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# Prerequisites of Peace

William F. Roemer

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## PREREQUISITES OF PEACE

ON SEPTEMBER 12, 1943, the Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull, advocated United States participation in the establishment of a world court to maintain peace; a court whose will would be enforced by armed might, if the court ever finds it necessary to use such forceful means of preventing another world war.

The philosophy of the Secretary of State which leads to the practical adoption of international police enforcement for World Court decisions deserves the most serious consideration, in comparison with that of other competent authorities who have thoroughly studied the requirements of International Law.

Another fully qualified authority in this field of International Law is the present sovereign of Vatican City, Pius XII, whose philosophy of International Law has brought forth practical proposals for the perpetration of peace.

The Pope is both the head of the Catholic Church and the head of the government of the tiny state which is named Vatican City. This city-state is independent of any higher political authority, even though it is situated within Italy and Rome itself, and may be "protected" by unsympathetic powers. The diplomatic practice of the head of government in

Vatican City and his realism in gauging the needs of world society are readily distinguishable from his religious relations with Catholics as head of their Church.

There can be no doubt whatever that the Pope in seeking to assist nations to finding a program for the enforcement of International Law is motivated by zeal for the temporal order of peace. At the same time, the Papal power deals with the governments of nations "in order to gain their recognition of the Church's rights, to make it possible for the Sacraments to be freely administered, for the Mass to be celebrated in every land, that educational facilities for Catholic children and their parents may be made available in all countries." Since negotiation must constantly be carried on with civil authorities, it obviously follows that the Pope is in duty bound to issue messages and encyclicals to the people themselves as well as to the heads of government.

The present reigning Holy Father has been well trained for his diplomatic duties. He was born into a family where diplomatic service for the Vatican was a tradition. His grandfather was Secretary of the Interior for the Papal States until they were seized by the Italian government and incorporated into the Italian state. His father, Philip Pacelli, was a lawyer in the Vatican and his only brother, Francis, helped draw up the famous Lateran Treaty that restored a small portion of the stolen territory to the Popes, in the reign of Pius XI. As a young priest, the future Pius XII worked in the office of the Congregation of Extraordinary Affairs for thirteen years.

It was in the last mentioned office that Pacelli, later Pius XII, acquired his fund of knowledge regarding problems of peace. His work required the quintessence of diplomacy and tact. In 1910, he was sent to London to represent the Vatican at the coronation of the late King George V and Queen Mary. In 1914, he helped to formulate the pact between the Vatican and the Serbian government. As Papal Nuncio the future Pope had the satisfaction of drawing up a pact between the Vatican and the Prussian government in 1929, which was quite an achievement in view of the latter's religious views. Again, while Nuncio to Bavaria, he concluded three more Concordats, one with Bavaria, one with Baden, and one with Jugoslavia.

Pacelli's elevation to the Cardinalate preceded his appointment as Secretary of State. He became one of the most "widely traveled" of Catholic prelates, having been in North and South America, where he utilized extensively our facilities for air transportation. He was elected Pope in 1939. The present World War was not four months old, when at Christmas time in 1939, he issued his first five point peace proposals, which he has repeatedly emphasized time and time again since then. In order to understand the meaning of the five point proposals of Pope Pius XII in his Christmas address in 1939, and another five point suggestion in his Christmas of 1940 address, it might be helpful for us to review the historical background of his 1939 proposals. As we all know, the current world war is generally considered to have begun with the invasion of Poland by Hitler's armies in September 1939. Immediately England and France declared war against Germany because they had just concluded, within a fortnight, a treaty with Poland promising to come to Poland's aid if she were attacked by Germany. The publication of this treaty failed to frighten Hitler because he had made a neutrality pact with Stalin. In the treaty Stalin promised to cooperate with Hitler economically. It was apparently agreed that Hitler would go on to smash the Polish armies and occupy the western half of Poland. Russia in return for her abstention from the defense of Poland, was to be allowed the occupation of the Eastern half of Poland.

