

CHAPTER 68 : THE VATICAN IN THE MODERN ERA

The Vatican had reached the height of her power in the High Middle Ages. Her political power was such that she could call nations into war, as she did in the Crusades. But the Protestant Reformation greatly diminished the power of the Vatican. No longer would nations tremble at her word. Indeed, coming out of the era of Protestant Reformation, the most powerful nations in the world were not Romish, but Protestant. If it came down to direct military combat, Protestants, and not Rome, would win. The situation called for a very different strategy from the one the Vatican had so successfully employed in the Middle Ages. Brute force would not win the war against Protestantism. The Thirty Years' War had made that abundantly obvious. The Holy Roman Emperor no longer could be counted upon to keep the countries in line with Rome either. Indeed, the Holy Roman Empire was a mere walking skeleton, destined to collapse. The Papal False Prophet needed a new partner to replace the Holy Roman Emperor; one designed to meet the new political challenge Rome faced.

From the Papal Man of Sin's beginning, the Papacy has always worked in conjunction with a beastial partner. From Constantine to the fall of the Roman Empire, it was the Roman emperor. During the Middle Ages the Holy Roman Emperor took on this role. The new beast that filled this slot of Papal partner was the Jesuit Order, under the command of its general, the so called Black Pope. Ignatius Loyola created a masterful organization. Its main weapon was the pen rather than the sword. Jesuits became known as the schoolmasters of Europe during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, not only because of their schools, but also for their pre-eminence as scholars, scientists, and the thousands of textbooks they composed. During their first two centuries the Jesuits were involved in an explosion of intellectual activity, and were engaged in over 740 schools. It was their schools, and not the Protestant schools, which set the pattern for the modern era. Jesuit education, unlike Protestant education, built knowledge upon another foundation from the Bible alone. And as education goes, so generally goes the nation.

The Romish strategy for addressing Protestant nations was to encourage them in the direction of secularism and toleration, rather than trying to bring them directly from established Protestantism to established Romanism. This strategy was manifested in Roman Catholic Maryland's passage of the Toleration Act; King James II's Toleration Act; Roman Catholic France and Spain's support for a secularist United States, independent of Protestant Britain; and the Roman Catholic call for the right to vote in England. Unlike during the Reformation era when Roman Catholics in Protestant states called for a return to established Romanism, in the modern era Roman Catholics in Protestant states called for a secularist state. 'We merely want to vote alongside Protestants,' was their cry. And, starting in the United States, their cry was heeded, and Romanists were given the franchise.

It is obvious this Roman Catholic call for toleration and secularism in Protestant states was based more in expediency than principle, because the Roman Catholic Church in Catholic countries steadfastly sought to maintain the Church's preferred status. Long

after Roman Catholics in the United States had the same political privileges as Protestants, many Roman Catholic countries were still suppressing Protestantism and denying political privileges to Protestants, with Roman Catholic Church support. It was only later in history that the secularism of the formerly Protestant nations took hold in most Roman Catholic nations.

Especially in places where the Roman Catholic Church had formerly enjoyed privileged status, the transition to modern secularism was not easy. We have already pointed out the rough ride of the Church during the French Revolution. In Italy as well the transition was not easy, but in the end the Church adapted well.

The Papal States, under the Vatican, ruled a large portion of the Italian peninsula for more than a thousand years until the mid 19th century. Most of the territory of the Papal States was seized by the newly united Kingdom of Italy, much to the chagrin of the Vatican. In 1870, the Pope's holdings were further circumscribed when Rome itself was annexed. Disputes between a series of "prisoner" popes and Italy were not finally resolved until 1929 by three Lateran treaties (also known as the *Concordat*), which established the independent state of the Vatican City and granted Roman Catholicism special status in Italy. The Lateran Treaties of 1929 provided for the mutual recognition of the then Kingdom of Italy and the Vatican City. The treaties were negotiated between Cardinal Pietro Gasparri on behalf of the Vatican, and Benito Mussolini, the Fascist leader, as Prime Minister of Italy. The three treaties included:

- A treaty recognizing the independence and sovereignty of the Holy See and creating the State of the Vatican City.
- A concordat defining the civil and religious relations between the government and the church within Italy.
- A financial convention providing the Holy See with compensation for its losses in 1870.

Through the concordat, the Pope agreed to submit candidates for bishop and archbishop to the Italian government, to require bishops to swear allegiance to the Italian state before taking offices, and to forbid the clergy from taking part in politics. Italy agreed to submit its rules on marriage and divorce to make them conformable to the rules of the Roman Catholic Church, and to exempt clergy from military conscription. The treaties granted the Roman Catholic Church the status of the established church in Italy. They also gave the Roman Catholic Church substantial control over the Italian educational system.

The financial strength of the Roman Catholic Church was greatly enhanced by the concordat of 1929. A financially besieged Pope Pius XI exchanged recognition and support of Mussolini's fascist government for more than \$90 million and the establishment of the Vatican as a sovereign state. The Vatican's emphasis on financial stability led it into other morally questionable financial arrangements with Adolf Hitler, the fascist state of Croatia and reputed Sicilian Mafia financier Michele Sindona. Many corrupt financial deals revolve around the Istituto per le Opere di Religione (IOR),

commonly known as the Vatican Bank, an entity unto itself without corporate or ecclesiastical ties to any other agency within the Holy See. The Vatican Bank was created upon receipt of the money from the Italian government, and it has been plagued by scandals and secret deals since its inception. Let's briefly consider some of these.

