. 2) may be published without hindrance and brought to the notice of the faithful in the form hitherto usual. . . .

Article 11.—The present organization and demarcation of dioceses of the Catholic Church in the German Reich remains in force. Such rearrangements of a bishopric or of an ecclesiastical province or of other diocesan demarcations as shall seem advisable in the future, so far as they involve changes within the boundaries of a German state, remain subject to the agreement of the government of the state concerned.

Rearrangements and alterations which extend beyond the boundaries of a German state require the agreement of the Reich government, to whom it shall be left to secure the consent of the regional government in question. The same applies to rearrangements or alterations of ecclesiastical provinces involving several German states. The foregoing conditions do not apply to such ecclesiastical boundaries as are laid down merely in the interests of local pastoral care.

In the case of any territorial reorganization within the German Reich, the Reich government will communicate with the Holy See with a view to rearrangement of the organization and demarcation of dioceses. . . .

Article 14.— . . . . 2. The Bull nominating Archbishops, Coadjutors cum jure successionis, or appointing a Praelatus nullius, will not be issued until the name of the appointee has been submitted to the representative of the National Government in the territory concerned, and until it has been ascertained that no objections of a general political nature exist. . . .

Article 16.—Before bishops take possession of their dioceses they are to take an oath of fealty either to the Reich representative of the state concerned, or to the President of the Reich, according to the following formula:

"Before God and on the Holy Gospels I swear and promise, as becomes a bishop, loyalty to the German Reich and to the State of. . . . I swear and promise to honor the legally constituted government and to cause the clergy of my diocese to honor it. In the performance of my spiritual office and in my solicitude for the welfare and the interests of the German Reich, I will endeavor to avoid all detrimental acts which might endanger it."

Article 17.—The property and other rights of public corporations, institutions, foundations and associations of the Catholic Church regarding their vested interests, are guaranteed according to the common law of the land.

No building dedicated to public worship may be destroyed for any reason whatsoever without the previous consent of the ecclesiastical authorities concerned. . . .

Article 20.—Where other agreements do not exist, the Church has the right to establish theological and philosophical colleges for the training of its clergy, which institutions are to be wholly dependent on the ecclesiastical authorities if no State subsidies are sought. . . .

Article 21.—Catholic religious instruction in elementary, senior, secondary and vocational schools constitutes a regular portion of the curriculum, and is to be taught in accordance with the principles of the Catholic Church. In religious instruction, special care will be taken to inculcate patriotic, civic and social consciousness and sense of duty in the spirit of the Christian Faith and the moral code, precisely as in the case of other subjects. The syllabus and the selection of textbooks for religious instruction will be arranged by consultative agreement with the ecclesiastical authorities, and these latter have the right to investigate whether pupils are receiving religious instruction in accordance with the teachings and requirements of the Church. Opportunities for such investigation will be agreed upon with the school authorities. . . .

Article 23.—The retention of Catholic denominational schools and the establishment of new ones, is guaranteed. In all parishes in which parents or guardians request it, Catholic elementary schools will be established, provided that the number of pupils available appears to be sufficient for a school managed and administered in accordance with the standards prescribed by the State, due regard being had to the local conditions of school organizations. . . .

Article 27.—The Church will accord provision to the German army for the spiritual guidance of its Catholic officers, personnel and other officials, as well as for the families of the same.

The administration of such pastoral care for the army — is to be vested in the army bishop. The latter's ecclesiastical appointment is to be made by the Holy See after contact has been made with the Reich government in order to select a suitable candidate who is agreeable to both parties. . . .

Article 31.—Those Catholic organizations and societies which pursue exclusively charitable, cultural or religious ends, and, as such, are placed under the ecclesiastical authorities, will be protected in their institutions and activities.

Those Catholic organizations which to their religious, cultural and charitable pursuits add others, such as social or professional interests, even though they may be brought into national organizations, are to enjoy the protection of Article 31, Section 1, provided they guarantee to develop their activities outside all political parties.

It is reserved to the central government and the German episcopate, in joint agreement, to determine which organizations and associations come within the scope of this article.

