

# Our English Section

## Strained Relations Increase Between Vatican and the Fascist Government

Since Italy's intervention in the war the relations between the Vatican and the Fascist Government have become increasingly strained as a result of Premier Benito Mussolini's policy of curbing the temporal activity of the Pope.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the Pope today is a prisoner in the Vatican, as was Pope Benedict XV during the first Great War. Yet the fact remains that many important clauses of the 1929 Lateran Treaty between the Holy See and Italy that were drawn with the specific aim of safeguarding the temporal independence of the Pontiff were systematically violated when they did not fit in with Signor Mussolini's plans.

The geographical situation of the Vatican State, in the heart of Italian territory, makes this policy easy to pursue. Signor Mussolini has many means with which to disturb the temporal life of the tiny State and is taking full advantage of them to apply pressure to the Pontiff in an effort to win the moral support of the Catholic Church for the Axis.

When Italy and Germany invaded Yugoslavia in April, 1941, the Yugoslav Minister to the Holy See was ordered to leave Italy. He protested that he intended to take up residence in the Vatican, where quarters were already being prepared for him. He pointed out that an article of the Concordat clearly specified that members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See might reside within the Vatican grounds. In reply, the Italian Government ordered him to leave Italy within twenty-four hours. A strong protest by Papal Secretariat of State failed to alter the decision.

### Contradictory News

Another Example of Fascist tactics occurred soon after Italy's intervention in the war. The Vatican newspaper Osservatore Romano was limited by Signor Mussolini almost exclusively to religious news. The fault of that newspaper, in the eyes of Fascists, was the printing of impartial dispatches which, by their very fairness, contradicted those appearing in the Italian press.

For a few days the Osservatore Romano continued its editorial policy of absolute impartiality. As a result every issue was seized as soon as it came out, and Italians who asked for it at news stands found waiting blackshirts who clubbed them on the charge of being traitors.

The Church has been humiliated in Italy, its clergy having the alternatives of co-operating with the Fascists or going to concentration camps. Scores of parish priests are now in such camps or in jail as "defeatists" because they refused to support the Fascist warlike propaganda and insisted on preaching peace and forgiveness instead of "hatred," as Signor Mussolini had ordered.

The situation has become worse in the past year, or, to be exact, since August, 1941, when Pope Pius refused to come out in favor of the Axis war against Bolshevik Russia. Signor Mussolini, this writer learned from reliable Vatican circles, suggested that the Pontiff sanction what the Fascist press termed the "Christian crusade against the Russian atheists." Pope Pius, however, refused to commit himself. His silence showed more significantly than anything else up to that time the grave concern of the Church over a possible Nazi victory in Europe.

As a result, the Vatican is now regarded as an enemy by the Axis. Its representatives are watched as closely as the agents of a hostile power. Italian spies are inside the Vatican grounds and report to the OVRA (Italian Secret Police) on the activities of the residents. The Pope has been compelled to adopt a rationing system. Vatican mail is being censored and Italians who have contacts with the Vatican personnel are shadowed and questioned.

### Open Breach Avoided.

An open breach between Italy and the Holy See has been avoided by the fact that the Catholic Church always tries to compromise on temporal questions as long as the tenets of the faith are not menaced, and because Signor Mussolini is fully aware of the world-wide morale power of the church.

As a result, official and unofficial vatican circles have been making increasingly clear, as the war progresses, that the church

sees in a democratic victory over the totalitarian states its only chance of avoiding an era of persecution.

In many of his speeches Pope Pius has left no doubt as to what he regards as the "evil forces" of the world. He has not, of course, come out openly in favor of an Anglo-American victory, for, in keeping with the traditional policy of the church, he must preserve at least a semblance of impartiality. But those who can read between the lines have now a clear idea of his attitude.

The Osservatore Romano recently printed a series of articles illustrating the Pontiff's ideas for "a just and permanent peace" which may be regarded as official, in view of the fact that they were written in accordance with instructions issued by the Papal Secretariat of State.

As Italy is about to enter her third war year, the ideological conflict between the Italian ruling class and the national clergy is becoming more apparent. Although highly patriotic, the Italian priest regards Fascism as a natural enemy of the church because of its subservience to and alliance with neo-pagan Nazism.