The Vatican assisted in operating a "rat line" expatriation movement for Nazis and other war criminals, and a financial deal linking the papacy with illegal, dirty money flowing through its bank, the IOR or Institute for Religious Works. Information about this and other bank scandals especially reached public attention with a body found on the morning of June 17, 1982 beneath London's Blackfriars bridge. The corpse was dangling from a rope, weighed down with 14 pounds of brick and stone; the victim's hands had been tied behind his back, a fact which seemed to be ignored by the coroner who pronounced the affair a simple suicide. But there was much more. The body was that of Roberto Calvi, head of the elite Banco Ambrosiano, at the time the largest privately owned financial institution in Italy. A second inquest, demanded by Calvi's family, began to blow open a financial and political scandal that reverberated throughout the European continent, and beyond.

When investigators began digging into the Calvi affair, they discovered a shortfall of nearly \$1.3 billion at Banco Ambrosiano. Later, the money was traced to accounts owned by the Vatican. Calvi and his bank were also involved with a shadowy figure named Licio Gelli, head of a renegade secret Masonic lodge named P-2 or "Propaganda Due." The P-2 membership roles included over a thousand leading political, financial and government figures; subsequent investigation revealed that Gelli's organization had links to the Italian intelligence ministries, senior military staff, even top figures in the nation's media. Forty-eight members of the parliament were secret members, along with four Cabinet ministers. Gelli had created a "state within a state." It was no wonder that in ruling circles, the enigmatic and secretive Gelli was referred to as "the Puppet Master. "

Who was Licio Gelli? And how was he linked to the Vatican bank? Gelli had declared that "the doors of all bank vaults open to the right," a metaphorical claim about the penchant of big monied interests to fund the sorts of causes that the Puppet Master operated. Gelli had been active in the fascist Black Shirts Battalion in the Spanish civil war when aristocrats and the church threw their lot behind General Franco, and during World War II he served as a key liaison officer to the elite German SS Division of Hermann Goring. In the cold-war era, he brokered his services to the Italians, the British and by some accounts even to the Soviet KGB.

But Gelli's main efforts centered on resurrecting a fascist order in modern Italy; to do this, he used his connections in the Italian secret service to obtain some of the most sensitive intelligence files on leading citizens, thus giving him carte blanche to blackmail his way into the circles of the country's ruling elite. "Propaganda Due" was the culmination of that effort. The Vatican connection to the Gelli-Calvi affair dates back to rise of Benito Mussolini, who in 1921 organized the Italian fascists of the old Fascio di Combattimento as a political movement. After becoming Prime Minister, Mussolini negotiated a series of agreements with the Vatican and finally settled "the Roman

Question" which had arisen in 1870 when the newly formed Italian kingdom annexed the Papal States. Since then, the Italian government had guaranteed the Roman Catholic Church only limited sovereignty, and a subsidy of 3,250,000 lire per year. By published accounts, the Popes considered themselves "prisoners" of the state.

After World War II, the race was on between the Soviet and western blocks to apprehend Nazi war criminals, or recruit intelligence and other assets. The Vatican used its resources to provide passports, money and other support for church-run "Ratlines" that transported former Nazis and supporters out of Europe to safer havens in the Middle East, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and South America. Organizations like ODESSA (Organization of Former Officers of the S.S.) and "The Spider" took advantage of this service, and by some accounts the Vatican Ratline provided support to as many as 30,000 Nazis. Among the beneficiaries of the Holy See's largesse were former Gestapo operative Klaus Barbie, Adolph Eichman, Dr. Joseph Mengele (the "White Angel" or "Angel of Death of the Auschwitz death camp), Gustav Wagner, Commandant of the Soirbibor camp, and Franz Stangl of the Treblinka extermination facility. Members of the Waffen SS "Galician Division" were resettled as well.

As the cold war heated up, the western allies formed a Europe-wide network under the authority of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE); proposed by CIA Director Allen Dulles, the network -- dubbed "Stay Behind" was envisioned as a team of anti-Communist guerrillas that would operate behind any Soviet lines in the event of an invasion from the East. As part of "Stay Behind," another covert program -- Operation Gladio -- was put in place in 1956. This was a joint undertaking between the Central Intelligence Agency and various European secret services. Licio Gelli was one of the coordinators of Gladio network, which by the 1970s had mushroomed to over 15,000 operatives and contacts.

If Gladio and "Stay Behind" might be considered the front line troops in Gelli's operation, then P-2 was the "shadow government." It took money to operate all of this, however, and one insight into how Gelli was intimately connected with ruling circles is demonstrated in his 1974 secret meeting with Alexander Haig, former NATO Supreme Commander who had become White House Chief of Staff under Richard Nixon. Haig assured Gelli of continued funding for both Propaganda Due and his various black ops. It might be added that Haig was also a loyal Romanist.

It was here that Roberto Calvi enters the picture. Both Calvi's Banco Ambrosiano and the Vatican's Istituto per de Riligione (IOR) became conduits for laundered money of all sorts. Under the direction of American Bishop Paul Marcinkus, head of the IOR, money was flowing through the Holy See's ledgers from a number of sources, and included cash from "Stay Behind" funding and even Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, himself a money conduit for organized crime figures.