In so far as the Reich and its constituent states take charge of sport and other youth organizations, care will be taken that it shall be possible for the members of the same regularly to practice their religious duties on Sundays and feast days, and that they shall not be required to do anything not in harmony with their religious and moral convictions and obligations.

Article 32.—In view of the special situation existing in Germany, and in view of the guarantee provided through this Concordat of legislation directed to safeguard the rights and privileges of the Roman Catholic Church in the Reich and its component states, the Holy See will prescribe regulations for the exclusion of clergy and members of religious orders from membership of political parties, and from engaging in work on their behalf.

Article 33.—All matters relating to clerical persons or ecclesiastical affairs, which have not been treated of in the foregoing articles, will be regulated for the ecclesiastical sphere according to current Canon Law.

Should differences of opinion arise regarding the interpretation or execution of any of the articles of this Concordat, the Holy See and the German Reich will reach a friendly solution by mutual agreement. . . .

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The Supplementary Protocol.

At the signing of the Concordat concluded today between the Holy See and the German Reich, the undersigned, being regularly thereto empowered, have adjoined the following explanations which form an integral part of the Concordat itself.

In re: . . .

Article 14, Par. 2.—It is understood that when objections of a general political nature exist, they shall be presented within the shortest possible time. If after twenty days such representations have not been made, the Holy See may be justified in assuming that no objections exist to the candidate in question. The names of the persons concerned will be kept confidential until the announcement of the appointment. No right of the State to assert a veto is to be derived from this article. . . .

Article 32.—It is understood that similar provisions regarding activity in party politics will be introduced by the Reich government for members of non-Catholic denominations. The conduct, which has been made obligatory for the clergy and members of religious orders in Germany in virtue of Article 32, does not involve any sort of limitation of official and prescribed preaching and interpretation of the dogmatic and moral teachings and principles of the Church.

Signed: Eugenio, Cardinal Pacelli.

Signed: Franz von Papen.

At the Vatican City, July 20th, 1933.



APPENDIX B

THE GERMAN CATHOLIC EPISCOPATE  
IN SEPTEMBER 1933

A. Church Province Breslau

1. Adolf Cardinal Bertram, Archbishop of Breslau
2. Maximilian Kaller, Bishop of Ermland
3. Christian Schreiber, Bishop of Berlin
4. Franz Hartz, Prelate Nullius of Schneidemuhl

B. Church Province Munich and Freising

5. Michael Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich and Freising
6. Joseph Kumpfmuller, Bishop of Augsburg
7. Sigismund Felix von Ow-Felldorf, Bishop of Passau
8. Michael Buchberger, Bishop of Regensburg

C. Church Province Bamberg

9. Jakobus von Hauck, Archbishop of Bamberg
10. Konrad von Preysing, Bishop of Eichstatt
11. Ludwig Sebastian, Bishop of Speyer
12. Matthias Ehrenfried, Bishop of Wurzburg

D. Church Province Cologne

13. Karl Joseph Cardinal Schulte, Archbishop of Cologne
14. Joseph Vogt, Bishop of Aachen
15. Antonius Hilfrich, Bishop of Limburg
16. Clemens August von Galen, Bishop of Munster
17. Wilhelm Berning, Bishop of Osnabruck
18. Franz Rudolf Bornewasser, Bishop of Trier

E. Church Province Paderborn

19. Kaspar Klein, Archbishop of Paderborn
20. Joseph Damian Schmitt, Bishop of Fulda
21. Nikolaus Bares, Bishop of Hildesheim

F. Upper Rhenish Church Province

22. Konrad Grober, Archbishop of Freiburg i. Br.
23. Ludwig Maria Hugo, Bishop of Mainz
24. Johannes Baptista Sproll, Bishop of Rottenburg
25. Petrus Legge, Bishop of Meissen (exempt diocese)

APPENDIX B

GERMAN DIOCESAN BOUNDARIES 1933<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>From The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany by Guenter Lewy. Copyright 1964. McGraw-Hill Book Company. Used by permission.