### Postwar Certainty.

The clergy know that, should the Axis win the war, the church will be dealt with by the conquerors as an enemy. They believe that the spreading of the Catholic faith and the survival of the church come before patriotic feeling, and, though disciplined and obsequious to the lay authorities, they confine their mission mainly to alleviating the sufferings of the masses.

The priests' mission is made easier by the fact that the majority of the people have no enthusiasm for Italy's participation in the war. After years of conflict in Ethiopia and Spain, the Italians felt a strong desire for peace.

This attitude still prevails today. It explains the apathy of the army, the "civil disobedience" at home and why Signor Mussolini was forced in one of his speeches to advocate a policy of "hatred." The priest who preaches peace is regarded as a friend by the masses.

Unlike the first Great War, the Vatican today has means with which to make its attitude clear throughout the Catholic world. Pope Benedict XV was to some extent criticized by both belligerent factions during the 1914-18 war.

This, Vatican circles told the writer, was due to the fact that the Pontiff's speeches were distorted to suit the conveniences of the Governments of the belligerent countries, with the result that the Catholics received a false impression of his attitude.

Pope Pius today is in a much happier position. He is able through the Vatican radio station to speak directly to all Catholics. These possibilities of misunderstandings has thus largely been eliminated.

### Priests Turn Publishers.

To remedy this situation, a number of parish priests decided to publish a sheet they called the Parola del Papa (word of the Pope). This small newspaper, which appears only when the Pope makes a speech, started a year ago with a circulation of 5,000 copies. Today it has reached a circulation of about 200,000 and is expected to top the half million before the end of this year.

The Parola del Papa is sent to parish priests throughout Italy, who distribute it among the faithful. In this way the masses have been kept fully informed of the activity of the Pope, and the favorable reaction of the people to his interest for peace has given the Church an accurate picture of the national feeling toward the conflict. Petty Fascist hierarchs in small provincial towns and villages have attempted to stop the distribution of this newspaper.

The Vatican has recently protested against arrests of priests as "defeatists." It considered this an arbitrary action on the part of the Fascist Government, basing its arguments on the 1929 Lateran Treaty. The protests

have gone unheeded, however.

This and many other instances of flagrant violation of the concordat, both in Italy and in Germany, are responsible for the feeling today among the Italian clergy that only a peace dictated by a victorious United States will enable the church to carry on its mission unimpeded throughout the Catholic world. This belief is strengthened by the knowledge of the satisfactory way in which the church is thriving in the United States, as contrasted with conditions in the Axis countries.

"The church regards Nazism

as its real enemy," said a high Vatican prelate who cannot be further identified for obvious reasons—to this correspondent less than a month ago.

"Atheist bolshevism is less preoccupying for the reason that, although it has forcibly eliminated God, man cannot live without believing in a superior being. On the other hand, Nazism has replaced God with a pagan theory which, though it does not meet his spiritual needs, yet gives him something to look up to."

"When the time of reconstruction comes it will be more difficult for the church to eradicate the false neo-pagan theory of the Nazis from the consciousness of the masses than to instill in the soul of the atheist the belief in God, for this belief will answer a natural craving of man's soul, while the neo-pagan masses may not feel it equally strongly."

The Italian clergy, he continued, who are aware of this danger, advocate victory in sermons and preachings, but they are always careful to specify "a victory for the common good"—that is for the good of Christianity. This, he said, would not obtain in the event of an Axis victory.

## Separate Peace for Italy?

(The author of the following article is Livio Zeno, one of the leaders of the Free Italian Movement in London, England.)

Popular feeling in Italy has increasingly tended to favor a separate peace. That is why Mussolini urgently sought a meeting with Hitler.

The Italian people, approaching the borderline of poverty and hunger, increasingly began asking themselves: "What are we fighting and suffering for? What are we getting out of it all?"

Even the Chauvinistic Italians who applauded Il Duce's territorial ambitions are beginning to feel frustrated. They are deprived even of the satisfaction that they are fighting for territorial gains.