There have been published reports that Albino Luciana, elected Pope John Paul I, was intent on putting an end to the dirty activities of the IOR, and the tenure of Bishop

Marcinkus. Various theories have been proposed to explain how thirty days after his election to the papacy and in good health, John Paul I was suddenly found dead in his bed. And no autopsy was allowed to determine the cause of death. In any case, the new Pope -- Carol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II -- was elected, and implemented his own conservative agenda, in a *quid pro quo* arrangement with the US government. Under John Paul II, the Vatican received official diplomatic recognition from the US government in a form of Concordat, and soon over \$12,000,000 in American covert ops funds were being funneled through the Vatican Bank to aid the Solidarity Trade Union in Poland and to help ensure both the breakup of the Soviet Union and the church's position in a post-Soviet Europe. Also as part of the deal, US President Ronald Reagan's administration bailed out the Vatican Bank with \$300 million of "discretionary CIA funds" to help rescue it from some of its financial problems. (It was at this time that conservative Romanist Bill Casey served as director of the US CIA, having been appointed by President Ronald Reagan. Casey's tenure in the position was characterized by scandal and intrigue, much of which has only been disclosed after Casey's death.) In turn, the Roman Catholic Church helped Reagan in his 1984 US Presidential bid, securing him many "Reagan Democrat" (i.e., "Roman Catholic") votes. And back in Italy it was "business as usual" at the Institute for Religious Works.

Meanwhile, Banco Ambrosiano was in financial trouble. Calvi began skimming from the funds flowing through Banco Ambrosiano to prop up bad loans, and even agreed to "launder" drug money for Mafia elements. He reportedly sought financial help from the secretive Catholic group known as Opus Dei ("God's Work"), and traveled to London to meet with the group's treasurer in hopes of selling a minority stake in Banco Ambrosiano. But Calvi had crossed too many people, and the skimming operation threatened a political scandal. In 1992, a Mafia defector told investigators that Calvi had been murdered on the orders of a British drug dealer named Francesco DiCarlo. The plan unraveled when Calvi's family demanded a second inquiry into his "suicide."

Licio Gelli already "disappeared" from a Swiss prison several years ago where he was being held after the discovery of the P-2/Calvi/IOR scandal. Court documents trace the flow of money from the Corleone Mafia family to investments in the Vatican bank. In connection with the spectacular failure of Banco Ambrosiano, Britain's Daily Telegraph observed: "The Holy See resisted all attempts by magistrates investigating the crash to force the now-retired Marcinkus to submit to Italian justice over the crash." Another twist involved a probe by Italian authorities into Calvi's murder, and a report that a "Vatican finance figure" (Telegraph) was present at the meeting where the plan to murder Calvi was discussed.

Why does the Vatican's involvement in the Calvi affair keep cropping up? The criminal organizations behind the scandal had links to the IOR and the Vatican hierarchy. In late August, it was announced that Cardinal Michele Giordano, Archbishop of Naples, was under investigation for usury, extortion and membership in a criminal group. Giordano was served with a warrant at his "palace" by prosecutors and members of Italy's Finance Guards unit; he threatened a diplomatic incident and claimed that his residence, being an

office of the Papacy, enjoyed diplomatic immunity and extraterritorial status. Investigators still obtained paper documents and computer disks.

The Cardinal's brother, Mario Giordano, had been arrested a week earlier in connection with a probe of Banco di Napoli. Two other bank officials, including a former manager, have been charged with extortion and running an illegal usury operation with interest as high as 400%. "Investigators have traced back to the cardinal and his administration cheques totaling more than 250,000 pounds cashed by his brother..." notes the Telegraph.

There is a long history of corruption revolving around the Vatican, and the 1929 concordat thus opened a new chapter in that long history.

In 1984, a new concordat between the Holy See and Italy modified certain of the earlier treaty provisions, including the primacy of Roman Catholicism as the Italian state religion. But as a practical matter, the Roman Catholic Church still is the favored church in Italy, although on paper Italy is secularist.

The State of the Vatican City is the smallest independent country in the world (both in area and in population), a landlocked enclave surrounded by the city of Rome in Italy. Though small in size, she is internationally powerful, the Vatican is the home of the Pope, and forms the territory of the Holy See, the central authority of the Roman Catholic Church. This means she enjoys a large network of priests in almost every nation of the world, an even larger number of religious adherents in these nations, and religious orders, especially the Jesuit Order, ready to defend her interests and undermine the interests of Protestantism.

The Vatican City includes the Vatican Hill (*mons vaticanus*), whose name antedates Christianity, and the Vatican Fields north of the hill, upon which St. Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, and the Vatican Museums are built. This originally uninhabited part of Rome (the *ager vaticanus*) had always been considered sacred, even before the arrival of Christianity. Vatican City and St. Peter's Basilica of the Roman Catholic Church were built upon what was called in Latin *vaticanus mons* or *vaticanus collis*. The words *mons* and *collis* mean hill or mountain. The words *vatic* / *vates* / *vatis* all relate to "prophecy". So from antiquity this was regarded as the hill of prophecy. In 326 AD the first church was built on the supposed site of the tomb of Saint Peter, and from then on the area started to become more populated.

The Holy See (Vatican City) conducts an active and effective diplomacy. She maintains formal diplomatic relations with 177 nations; 69 of these maintain permanent resident diplomatic missions accredited to the Holy See in Rome. The rest have missions located outside Italy with dual accreditation. The Holy See maintains 179 permanent diplomatic missions abroad. The Holy See is especially active in international organizations. It has permanent observer status at the United Nations in New York, the Office of the United Nations in Geneva and specialized institutes, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome and the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in Paris. The Holy See also has a member delegate at the International Atomic Energy Agency and at

the UN Industrial Development Organization in Vienna. It maintains permanent observers at the Organization of American States in Washington, DC, and the Council of Europe. In addition, the Holy See has diplomatic relations with the European Union in Brussels. In 1997 the Holy See became a member of the World Trade Organization. She also enjoys membership status in the Arab League and Organization for African Unity. This gives the Roman Catholic Church political power unique among the religious institutions in the world, as well as unique among the political institutions in the world.