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### DOCUMENTS

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The Papers examine the Italian attitude toward Germany which is often inseparably linked with the degree of relations between Germany and the Vatican. However little mention is made of the Vatican, and the Papers add nothing new to the study of the German attitude. Ciano was anti-German.

Documentary Background of World War II, 1931-1941.

Edited by James W. Gentenbein. New York: Columbia University Press, 1948.

An excellent collection of pre-World War II documents. It should be used to understand the internal and external German political activities during this period. Nothing on the Vatican, but there is much useful material on German relations with all the major powers. Includes speeches, treaties, agreements, etc.

Documents on German History. Edited by Louis L. Synder.

New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1958.

A very representative selection of documents from 9 A.D. to 1955, but nothing in detail. A broad and general coverage of the period under study which includes material on the Reichstag fire, propaganda, the Nuremberg Laws, etc. Nothing on the German attitude, but useful for finding major documents quickly.

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Here is a presentation of the most important documents found in the DGFP with a narrative text that ties them together in a comprehensive fashion. It is bound to become a standard work in the study of the German attitude toward the Vatican if only because it introduces hitherto unpublished materials which are found in the Foreign Ministry archives at Bonn. The work is indispensable although Friedländer seems to strain to fit the documents into his preconceived idea of historical pattern. He also over-emphasizes the Vatican's fear of communism.

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This series covers the period of 1938-1939. Volumes VI and VII show that Britain knew more about Reich relations with the Vatican than did the German Foreign Ministry. These volumes contain much information pertaining to British-Vatican diplomatic relations. They also disclose what Britain thought of Germany's negotiations with the Holy See.

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New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1953.

This is the stenographic record of Hitler's "table-talks." Much of his religious philosophy can be gleaned. His observations are mainly sweeping generalizations concerning an alleged Jewish-Christianity-Bolshevik connection and science as superior to religion. His attitude toward a few specific incidents is apparent. Hitler's philosophy concerning the church changes disturbingly, depending upon to whom he is talking.

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These are the last passages ever written by Hitler (1945). He now knew that the war was ending so he compiled a sort of supplement to his Conversations. Hitler attempts to examine where he went wrong and some of his conclusions and reflections are interesting. There are few statements about Christianity, but they are in final form in his mind, not rambling like Conversations. His thoughts seem to have jelled in many areas. Not necessary for the topic under study.

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The letters are of little value exclusive of illuminating the scanty diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican. Myron Taylor's textual additions are very interesting, although not always correct. They show that the United States was the only major power with a large Catholic population that did not take full advantage of the Vatican's power to further its policies.

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Here is a reiteration of Cardinal Hlond's memorandum of 1939 and other documents commonly available. Nothing new is added. It is a compilation of documents issued by the Reich which were restrictive to Poland. Thus an anti-German approach is presented.

Poland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. German Occupation of Poland. New York: The Greystone Press, n.d.

Also called the Polish White Book. A documentary compilation, with text, of all German laws and decrees enacted to deal with Poland during and after the invasion. Laws which caused suppression of the Polish clergy and their property are included and commented on in the text. It is meant to be anti-German and is. The documents presented can be found in any of the standard works in this field such as NCA and DGFP.

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This is a very good compilation of the published speeches and decrees of both Pius XI and Pius XII. It must be read in order to understand the corresponding reactions the Popes' words caused in the Reich.

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In 1943, the name of this set was changed to the United Nations Review from the Inter-Allied Review. Herein is presented the text of documents, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, declarations by diplomats, excerpts from diplomatic speeches, and statements of Allied leaders. At the end of most articles "Press References" are given--synopses of numerous press articles on the subject covered. The general view and "feeling" of individual countries can be grasped through this set, and there are articles dealing with Church problems on the state level.

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Includes some testimony of witnesses and the accused which is valuable. Much material is entered in evidence: documents, excerpts from decrees, orders, letters, etc. Presents a schematic interpretation of these documents. From these the general picture of many phases of Nazi

religious activity can be determined. A necessity in any study of Germany during this period. The documents found here are all in NCA and DGFP.