England and France were not quite ready to attack Germany from the west. Since Munich, England had been getting ready as best she could, so as to avoid a humiliation similar to that which was her lot when Hitler summoned Chamberlain to their famous conference at Berthesgaden. England and France at first did practically nothing on the western front while Hitler in three weeks smashed the overrated Polish army. Czecho-Slovakia and Austria had preceded Poland in succumbing to German might. Now the Pope saw that his diplomatic efforts to avert war had proved futile. Consequently he endeavored to originate a plan that might even then, at Christmas, bring about a settlement of the difficulties which lay in the way of peace, which he knew would have to be observed if any restoration of order in Europe were to be successful.

## POINT ONE

I. "The fundamental condition of a just and honorable peace is to assure the right to life and independence of all nations, large, small, strong or weak. One nation's will to live must never be tantamount to a death sentence for another."

As I interpret this first point, the Pope is condemning the neo-pagan principle which has motivated most states in the present century, which denies that the moral law has reference to and binds allegedly "soulless" states. He is reminding governments of the moral right of each nation duly organized and capable of independent life, to continue that life without being ruthlessly conquered and subjugated by its larger neighboring state solely for that state's greater power. Poland was very likely in the Pope's mind, as perhaps was Finland.

Again we might recall the case of France and Germany which were preoccupied by fear of the re-birth and growth of each other's power ever since the first world war. This is but an instance of the effect of the anti-religious Revolution in Europe which brought about widespread denial of the moral law as it applies to international affairs.

We might be reminded, in connection with this point, of one of the slogans of the first world war which inspired Americans. President Wilson had told us solemnly that we were fighting for the right of small nations to self-determination, the right to choose their own form of government and make their own laws to suit the conditions of their political economy. It might be safely asserted that "American tradition" has always been in line with this right of self-determination, of the right-to-live of small, as well as large, nations.

Americans should not feel that assistance in the construction of an International Court of Justice would diminish their right to defend their own legitimate independence. Pius XII does not call for a world in which the principle of nationality shall be extinguished. He does not say that there shall cease to be a nation of Frenchmen, or a nation of American freemen. The Church has never desired to destroy the "Active love of country" which is patriotism. The Church has, however, condemned exaggerated nationalism. Pius XII advocates a Society of Nations.

## POINT TWO

II. "Nations must be liberated from the heavy slavery of armaments and the danger that material force instead of serving to protect rights become the tyrannical violator of them."

Point two deals with the subject of progressive disarmament which is the partial or complete abolition of a nation's war equipment. Few attempts at international disarmament were launched prior to the first world war but as a result of peace treaties of 1919 large scale reductions in the disarmaments of Austria and Germany were effected for a time. Important naval disarmament agreements were made later between the United States, Great Britain, France, Japan, and Italy at the Washington Conference in 1921-22. They finally agreed to limit their navies on a basis of 5-5-3 ratio.

I must confess, that I myself have been influenced somewhat by a cynical view—the defeatist attitude that there is no use for one nation to advocate disarmament at any time because there is little hope that any other nation will be willing to do likewise. Yet, in the Washington Conference in 1922 under the leadership of Mr. Hughes, a noble beginning was made. Had Japan and Great Britain lived up to their agreement much good would have resulted.

The Pope is reminding us that we must not allow past defeats to obscure the truth that the race in armaments cannot go on in peace time without eventuating in a catastrophe and in impoverishment for the people. Of course, the Pope certainly did not mean to advocate an ultra pacifistic scheme of disarmament on the part of one nation as long as neighboring states have threatening armaments in construction.

His point is that there must be mutual disarmament on the part of all nations—such as was begun at the Washington Conference, with greater authority placed in our international tribunals.

This second point ties in well with the third point in the Pope's program, which advocates, as we shall see, some sort of international organization which will facilitate arbitration and judicial awards.

## POINT THREE

III. "In any reorganization of international neighborliness it could conform with the maximum of human wisdom for all parties concerned to deduct the consequences of past gaps or deficiencies, and in creating or reconstructing international institutions that have a mission so high but at the same time difficult and full of serious responsibilities, account should be taken of experiences that arose from the inefficacy or defective functioning of similar previous initiatives."

. . . We may notice that the Pope doesn't recommend the resurrection of the League of Nations. The failure of one attempt at organizing a formal Society of Nations does not however preclude another attempt at establishing one which omits impractical or reasonably objectionable forms doomed by the recent experience of their tragic incompleteness.