The Roman Catholic Church has a sophisticated missions arm. Roman missions are carried on both by missionary societies and by religious orders, all under the supreme direction of the Pope, and also more or less under the general supervision of the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide at Rome, since its foundation by Gregory XV in 1622. This important congregation has been described as corresponding pretty much in the Catholic Church to the colonial office in the former British empire, and its head, the Prefect of Propaganda, to the secretary of state for the colonies. It holds supreme control over all the foreign missions in heathen countries. A special section (erected by Pius IX) has charge of the affairs of all the Oriental rites in union with the Roman see. Confining our attention at present to the missions strictly understood under foreign, i.e. to heathen or non-Christian countries, we shall find the whole of these parts of the globe carefully mapped and parceled out by propaganda to a variety of missionary agencies or religious orders. The government of the various mission fields is generally carried on by Vicars-Apostolic (i.e. titular bishops acting as vicars or delegates of the Apostolic see) or Prefects-Apostolic (i.e. priests with similar powers, but without episcopal rank). In some cases a regular territorial hierarchy has been established. Of the religious societies engaged in the evangelization of these many fields of labor, some have been established exclusively for foreign missionary work among the heathen. The other missions are entrusted to the care of various religious orders and congregations, which take up foreign missionary work in addition to their labors in Christian countries. Such are the Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, Lazarists, Augustinians, Marists, &c. Besides the above orders of priests, an immense number of religious societies of women are engaged in works of education and charity throughout the whole of the foreign mission field.

By far the greater part of the Roman missionary work in the modern era has been done by France. The French government, anticlerical as it has long been at home, was the watchful and strenuous protector of Roman Catholic missions abroad; and it is evident that not a little political influence in foreign countries has been gained thereby. Protestant missionaries have been opposed on political as well as religious grounds. Roman Catholic France has been pivotal in undermining Protestantism wherever she resided, including in North America.

One aspect of Roman Catholic missions has been to keep scripture out of the hands of the laity and to distort its doctrines. For 600 years the Roman Catholic Church attempted to keep vernacular translations of the Bible out of the hands of the people. The Council of Toulouse, in 1229, decreed that "the laity" could not possess the books of the Old and New Testament "in the vulgar tongue." Waldensian and other Bible-believing people were mercilessly persecuted and their scriptures destroyed. The Council of Trent, in

1546, claimed that the indiscriminate distribution of the scriptures caused more evil than good, and forbade the people to possess the Bible without a written license. Those who possessed Bibles without a license were commanded to deliver them up to the Catholic authorities under threat of inquisition terrors. Booksellers were forbidden to sell any Bibles except to people who possessed a license from the Catholic Church. Huge quantities of scriptures in English, Germany, Italian, French, Spanish, and in other languages, were confiscated and destroyed throughout the 13th to the 19th centuries. Bible translators and distributors were imprisoned and burned. Even after the Catholic inquisition was outlawed in many lands in the 18th and 19th centuries, the popes continued to condemn the free distribution of scripture. Pius VII, in 1816, condemned the Bible society in Poland and claimed that the distribution of scripture was undermining "the very foundations of religion" and was "eminently dangerous to souls." He said, "The Holy Scriptures, when circulated in the vulgar tongue, have, through the temerity of men, produced more harm than benefit." Leo XII, in 1824, said that "if the sacred scriptures be everywhere indiscriminately published, more evil than advantage will arise." In 1825 Leo mandated that the decrees of the Council of Trent be enforced against distribution of scriptures. Pius VIII, in 1829, condemned the Bible societies and the free distribution of scripture. Gregory XVI, in 1836, and again in 1844, affirmed the decrees of his predecessors. In another bull of 1845, this pope repeated his condemnation of Bible society scriptures and denied that the scriptures should be freely distributed to all people. Pius IX, in 1850, issued an encyclical letter which condemned the Bible societies. In 1864 this pope issued a Syllabus of Errors, in which he again condemned Bible societies, lumping them together with Communism, secret societies, and other evils, labeling them "pests of this kind." This became official Roman Catholic dogma in the First Vatican Council. Leo XIII, in 1897, prohibited "all versions of the vernacular, even by Catholics, unless approved by the Holy See, or published under the vigilant care of bishops."

In Roman-dominated lands, the Bible was almost an unknown book among the common people. Consider this testimony about conditions existing in the city of Rome as late as the mid 19th century: "The Bible in Rome is a strange and rare book. The only edition of it authorized to be sold here, is in fifteen large volumes, which are filled with Popish commentaries. Of course none but the rich can purchase a copy of the sacred Scriptures. Indeed very few of the common people know what we mean by the Bible" (J.A. Clark, Protestant Episcopal Church of St. Andrew, Philadelphia, in a letter to his congregation, dated from Rome, March 24, 1838; reprinted by Charles Elliott, *Delineation of Roman Catholicism*, 1851, p. 23).