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Series C is the best source for Germany's attitude toward the Vatican in the years between 1933 and 1937. The series includes abundant material on the Reich's "co-ordination" of the German Catholic Church and the repercussions caused at the Holy See. The documents concern the German Foreign Ministry and were captured by the Allies after the war. Although the published material is selected from a very large amount of captured material, it is thoroughly representative of German policy in these years.

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because most German negotiations with the Holy See were conducted through the Ministry at this time.

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This collection contains the full text of the majority of documents entered in evidence at the first Nuremberg trial. It also includes indictments, oral arguments, and useful appendices. Supplements A and B contain statements by the defendants, arguments by the defence counsel, and interrogations. There is a great deal of material relating to the Vatican, and much circumvention by the defendants while determining where to place the blame for German policy toward the Catholic Church.

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This volume sums up the reasoning, judgments, and sentencing of the defendants tried at Nuremberg. It helps the reader define the categories of religious persecution for which the German leaders were tried.

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AND OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

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Hitler, Weizsaecker, Mackensen, Ribbentrop, Goebbels, etc.

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No information on the German attitude, but it adds many details external to the situation and gives the Allied thoughts in many cases. Of course, Churchill is his usual self and the only thing portrayed as more correct and valiant than England is Churchill himself.

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Himself a Catholic, Cianfarra has written an earnest, sympathetic account treating Popes Pius XI and XII during the 1933-1943 period. This journalistic view disregards polemic and records first-hand observations concerning the Vatican's attitude toward the war and Germany. Many of the author's remarks are not substantiated by available German documents and must be used with care. Cianfarra also has the reporter's malady of not naming his source. All things considered, it is a good source.

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Ciano was anti-German and well thought of by the Vatican. His daily entries throw little light on the German attitude toward the Church. He could have contributed very much to this problem, but actually recorded very little. The Foreign Minister does record some of the Pope's conversations with the Duce concerning the Reich.

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Another personal account by a close associate of Hitler's. Not much on Hitler's attitude toward the Vatican, and what there is is not new, but a reiteration of statements found throughout Mein Kampf and Conversations.

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This is a good work for the 1933-37 period as Dodd records his conversations with many high ranking German and Catholic leaders. Much insight can be gained as his observation of the church question is acute. It is too bad that he is anti-Catholic as well as anti-German and concentrates more heavily on the Protestant Church. Dodd is a Baptist.

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Herein is presented some insight into the attitude of the German authorities in Italy at the time the Vatican was instrumental in peace negotiations which ties together the memoirs of Walter Schellenberg and Albert Kesselring.

Goebbels, Joseph. The Goebbels Diaries: 1942-1943. Translated by Louis P. Lochner. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1948.

The Diaries give much insight into the beliefs, actions, and policies of members of the Nazi Party. Goebbels was among the leaders of the opposition to the Church and second only to Martin Bormann in closeness to Hitler. His attitude toward propaganda aimed at the Vatican is apparent and he is

somewhat of a weather-gauge of the upper echelon Reich officials who desired to rid Germany of the "politically active" church. The Diaries is one of the best personal narratives available for the study of the German attitude. He was a Catholic and quite aware of the problems Germany had with the Church.

Hassell, Ulrich von. The Von Hassell Diaries: 1938-1944. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1947.

Hassell touches on the attitude of both the Nazi Party and the internal German opposition to the Vatican. He was in a position to observe the situation, and his Diaries indicate that he did just that. Hassell traces, in detail, the German oppositions negotiation for peace through the Vatican. Information he has gleaned from various contacts, as well as from Hitler and Bormann, are recorded as is his contact with generals who sought peace for Germany. A necessary source which far over-shadows that of Papen and Weizsaecker.

Heiden, Konrad. Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1944.

A view of the rise of the Fuehrer within the framework of National Socialism. Little information on the German attitude toward the Church but should be read to help garner the feeling of the period. He does not omit the part played by the Vatican and the Catholic hierarchy in bringing Hitler to power however. Heiden is recognized as knowing more about the rise of Hitler and Nazism than any other objective historian, but it must be remembered that he was anti-Hitler.

Hitler, Adolf. Mein Kampf. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943.