Many Leagues have in days past been tried and found wanting. We must try and try again until we find the magic formula. A study of the weakness of the League of Nations constituted at the time of the drafting of the Versailles Treaty in 1919 would well reward the post-war planners who hope to achieve a settlement of this war's problems.

We recall the time when President Wilson sailed to Europe to play his part in the organization of the League and to take a hand in the formulation of the Peace treaty. There arose the opportunity of the century to create just such an organization as the Pope is still advocating as a necessary condition for a lasting peace.

It would be too long a story to recount the history of the struggle in which was begotten the League, the refusal of the United States government to ratify Mr. Wilson's draft of the League.

Let us hope that before the end of this war some statesmen will have foresight enough to offer a concrete plan which will embody the principles emphasized by the Pope, a program which can honorably be accepted as just to all governments and nations.

A beginning in such planning has been made sketchily by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill in the Atlantic Charter which enumerates the Four Freedoms as

planks in the new international structure of order after this war has been terminated.

#### POINT FOUR

IV. "A point that should attract particular attention, if a better arrangement of Europe is wanted, concerns the real needs and just demands of nations and peoples as well as of ethical minorities; demands, which if not always enough to form a strict right when there are recognized or confirmed treaties or other juridical documents that oppose them, deserve anyway benevolent examination to meet them in a peaceful way and even where it appears necessary by means of an equitable, wise and unanimous revision of treaties."

It seemed to many European scholars that the remedy for the minorities question is not to be found in the erection of national states for each minority, racial, religious or linguistic. The inclusion of clauses in the peace treaties of 1919-20 signed by Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey for the rights of minorities was a step in the right direction. Some smaller nations were denied admission to the League of Nations until they promised to guarantee minority rights. The League had, however, no way of enforcing these treaties and it is doubtful if a satisfactory way will be found until the spirit of Christian tolerance drives out racial myths and nationalistic prejudices which make the lot of minorities intolerable and the peace of Europe impossible. The spirit of Christianity was lacking in those nations which oppressed minorities. The solution for the minorities question will be found in a system of government which provides for religious freedom, educational freedom, and free expression of opinion within the state. Such is the judgment of the Pope. We Americans generally do not have this acute problem since we live in a democracy.

#### POINT FIVE

V: "But even better and more complete settlements will be imperfect and condemned to final failure if those who guide the fates of peoples and the peoples themselves do not let themselves be penetrated ever more by that spirit that alone can give live authority and obligation to the dead letter of articles in international arrangements; by that sense, namely, of intimate, acute responsibility that measures and weighs human statutes according to the holy unshakable rules of divine law; by that hunger and



thirst for justice that is proclaimed in the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount and which has as a natural presupposition moral justice; by that universal love that is the Christian ideal and therefore throws the bridge also toward those who do not have the benefit of participating in our own faith."

In this point, the Pope warns the post-war planners and treaty makers against the mistake of incorporating revenge and hate in the punitive clauses of treaties made at the close of war. Charity complements Justice. The children of the new generations must not have incentive to revolt from international law because of inhuman restrictions on their national life. The punishment of those inhuman leaders who plotted and engineered the Nazi, Fascist, and Imperial Sun-God revolutions against International Order can be carried out in a summary and judicial manner, without the passionate slaughter of people who can be taught quickly the lessons of democracy.

In conclusion, it may be said that those who condemn Pope Pius for failing to take sides early in the war, forget that he is the common Father of Catholics throughout the world. He is the shepherd of a Christian people who must seek to bring back to the right road the erring sons of men. The most glaring error of the Pope's critics is their failure to see that the Pope's proposals for a just peace is the only foundation upon which can be built a reliable super-structure of law and order.

The prince of Vatican City has not been elected to draft the post-war Covenant of an International Tribunal nor the new International Rules which shall govern the public relations of States with one another. He has nevertheless volunteered to enunciate eternal principles and practical conditions which are rightly conceived as a basic philosophy of peace. Once politics is adjourned in the armistice, statesmen must be ready with a program that does not violate the prerequisite conditions for a just world-order in which International Law will be impartially enforced.

*William F. Roemer*

University of Notre Dame