Consider the situation in Ireland, another bastion of Roman Catholicism. In 1907 and 1908 the Irish Church Mission made a diligent search of book shops in Catholic Ireland to determine the availability of Catholic Bibles. Note the result: "In the booksellers' shops of Athlone, Balbriggan, Drogheda, Mullingar, Wexford, and Clonmel, not a Bible, or New Testament, or scrap of Scripture of the Church's authorized version, could be found--a shop assistant at Mullingar, saying, 'I never saw a Catholic Bible.' ... in Cork, with over 76,000 inhabitants, there are twenty-four Roman Catholic booksellers, of whom twenty did not keep the scriptures, two of them asking the would-be purchaser if the Douay New Testament, of which they knew nothing, was 'a new monthly

publication.' Lastly, in Dublin itself, out of four large Roman Catholic publishing and bookselling establishments, only one had the scriptures, whilst the answer given to an inquiry for a New Testament at the depot of The Catholic Truth Society was, 'We don't keep it.' The conclusion arrived at by the commissioners who ransacked the booksellers' shops in Ireland for Bibles, was 'that in nine-tenths of the cities, towns, and villages of Ireland a Roman Catholic could not procure a copy of the Roman Catholic Bible or New Testament'" (Alexander Robertson, *The Papal Conquest*, 1909, pp. 166,167).

It was 1831 before the first Bible was printed in Latin America, and when the Catholic Church finally did allow the publication of some scriptures there, they were so outrageously expensive that the common man could not afford a copy. "A traveler across Brazil in 1902, who inquired carefully into the subject, found in a thousand miles bishops and priests in plenty, but not a single copy of the Bible in any lay home; nor had most of the residents ever heard of the Bible, though they were able, willing, and anxious to buy a copy when it was shown to them" (Jacobus, *Roman Catholic and Protestant Bibles Compared*, 1905, p. 235). These examples could be multiplied exceedingly.

When it finally became impossible in the modern era to stop the widespread distribution of Bibles, the Catholic Church had to change her tactics, principally by rejecting what is characterized as "literal" interpretations of the Bible, in favor of more theologically liberal notions. This shift is reflected in the difference between the First Vatican Council in the 19th century and the Second Vatican Council in the 20th century.

There have been two major ecumenical councils recognized by the Vatican in modern times. The First Vatican Council took place in 1869 - 1870 and was the 20th of ecumenical councils recognized by Roman Catholicism. The First Vatican Council was summoned by Pope Pius IX. Its most notable "accomplishment" was declaring the primacy and papal infallibility of the Bishop of Rome. About 60 members of the council effectively abstained by leaving Rome the day before the vote and the debate was still heated. It was especially objected to by the American delegation. Bishop (later canonized) Antonio Maria Claret suffered a fatal heart-attack during the debate shortly after condemning the "blasphemies and heresies uttered on the floor of this Council". The discussion and approval of the constitution gave rise to serious controversies which led to the withdrawal from the church of those known as Old Catholics. The Council also confirmed the Pope's positions delineated in his *Syllabus of Errors* (1864). After the *Syllabus*, it became heresy for a Roman Catholic to believe that "in the present day it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship." It was heresy to believe that "the Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church." It also denounced the Bible societies which distributed the scriptures.

It should also be noted that Pius IX announced the dogma of the Immaculate Conception during his Papal reign. This dogma teaches that Mary was excluded from original sin from the moment of her conception.

The Second Vatican Council took place in the 1962 - 1965 and was the 21st. It was a pastoral, non-dogmatic ecumenical council of the Catholic church, which means it neither amended nor denied the dogma declared at any of the previous ecumenical councils, including the notorious Council of Trent, with its many anathemas against the Protestant faith. Rather, it affirmed the dogma of preceding councils, while yet changing the image and approach of the church to those outside the Roman Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council opened under Pope John XXIII in 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI in 1965. That the Council was pastoral and non-dogmatic is made clear by the Opening Address of the Second Vatican Council given by Pope John XXIII in 1962. It has often been cited as the most significant event in Catholicism in the 20th century. For Catholics, the most visible results of various interpretations of the Council's sixteen documents were changes in how church sacraments were practiced, the use of vernacular languages for the Mass, and a revolutionary new attitude towards their relationship with Jews.

Many theological liberals hailed the Second Vatican Council as a modernizing event that brought the Church away from its dogmatic view of scripture, devotion to Scholasticism, and firm ideas on the "Four Last Things" (i.e., Death, Judgement, Heaven, and Hell). They see Vatican II as being the beginning of a "New Springtime" that has been a source of renewal and revitalization for what they believe was a stagnant institution. Others view the Council as having been a negative (or mostly negative) influence for those very same reasons. Traditional Catholics tend to see the Council as having changed the focus of the Church from the "saving of souls" to centering on man's temporal well-being. It definitely marked a change of face on the issue of secularism and "freedom of religion".

The Second Vatican Council was a Jesuit triumph, for it officially codified what had been the Jesuit *modus operandi* in addressing Protestantism in the modern era, using secularism to undermine Protestantism and enhance Romanism. Jesuit Father John Courtney Murray, an expert at the Second Vatican Council, succeeded in reconciling secular doctrines of separation of church and state and freedom of conscience with the theological tradition of the Catholic Church. He has come to be described as the "architect" of the conciliar document on religious freedom.