Everybody in Italy realizes full well that if Hitler is unwilling to satisfy Italian territorial claims while he is in need of Italian military and naval support, Hitler is scarcely likely to keep his promises after the war.

Having been imbued with the Fascist propaganda to the effect that the Allies after the last war cheated Italy of her just territorial ambitions, Italian nationalists are asking themselves whether this war will end differently.

The Italian people's dream of a separate peace have recently been encouraged by several factors:

1. Germany's failure to defeat the Soviets within the promised time limit.

2. Adolf Hitler's despondent speech of April 26.

3. Realization that American warships operating in the Mediterranean further imperils the Italian fleet's hoped for domination of that sea at a time when it is already obvious that French naval supremacy over Italy grows with every Italian warship sunk.

4. Laval's return to power, which for the Italians almost immediately manifested itself in Hitler's successfully exerting pressure on Mussolini to check the popular agitation for Savoy, Nice, Corsica and Tunis.

There are many obstacles in the way of a separate peace, first is Il Duce's personal political influence, second, there is the German control of the Italian police and key political positions. Third, half a million Italian workers in Germany could be held as hostages, like the French prisoners of war, though in this case the Italians could hold Rommel's Germans. Fourth, the knowledge that the Allies would demand Italian evacuation of the Yugoslav and Greek territories they now occupy.

Il Duce's dismissal would be a prerequisite to any such action and this would remove the chief obstacle, but failing this, the King's abdication might precipitate a constitutional crisis which, if favored by circumstances, might lead to the fall of Mussolini's government.

## Italy and Political Warfare

If the military leaders decide that the moment is ripe for the opening of a "second" front, the possibility of an allied landing in Italy will not be overlooked, chiefly if Rommel's offensive in Libya does not bring the results hoped for by the Nazi leaders. The position of Malta as a fortress against Nazi activities in the central Mediterranean has been strengthened. American supplies are reaching Egypt in increasing quantities and the presence of American troops has been reported in Gibraltar. They may be used in the eventuality of political changes in northern Africa. But they may also have more ambitious plans.

It is to be hoped that any military operation which takes Italy into account will be preceded by an intelligently-planned political offensive aiming at convincing the Italian masses to support actively the troops of the United Nations, if and when a landing takes place. From the correct

statement that Italians hate the Germans and the Nazi-Fascist rule, one should not jump to the conclusion that Italians love the United Nations. They know too little about us. Fascist propaganda has worked actively for twenty years in sowing among large sections of the Italian people distrust for the Soviet Union, for the United States and for the British Commonwealth. The Bolshevik bogey, the exploitation of Italian labor by what fascists have been calling for years the Jewish-Masonic American plutocracy, a false picture of England's role at the Peace Conference and at the time of the Ethiopian aggression, play an important part in determining the attitudes of many Italians. All kinds of errors and misconceptions must be eliminated in order to transform passive opposition to Axis policies into active support of the cause for which we are fighting.

## Discorso alla radio del Conte Sforza

(Continuazione dalla 1. a pag.)

lia di domani ha tutto da guadagnare non da antiquate intraprese nazionalistiche ma dalla creazione di un mondo basato sulla solidarietà internazionale: Garibaldi, che pur era un vero eroe di guerra, non un finto eroe di guerra civile, lo aveva ben capito; e nei suoi ultimi anni di Caprera lo proclamò apertamente.

Ogni volta che il fascismo finge di risolvere un problema italiano in quanto solo italiano, esso danneggia interessi italiani infinitamente più alti. Nella pace di domani — che sarà la pace vittoriosa delle democrazie — noi italiani non discuteremo di problemi italiani come tali; noi saremo alla avanguardia del mondo che sorge e discuteremo solo di lati italiani di comuni problemi europei e mondiali.

Nell'Europa di domani, nazionalità gloriose come l'italiana dovranno restare vive fiamme di pensiero e di fede; ma mai più si abbasseranno a divenir strumenti di aggressioni che si rivolgono contro di noi.

Uniamoci intorno al nome di Garibaldi.