Mein Kampf is, of course, a basic work to be examined in the pursuit of an understanding of the German attitude. His religious beliefs are scattered throughout the work and blended with principles of National Socialism. It is comparable to Conversations in that Hitler's attitude is exposed in generalized, often quixotic terms. It can generally be said that he is consistent in his belief that the Church must give way to National Socialism, but he varies in his thoughts as to when, how far, and in what manner.

Hoffmann, Heinrich. Hitler was my Friend. Translated by R. H. Stevens. London: Burke, 1955.

Hoffmann was Hitler's official photographer and always present at great occasions as well as at dinner parties, etc. He often comments on the religious attitude of Hitler, Bormann, and others and has a sympathetic view. He was, however, so deeply influenced by the National Socialist feeling around him that his judgment was inaccurate. Hoffmann is self-serving, but the work should be read to help grasp the attitude of Hitler and Bormann.

Hull, Cordell. The Memoirs of Cordell Hull. 2 vols. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948.

This work shows that the German attitude toward the Vatican was correct in its awareness of the importance of the Vatican in international affairs. It also throws light on America's negative attitude toward the guarantee of not bombing Rome. Hull writes extensively and covers a tremendous span of years in two volumes. Relations with the Vatican and Germany make up a very minor portion of the work. Still, to understand the German attitude one must understand the power the Vatican possessed and part of that power was concentrated in the United States.

Kesselring, Albert. Kesselring: A Soldier's Record. Translated by Lynton Hudson. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1954.

The bulk of the Record is taken up with German tactical and strategic decisions, and maneuvers of which Kesselring had knowledge. However, for the period from 1944-45 he gives a detailed account of the German and Allied activities in Italy. He describes the aid that he and other German soldiers gave to the Italian population, the Vatican, and the saving of art treasures. He also sheds light on the activities engaged in by himself and S.S. General Wolff in negotiating a peace with the Americans for the surrender of German troops in Italy. The Vatican often acted as intermediary in all of these activities, and it appears that Kesselring co-operated fully.

Murphy, Robert. Diplomat Among Warriors. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1964.

Murphy, a Foreign Service Career Officer with the United States State Department, traveled and worked throughout Europe during World War II. He

is a Catholic and many times gives interesting side-lights on the activities of prominent Catholics during this period. His book is written with a good deal of hindsight, but does offer some fresh and contemporary conclusions. Very little discussion about high ranking personalities who were concerned with the German attitude.

Mussolini, Benito. Memoirs, 1942-1943: With Documents Relating to the Period. Translated by Frances Lobb. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1949.

The Memoirs are apologetic and propagandistic; obviously written to influence world opinion in favor of Mussolini. Useless for Germany's attitude toward the Vatican except that significant material on S.S. General Wolff's negotiations for unconditional surrender of the German forces in Italy is presented. The appended documents are of much more value than the memoir itself. There is also useful information on the bombing of Rome by the Allies. Mussolini consistently grossly exaggerates his case.

Papen, Franz von. Memoirs. Translated by Brian Connell. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1953.

Papen was always in a position to view the German feeling toward the Church. His Memoirs is an autobiographical defense of his activities for the Reich and can generally be criticized for lack of intellectual honesty. Nevertheless, the work must be considered a basic source in this area because of Papen's intimate relationship with the top Nazis and his more than average concern with the Vatican.

Rosenberg, Alfred. Memoirs of Alfred Rosenberg. Commentaries by Serge Lang and Ernst von Schenck. Translated by Eric Posselt. Chicago: Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, 1949.

The work is mainly a commentary on Rosenberg's final testament and fragmentary memoirs which have been partially rewritten to assure readability. The commentators have attempted to interpret Rosenberg's words in the "light of history," but, as it was written in 1949, have not taken a very objective view. It is evident that Rosenberg never felt that he was guilty of any excesses and that, to the end, he was the ideological embodiment of National Socialism. He followed a politically expedient

policy toward the Church although his words were often violently directed against it.

Schacht, Hjalmar Horace Greeley. Confessions of "The Old Wizard." Translated by Diana Pyke. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956.