Pope John Paul II has employed theological liberalism and latitudinarianism to reach out and bring more people into a favorable impression of Romanism. For instance, he has affirmed his belief in the Big Bang Theory, a theory developed by Jesuit scientist Monsignor Georges Lemaitre (1884-1966), known as the "Father of the Big Bang Theory." The very original cosmic theory that made Monsignor Lamaitre famous also brought him to induction into the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences. He further served as President of that body for six years before his death. By affirming the Big Bang Theory, and the overall evolutionary conception, the Roman Catholic Church has enhanced its appeal in the modern "intellectual" world. The Pope has reached out to Muslims by kissing the Koran. And he has actively pursued ecumenical ties with a broad swath of denominations and sects.

Before the Protestant Reformation the Roman Catholic Church had been quite theologically diverse. So long as one stayed within the bounds of the Church, tipping

one's hat to the Pope, much was tolerated. But in reaction to the Protestant Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church had become more theologically narrow. Dissent of any kind could become threatening to the Church. The Second Vatican Council marks a shift back to theological diversity. The modern Roman Catholic Church has adapted well to modernism and secularism, and is no longer so threatened by Protestantism. Indeed, it has been historic Protestantism that has significantly waned in the modern era, despite the greater accessibility to scripture in the modern world.

The Roman Catholic Church has even been able to weather various corruption scandals, like ones previously noted in this chapter. There are a plethora of others involving the Vatican. Its banking arm has been central in various international money laundering schemes, including ones associated with drug money. Vatican officials even conspired to launder millions of dollars looted in one of the largest scandals to rock the U.S. insurance industry. The scam was headed by financier Martin Frankel, who has been charged with racketeering in Connecticut. Frankel bought insurance companies, including one registered in Missouri, then siphoned the insurers' cash reserves and used them to purchase mansions, cars, diamonds and gold. Frankel fled to Germany in 1999 after Mississippi insurance regulators began asking questions about a charity with ties to the Vatican that Frankel had used as a "front" to purchase insurance companies. Frankel's connection to the church was Monsignor Emilio Colagiovanni, a senior member of the Curia, or Vatican government, and an appellate judge in the church courts. In the late 1990s, Colagiovanni was the president of Monitor Ecclesiasticus, a religious and charitable foundation that publishes the decisions of Vatican courts. Colagiovanni was charged with wire fraud and money laundering. Frankel established a charity -- the St. Francis of Assisi Foundation to Serve and Help the Poor and Alleviate Suffering -- that he would use to acquire insurance companies, using money that he already had looted in prior insurance schemes. Colagiovanni used his foundation to make it appear as if St. Francis' funding came from Vatican sources, and assured others that St. Francis was legitimate. Colagiovanni used his position as a member of the Curia to convince state government officials and insurance companies in the United States that St. Francis was connected with the Vatican through Monitor Ecclesiasticus, and that St. Francis was a Vatican-funded initiative. In return, Frankel agreed to transfer \$5 million to a Monitor Ecclesiasticus account that Colagiovanni controlled. Colagiovanni also is alleged to have escorted executives from an insurance company on a private Vatican tour to assure them that St. Francis had received Vatican money. Senior Vatican officials approved the scheme and took no action to repudiate Colagiovanni's misrepresentations. The insurance commissioners of the five states are already seeking more than \$600 million in damages from Frankel in a lawsuit filed in 2000. The latest lawsuit was filed under federal racketeering statutes, which allow for actual damages to be tripled. A final judgment in this case could top \$600 million. Missouri officials became involved in the case when a company registered in the state, International Financial Services Life Insurance Co., was declared insolvent in May 1999. Frankel acquired International Financial Services through a holding company in 1994. International Financial Services was registered in Missouri but had no offices there. It was licensed to provide modest burial plans in 40 states, but it had only one licensed agent in Missouri. Officials have estimated that the company lost \$57 million in the scam.

Another scandal that has rocked the Roman Catholic Church is the cover-up of widespread sexual abuse of parishioners by Roman Catholic priests. A report by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice has indicated 10,667 people alleged abuse by 4,392 priests between 1950 and 2002. Though the scandal of priest abuse spread to every diocese, Boston has been the epicenter, with over 250 priests accused of molesting little boys. But even more damning was the widespread cover-up which followed these alleged cases of abuse. Boston Cardinal Bernard Law, for example, was forced to resign in 2002 because of evidence that he had covered up countless cases of criminal behavior. As head of the archdiocese, Law admitted to a grand jury he had personal knowledge of many cases of sexual abuse of minors – which is a serious crime, not just a mortal sin – yet failed to report them to police. Not only that, he allowed those priests to continue their ministry, merely assigning them to another parish, where there was a fresh crop of altar boys to prey upon. Documents reveal that the cover-up was actually Vatican policy, which is clearly a criminal act. For instance, a secret 1962 Vatican document, approved by then-Pope John XXIII, called for strict secrecy in handling priests accused of soliciting sex in the confessional. This Vatican policy explains why the Vatican has rewarded Bernard Law with a plush job, despite documented evidence of his criminal behavior. Law was named by the pope to the powerful position of Archpriest of St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome. As head of one of the four most important churches in Rome, St. Mary's archpriest is automatically considered a major player in the Vatican. The position comes with a palatial apartment and a \$12,000-a-month stipend. And this latest honor is awarded to Law on top of nine different Vatican posts he already holds, including membership in the Congregation for Clergy, which reviews sexual-abuse cases sent to Rome. These benefits appear to come because of Law's loyal protection of the crimes of the Vatican in the cover-up.

The scandal has cost the Roman Catholic Church dearly. Just as a result of Law's mismanagement, his successor, Archbishop Sean O'Malley, was forced to shell out \$85 million to settle over 552 lawsuits filed against the diocese – a move that will require closing 20 percent of Boston's parish churches. And other lawsuits have been filed in many other dioceses, already resulting in pay-outs of millions of dollars.