## Il Presidente Degli S.U.



F. D. ROOSEVELT

## Il Presidente Del Messico



MANUEL AVILA CAMACHO

I capi di due nazioni amiche che son diventate alleate in guerra, rinsaldando così l'unione panamericana.

## Dumas e l'usciere

Gli uscieri erano l'ossessione di Alessandro Dumas. Ne vedeva tanti ogni giorno con la carta bollata tra le mani! Una volta gli presentarono un foglio per una sottoscrizione. — Si tratta, gli dicono, di venti franchi per la sepoltura di un povero usciere. — Un usciere? Prendete, esclama il romanziere mettendogli la mano alla borsa, ecco quaranta franchi, seppellitene due.

## Italo-Canadesi!

Sostenete il vostro giornale "La Vittoria" Diffondetelo! Abbonatevi! ADESSO!

Ufficio: RAndolph 5125-6 Residenza: ELgin 7922 M. S. MILLSTONE & CO. AVVOCATI Suites 213-14, 455 Spadina College & Spadina Toronto

## ROMANZO L'ultimo grido di Vincenzo Bruno

VI.

Una barca veniva lentamente a loro e in breve fu vicina. C'erano a bordo uomini e signore. Franco, che s'era piegato a guardare, gridò:

Andate alla Grotta?

Un signore che sedeva a prua salutò dicendo:

— Anche voi qui? Andiamo proprio alla Grotta.

— Noi prendiamo un bagno di sole.

— Buon divertimento.

— Anche a voi.

La barca sopraggiunta filò verso la costa.

Quando Corrado e Franco decisero di ritornare, ebbero di fronte il Pellegrino grigio e nudo. Biancheggiava su di un pinnacolo la statua di santa Rosalia cinta da arcate, e dal mare tutto sembrava minuscolo, come un giocattolo alzato lassù per un capriccio e mantenuto in equilibrio per virtù d'un prodigio.

La villa Belmonte sulla costa luceva dal bianco intercolonnio della facciata; giu' in alto, nel verde, occhieggiava un chiosco rotondo, e, più in su ancora, un tempietto a tetto conico si nascondeva fra gli alberi.

Quella fu la prima d'una serie di gite in barca. Vagavano sul mare, senza meta. Se li aiutava la bonaccia si allontanavano tanto che la costa diventava all'orizzonte una linea scura, mentre solo e incombente restava il Pellegrino, con alle spalle il Gallo, riflesso sul mare a toni di cupo metallo.

Facevano anche lunghe passeggiate a piedi durante le quali Corrado riabituava i muscoli al movimento. (Tabarro) era il loro inseparabile compagno. Anche a lui la riacquistata libertà procurava schietti entusiasmi che si traducevano in corse pazze e abbaiamenti furiosi.

Erano andati alla Vergine Maria, un gruppo di case abitate da pescatori, con un palazzetto cupo, una piccola darsena e un grande magazzino per gli attrezzi da pesca; tutto odoroso di, salesidine e sparso di reti, tutto picchiettato dal verde dei fichi d'India. Erano andati più oltre, seguendo la costa, per un viottolo, fino a una torre sbocconcellata e cadente, e retta su d'una rupe, antica vedetta per le incursioni saracene, fino a punta Priola, e lì avevano deliziato gli occhi al panorama di monte Gallo e del golfo di Mondello, azzurro come un lago alpino.

Erano andati alle Falde, alla Castellana, alla Favorita. Corrado si lasciava sempre condurre senza opposizione, ma senza gioia. Gli tornavano sempre più le forze e il colorito. La madre, guardandolo, ne gioiva in fondo al cuore, ma nelle sue ardenti preghiere chiedeva a Dio e alla Madonna che anche quella nube che offuscava la fronte del figlio dovesse scomparire per saperlo veramente e del tutto risanato d'animo e di corpo.

Alzatosi più presto del solito, Corrado annunciò alla madre che si recava in città.

— Franco lo sa?

— Non gli ho detto nulla, nè forse lo vedrò.

— Ma che conti di fare?

— Una passeggiata. Ormai sono forte abbastanza per potere andar solo. E un pezzo che non rivedo la città.