The Confessions are predominantly concerned with the administration of finances within the Reich, but Schacht was a devote Christian (Protestant) who was against the Reich's church policy. He spoke openly against the Reich's church policy, but his activities in this area are completely overshadowed by his concentration on finance. The work presents a good example of a man who is German by nationality but anti-Reich in ideology, and the tribulations this dichotomy caused him in regard to loyalty and, to a lesser degree, the church.

Schellenberg, Walter. The Labyrinth: Memoirs of Walter Schellenberg. Translated by Louis Hagen. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956.

Schellenberg wrote direct and honest, as well as intriguing, memoirs. His familiarity with the S.S. and S.D. set-up gave him the background to evaluate events in minute detail while observing the reactions of higher Reich leaders and the entire S.S. entourage. Many details can be added to the circumstances surrounding the death of Heydrich and the disclosure of the German Western invasion plans to the Allies. He often delves into the attitude of Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler, Heydrich, Bormann, Canaris, and himself toward the Church. Very good. Very interesting.

Warlimont, Walter. Inside Hitler's Headquarters, 1939-1945. Translated by R. H. Barry. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964.

Particularly good for an examination of the development of Hitler's war plans. The work includes the dialogue of conversations between Hitler and other important personages in the Third Reich. Very few passages relate to German regard for the Vatican, but these are quite important.

Weizsäcker, Ernst. Memoirs of Ernst von Weizsäcker. Translated by John Andrews. Chicago: Regnery, 1951.

The former German Ambassador to the Vatican

presents an apologetic and distorted account of his activities. He discusses only the periphery of the great events that surrounded him. There is much discrepancy between Weizsaecker's account of his activities and information found in the German documents and other memoirs. Still, he adds much detail to major events (e.g. the Maglione letter in 1943) that had been obscure before.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Bullock, Alan. Hitler: A Study in Tyranny. Completely Revised Edition. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

The study is a definitive biography of Hitler and interweaves most political development in detail. But, as Bullock points out, the regime's attitude toward the churches does not fall within the scope of the book. A fine source for studying the background to the Reich-Vatican conflict.

Cochrane, Arthur C. The Church's Confession Under Hitler. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962.

Cochrane devotes his work to Protestantism but shows the degree to which it and Catholicism were involved together in the struggle against German suppression of religion. The most useful material is concerned with the Catholic opposition within Germany. One of the author's conclusions is that the two Churches worked together effectively. This thesis is contradicted by the Dodd Diaries and Hitler's claims, in Conversations, that it was a brilliant maneuver to keep the two from working together.

Colvin, Ian. Chief of Intelligence. London: Victor Gollancz, 1951.

Colvin places his emphasis on Canaris's opposition to Hitler. Much of his evidence relies on circumstantial evidence and speculative thought. Canaris's encounters with the Vatican are mentioned, but in such general terms as to be nearly worthless.

Deakin, F. W. The Brutal Friendship: Mussolini, Hitler, and the Fall of Italian Fascism. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.

Deakin's work is one of the most scholarly studies available on the relationship between Hitler and Mussolini. Many documents not elsewhere published are included.

De Launay, Jacques. Secret Diplomacy of World War II. Translated by Edouard Nadier. New York: Simmons-Boardman, 1963.

Relates briefly to the surrender negotiations carried on by Dulles and S.S. General Wolff in 1945.

Gilbert, G. M. The Psychology of Dictatorship: Based on an Examination of the Leaders of Nazi Germany. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950.

Here is found much information concerning the attitude of German leaders, particularly Papen, toward Catholicism. The work is most important to this subject because it helps the reader to understand the influence the psychological background of the leaders had on their policy making capacity during World War II. Since many of these men were Catholic, their religious environment as children is part of the explanation of their ambivalence toward Catholicism as adults. Curiously, ambivalence toward Catholicism is quite characteristic of the leaders of the Reich.

Goris, Jan-Albert. Belgium in Bondage. New York: L. B. Fischer, 1943.