Most of the sexual abuse cases involved sodomy. In his book, *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, Father Donald Cozzens, a Catholic seminary president, says there is such a high percentage of gay priests in the church that he is concerned “the priesthood is or is becoming a gay profession.” A.W. Richard Sipe, too, estimates that between 25 percent and 45 percent of American priests are homosexual in orientation. There is also a significantly higher rate of AIDS in the Roman Catholic priesthood than in the general population.

With its network of priests and religious orders, combined with unscrupulous methods, the Vatican is able to exert an immense amount of influence in national politics of the US as well as most of the other nations of the world. In a previous chapter we showed the significant influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the formation of the United States.

Her power has increased as an increasing percentage of the US population has become Roman Catholic. Most of the growth is attributable to immigration from Roman Catholic nations. The Roman Catholic Church has been a major lobbyist for the flow of immigrants from Catholic nations (especially south of the border into the United States), and it has provided a support network for the newly arrived immigrants. The Roman Catholic Church to a great extent denies the right of national borders:

“Pius XII...became the first Pontiff to affirm an explicit, though conditional, "right" to migrate. Public authorities unjustly deny the rights of human persons if they block or impede emigration or immigration except where grave requirements of the common good, considered objectively, demand it (Speeches, 1959).

His successor, Pope John XXIII, also voiced the emerging doctrine of "just reasons" for immigration: Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there (Pacem in Terris).

The right to emigrate was enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which does not, however, contain any right of immigration:

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

The right to immigrate had been explicitly rejected by most nations, including the United States. Pacem in Terris proclaims the promotion of the personal rights of all as the primary end of governments. This encyclical deplored the inadequacy of nation-states and the international system to realize the common good and the rights of individuals (Christiansen, 1988). Pope John implied a preference for world government, but prescribed neither structures nor roadmaps.

Pacem in Terris evokes the underlying historical tension between the Catholic church and the nation-state, with its concepts of geographically defined jurisdiction and obligations, exclusive sovereignty, and the supremacy of national interests. In the three decades since John XXIII, the church has become even more antagonistic toward national assertions of sovereignty, not only in the movement of peoples across borders, but in the international flow of trade, knowledge, culture and capital.”

The Roman Catholic Church can effectively use emigration/immigration (legal and illegal) for its own political advantage. For example, it can make the most powerful nation in the world (the USA) Roman Catholic. Also, since Roman Catholicism tends to impoverish nations when it is the dominant religion, it allows these weak Roman Catholic nations to relieve their own problems by pushing them off onto other (non-Roman Catholic) nations. And with its extensive world-wide network of priests, as well as its orders (Jesuit, Dominican, etc.), it can readily effect and manipulate population flows to its own political advantage.

In the US, Vatican influence has been manifested in the intelligence service. It was a Roman Catholic that created what evolved into the CIA. For creating the Office of Strategic Services [OSS], the wartime predecessor to the CIA, General William "Wild Bill" Donovan was decorated in July 1944 by Pope Pius XII with the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Sylvester, the oldest and most prestigious of papal knighthoods. This award has been given to only one hundred other men in history, who "by feat of arms or writing or outstanding deeds have spread the faith and have safeguarded and championed the [Roman Catholic] Church." Donovan used his power to assist the Vatican, and he was rewarded for his services with the highest Roman Catholic award ever received by an American. No doubt, thousands of others have striven with their deeds for similar recognition. The CIA also has served as an agency through which secret assistance to the Roman Catholic Church has been provided by American society members acting as her defenders. During the CIA's formative years, nominal Protestants predominated. However, Roman Catholics wrested control of the CIA's covert-action section. It was no coincidence that some of the agency's more grandiose operations were in Catholic countries of Latin America and on behalf of the Catholic regime of South Vietnam.

The writer John Cooney provides insights into Roman Catholic political power in the twentieth century in his book *The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman*. Here are some sample quotes from the book:

“The close relationship between Spellman and President Roosevelt led to Spellman’s becoming a national and international power broker and to covert cooperation between the Vatican and the U.S. in international affairs.” – center picture pages

“When Spellman died on December 2, 1967, President Johnson lost one of the most ardent backers of his war policy [the Vietnam War- JPM]. Johnson’s arrival at the funeral was secretive for fear of demonstrations.” – center picture pages

“The Vatican had spent a great deal of money bringing the Christian Democrats to power [in Italian elections- JPM]; the Pope sent Galeazzi to Spellman and Joe Kennedy to find a way to make up the Vatican losses. The Pope didn’t expect the money to come from Spellman’s seemingly inexhaustible treasury; he didn’t see why Church money had to be used at all. He wanted the rich American government to give him the funds...”The Vatican had been promised that American funds would be made available to assist in the presentation of the anti-Communist appeal to the Italian public, ‘ Spellman wrote to Rome of his Marshall visit. He added that the U.S. government had secretly ‘released

large sums in “black currency” in Italy to the Catholic Church.”...Spellman’s report to Rome emphasized the strict confidentiality of the transaction...Truman would be doomed if it became known that his administration had secretly funded the Holy See...”- pp. 160-161