In piazza delle Galline incontrò Lisandro che andava in paese. Aveva il braccio al collo; se l'era spezzato sciogliendo sulla spiaggia.

— Come va, Lisandro?

— Meglio, ma il braccio non serve ancora. Debbo tanto alla signora e a vossignoria.

Afferro con la mano che aveva libera quella del giovane e, in una effusione di gratitudine, tentò di portarsela alle labbra. Corrado si svincolò con destrezza salutandolo.

— Arrivederci, fatti coraggio.

— Facciamo sempre la volontà di Dio.

Riprese la strada. — (Ec-

come un altro — diceva a se stesso, — rassegnato e contento. Carico di figli e di malanni, affronta la vita e lotta pertinace e tranquillo. Chi gli dà questa forza?)

Sulla piazza dell'Acqua Canta sostò aspettando il tranvai presso un basso muretto che faceva da parapetto. Aveva davanti i magazzini della manifattura dei tabacchi e i cipressi di un vecchio piccolo cimitero.

Corrado non vedeva e rimuginava il suo pensiero. Quella gita in città l'aveva progettata da un pezzo.

Il tranvai sopraggiunto ripartì subito scampellando. Il movimento delle carrozze, dei carri, delle automobili gli riempiva la testa di frastuono e ne provava uno stordimento acuto, abituato com'era da un pezzo al silenzio del suo eremo.

A Piazza Marina, ove aveva la sua abitazione, alzò gli occhi a guardare i balconi e le finestre chiuse, ma non pensò nemmeno di salire per un momento.

Aveva il suo piano e doveva condurlo a compimento in breve tempo, nascondendolo a tutti.

S'avviò per il corso Vittorio Emanuele, tra la folla di pedoni e di vetture. Faceva quella strada più lunga per avere il tempo di riflettere meglio a quel che si era proposto di attuare quella mattina, dopo lunga indecisione, e per rimettersi dal turbamento che l'irrevocabile decisione presa gli metteva nell'animo. Andava macchinamente e giunse ai Quattro Canti già stanco. Il suo intimo cruccio si allargava.

Eppure, bisognava uscire dalla situazione che durava da troppo tempo. Infilò via Maqueda tenendosi vicino ai negozi. Nello specchio d'una vetrina si vide pallido e accigliato. Cercò di rimettersi procedendo a passi lenti.

(Chi te l'ha detto? Che ne sai tu?) Questo gli aveva chiesto Franco il giorno del loro primo incontro, dopo le sue confessioni; e aveva ragione.

Ma l'uomo di scienza avrebbe messo a posto le cose. Giunse al teatro Massimo e si arrestò per prender fiato. Era giunto. La palme che fiancheggiavano la mole enorme sembravano fontane di verde smeraldo.

Chiese al portinaio di un vicino palazzo:

— E in casa il dottor Sampieri?

— Sì, non è ancora uscito.

Quando Sampieri lo vide ebbe una esclamazione di giubilo: — Lei qui? Come mai? una vera sorpresa. Ha lasciato l'eremo E la signora?

Ma s'interruppe scorgendo sulla faccia del giovane un travaglio doloroso.

— Che c'è dunque di nuovo?

Volevo parlarle di cose serie.

Sampieri avvicinò una poltrona e vi si sprofondò tendendo il capo.

— Ascolto. Il medico è come il confessore.

— Sono venuto per sapere da lei senza testimoni, e quindi senza sottintesi, le mie vere condizioni di salute.

Il medico lo guardò sorpreso.

— Non comprendo...

— La mia guarigione è definitiva?

— Quando avremo completata la convalescenza la diremo definitiva.

— Non mi sono spiegato bene...

— Benissimo invece.

— Qui non c'è mia madre, ci sono io, io solo, disposto a tutto, anche alle confidenze gravissime.

— Il suo dubbio non ha ragione d'esistere.

— Lei conosce la malattia che mi ha tolto il padre...

— Certamente; l'ho avuto in cura.

— Dunque il mio male è doppiamente grave: per il passato e per il presente.

— Il passato è passato. Il presente dice che lei è sano, non c'è nulla che possa destare sospetti o apprensioni. Glielo dico sinceramente...

(Continua)