A pro-Belgium chronicle that examines the German occupation of Belgium and the Belgian resistance. Very interesting reading but short on specific details. No mention is made of the Vatican although a great deal of space is given to the Catholic clergy. Good for getting the feel of the period and the Catholic resistance in churches and unions.

Graham, Robert A. Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1959.

A well-researched documented tracing of Papal diplomatic machinery from the fifteenth century on. There is concern for the legal ideas behind the internationality of the Church, particularly in regard to the United States and the Soviet



Union. This dispassionate study suffers from the lack of available sources in the Vatican and national archives.

Halecki, Oscar. Eugenio Pacelli: Pope of Peace. New York Creative Age Press, 1951.

A very good work which examines the trials and tribulations of Pius XII in detail and adds much interesting, fully developed information to many of the obscure incidents that occurred between the Reich and the Holy See. However, it is, as the title suggests, quite biased. Many of the opinions set forth by the author are grossly incorrect if one is to believe the German documents. All in all, a very interesting book but open to a great deal of debate.

Heiden, Konrad. A History of National Socialism. Translated by Ralph Manheim. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1935.

A detailed examination of National Socialism, and its aims and actions particularly in 1932-33. There is useful discussion about the problems posed by the specific demands of National Socialism in relation to the German Catholic Church and the ideological conflict precipitated by the Concordat. The broader, diplomatic picture which concerns the Vatican is not discussed.

Hochhuth, Rolf. The Deputy. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. New York: Grove Press, 1964.

Hochhuth presents a morality play which caricatures the motives of Pope Pius XII during the Second World War. A compound of fiction and fact is rendered more valuable by the author's "Side-light on History" which documents much of the work. Moral issues abound.

Lehmann, L. H. Vatican Policy in the Second World War. New York: Agora Publishing Co., 1946.

Lehmann's work is of no merit concerning the German attitude. Although a Catholic priest, his thesis is that there was a Jesuit conspiracy to spread Catholic political totalitarianism throughout national totalitarian governments. His conclusion that the Church is disregarding its spiritual mission and becoming dedicated to political ultramontanism deserves consideration.

Lewy, Guenter. The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964.

This is the most comprehensive and well-done work available on the relationship of the Nazi hierarchy to the German Catholic Church. There is also much information on the German attitude, both individually and collectively, toward the Vatican. However, it is mainly concerned with the internal Church. Lewy makes use of a great amount of unpublished material and his sources are generally unimpeachable. It is a well-balanced, objective work. Lewy not only made use of unpublished Foreign Ministry material but gained access to many diocesan archives which contained communications to and from the Holy See. Finally, he held personal interviews with many of the important surviving personalities. His conclusions are, of course, open to discussion.

Manvell, Roger and Fraenkel, Heinrich. Dr. Goebbels: His Life and Death. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960.

A portrait of the career and character of Hitler's Minister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment. It is a biography based upon letters, diaries, and the oral testimony of those who knew him. Not a definitive biography, but it helps to understand the man. Nothing on the Church that cannot be found in better sources.

Namier, L. B. Diplomatic Prelude, 1938-1939. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948.

Inter-relationship of the Vatican with any power is mentioned only in regard to Mussolini and then is very brief. This is a very specific work which is valuable for its delineation of events immediately prior to the invasion of Poland.

Peers, E. Allison. The Spanish Dilemma. London: Methuen & Co., 1940.

Peers is predisposed to favor Spain and wrote in 1940 which was very close to the subject. The work is couched in generalizations, as was the intent, which show the extent to which Catholicism and Russia influenced the possibility of a German-Spanish alliance. It is valuable for this study in that it shows, to a degree, the problem Germany faced with Spanish Catholicism and therefore with the Vatican.

Ritter, Gerhard. The German Resistance: Carl Goerdeler's Struggle Against Tyranny. Translated by R. T. Clark. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1958.

An excellent account of the German Opposition which includes information on the relationship of the Opposition to the Vatican. It is clearly pointed out when and how the Vatican was used to make contact with the Western Powers concerning peace overtures. Of course, much of this is in the realm of conjecture as there is little documentation, but Ritter was in a position to observe and talk to the individuals involved. Quite detailed.