“For years rumors abounded about Cardinal Spellman being a homosexual. As a result, many felt- and continue to feel- that Spellman the public moralist may well have been a contradiction of the man of the flesh. Numerous priests and others interviewed took his homosexuality for granted [Among the many interviewed who asserted this was Philip Nobile, a former seminarian who served as one of Spellman’s altar boys, according to the Chapter Notes - JPM]...But without question, Spellman was a rabid public moralist. He ranted against movies, plays, and films that treated sex even lightly, let alone those that exploited sexuality as a major theme.” - p. 109

“During his trips to Latin America, the Cardinal worked, in effect, as an arm of the United States government...The C.I.A., like the F.B.I., turned to Spellman because of his connections and his prestige throughout Latin nations, where he helped churchmen with money and political advice and rebuked them on occasion.” – pp. 231-232

“On another trip, Spellman landed in Paraguay, where he warmly greeted the dictator Alfredo Stroessner, who had recently effected a military coup. Unlike military dictatorships in Brazil and Chile that at least paid lip service to helping the people, Stroessner made no pretenses. His military and police were rewarded with graft, contraband, and the spoils of lucrative narcotics and prostitution trades. Upon his arrival Spellman went to the general’s residence, where he publicly proclaimed what a pleasure it was to be in ‘the ancient Catholic country of Paraguay.’” – p. 233

“Spellman took it in stride when he was approached by the C.I.A. about Guatemala...The American-engineered coup [in Guatemala- JPM] finally came in June 1954...Spellman had reason to rejoice. The new government reestablished long-broken ties with Catholicism. Castillo Armas restored the right of the Church to own property, to give religious instruction in public schools, and to increase the number of foreigners among the clergy.” - p. 236

“...Spellman had tried unsuccessfully to pressure the administration into beefing up assistance to the French troops fighting Communist insurgents in Vietnam. The United States, however, had underwritten eighty percent of the French war costs; Eisenhower was reluctant to go further, even though the Dulles brothers also wanted what Spellman pushed...Though few people knew this, the Cardinal played a prominent role in creating the political career of a former seminary resident in New York who had just become premier of South Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem. In Diem, Spellman had seen the qualities he desired in any leader: ardent Catholicism and rabid anti-Communism...Through the press and a Washington lobby, the problems of confronting anti-Communism in Indochina became widely known in America...The Cardinal placed him in touch with Joe Kennedy, who arranged meetings for Buttinger with the editorial boards of major publications such as *Time* and the *Herald Tribune*...Spellman and Kennedy also helped form a pro-Diem

lobby in Washington...To a large extent, many Americans came to believe that Vietnam was a preponderantly Catholic nation [in reality, Catholics composed approximately 10% of the population]...With the help of C.I.A.-rigged elections in 1955, Diem abolished the monarchy and Bao Dai was forced to live in exile.” – pp. 239-242

“The Pope had asked him [Spellman- JPM] to intervene and he wanted to see the situation firsthand. His physical presence in Saigon, he knew, would place him and the Church firmly in Diem’s camp in the public mind...in Vietnam it eventually seemed to bear out Graham Greene’s warnings that the Church and the United States were being tied to a cause unpopular among Vietnamese...The Cardinal [Spellman- JPM] became one of the most hawkish, arguably the most hawkish, leaders in the United States. By 1965 he clashed with the Pope, who desperately tried to bring peace in Vietnam as Spellman pounded the drums of war.” – pp. 242-245.

[Note above how the Romish Church had inspired the war, but ended up leaving the U.S. holding the bag while the Pope ended up looking like a man of peace.- JPM]

“The potential for corruption in Vietnam was tremendous...the CRS [Catholic Relief Services – JPM] eventually encountered a great deal of resentment...there was much graft and corruption...the National Catholic Reporter...reported apparent CRS abuses in articles such as one entitled “Vietnam 1965-1975. Catholic Relief Services Role: Christ’s work- or the C.I.A.’s?” – pp. 244-245

“On November 2, 1963, Diem was assassinated during a C.I.A.-inspired coup d’etat. Two years after the assassination, Spellman told of his knowledge of Kennedy’s involvement to Dorothy Schiff, the *Post* publisher...The publisher was amazed by the revelation, but there was nothing she could do with the information...she had promised not to reveal what she heard...Shortly before the coup Spellman disassociated himself from Diem.” – pp. 244-245

The Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church it controls is very much interested in world politics, for the Roman Catholic Papacy still officially claims for itself temporal sovereignty over all nations. Here are some sample statements from its canon law, which are still in effect:

"Constitutions (civil, we presume) cannot contravene good manners and the decrees of the Roman prelates."

"The Emperor ought to obey, not command, the Pope."

"The constitutions of princes are not superior to ecclesiastical constitutions, but subordinate to them."

Its right of temporal sovereignty is maintained by its own temporal sovereignty over Vatican City, and its place in the political councils of the world. The Vatican is shrewdly

positioning herself to accrue more power, and even to replace the US as the superpower of the world, should the US decline in power.

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Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Logos Research Systems, Inc.: Oak Harbor, WA, 1997). (see electronic version at <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/About.htm>)

J. Parnell McCarter, *Sabbath Bible Survey Tests and Assignments* (PHSC: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003). (see electronic version at <http://www.puritans.net/curriculum/>)

J. Parnell McCarter, *Let My People Go* (PHSC: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003). (see electronic version at <http://www.puritans.net/curriculum/>)

The on-line resources of Historicism Research Foundation at <http://www.historicism.net/> also proved invaluable for my understanding of Biblical prophecy. Biblical prophecy concerning Christian church history, especially as revealed in the book of Revelation, serves as the foundation upon which all church histories should be based.

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