Schwarz, Paul. This Man Ribbentrop. New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1943.

A biography and character study of Hitler's right hand man in foreign affairs. Amusing and superficial. Schwarz holds the diplomatic amateur Ribbentrop in contempt.

Seldes, George. The Catholic Crisis. New York: J. Messner, 1945.

A good examination of the degree to which Catholics and the Vatican influence politics, the press, and politicians among other things. Particularly good for this study are the two chapters: "Who Speaks for the Church?--Coughlin." and "Church Pressure in Politics." The first chapter mentioned attempts to decide how much bishops, etc., reflect Vatican opinion. This work concerns the United States to a large degree, but European problems are intertwined.

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The Vatican: Yesterday - Today - Tomorrow. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1934.

Here is presented a panorama of factual Church history complete with the workings of Vatican personnel. An honest picture of Vatican influence on spiritual and political life through 1933 emerges in a comprehensive narrative. Judicious comment accompanies examination of the Church as a temporal entity.

Shirer, William L. End of a Berlin Diary. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947.

Another of Shirer's biased looks at internal Germany. He looks briefly at a few of the minor German leaders who were devote Catholics, but no light is thrown on the German attitude. Generally of no value to this study.

Thomas, Hugh. The Spanish Civil War. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961.

Probably the best secondary work in the field. Thomas discusses the role of the Catholic Church in Spain and often touches upon the German attitude toward the Church during the Spanish Civil War. This work is complex and demands close reading.

Trevor-Roper, H. R. The Last Days of Hitler. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947.

Trevor-Roper's book is a day by day account of the period from July 20, 1944 to the end in May 1945. He never fails to draw conclusions but they are sometimes rather shaky. The Church and its role in the negotiations for surrender is not mentioned. However, the work is valuable in that it minutely examines the situation in Berlin at this time.

Warmbrunn, Werner. The Dutch Under German Occupation, 1940-1945. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1963.

A good account of the Nazi directives issued and the Dutch reaction. Examines the entire Dutch resistance movement and devotes one chapter to the churches. Not greatly detailed, but it covers the area comprehensively.

#### GENERAL WORKS

Delaney, John J. Dictionary of Catholic Biography. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961.

Delaney has compiled biographies of many Catholics for a long period. The compilation does not include all of the prominent German bishops for the 1933-1945 period.

Dill, Marshal Jr. Germany: A Modern History. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961.

Germany is a survey book which offers little detail. A broad picture emerges which is useful for preliminary work in this field. Considering the general nature of the survey, Dill has handled the problems of the Catholic Church very well.

Hitler's Europe: Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946. Vol. IV. Edited by Arnold Toynbee. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.

This survey makes a good attempt to include the subtle as well as the obvious relations between the Reich and the Vatican. A fine general view of the era but no detail concerning the German attitude toward the Church.

Jarman, T. L. The Rise and Fall of Nazi Germany. New York: New York University Press, 1956.

A short assemblage of the major source material available (300 pages). Covers the entire period but adds nothing new. Jarman does attempt to show the influence of the Hohenstaufen's conflict with the Papacy on the national character of Germany.

Shirer, William L. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, 1962.

A good general history of the Third Reich. The work suffers from anti-German bias and treats German activities in regard to the Church in an unrelated and glossy manner.

Wilmont, Chester. The Struggle for Europe. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952.

One of the best general sources published for the World War II period.

#### ARTICLES

"Bureaucrat of Death," Newsweek, (October 12, 1964), 57-58.

Gurian, Waldemar. "Hitler's Undeclared War on the Catholic Church," Foreign Affairs, XVI, (January 1938), 260-271.

Maritain, Jacques. "Religion and Politics in France," Foreign Affairs, XX, (January 1942), 266-281.

"Pius XII and the Third Reich," Look, Vol. 30, No. 10  
(May 17, 1966), 34-50.

Poole, DeWitt C. "Light on Nazi Foreign Policy,"  
Foreign Affairs, XXV, (October 1946), 130-154.

Sturzo, Luigi. "The Vatican's Position in Europe,"  
Foreign Affairs, XXIII, (January 1945), 211-221.