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ON WHOSE SIDE IS THE USA?

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

In view of the extreme immorality of every imaginable kind in which America is presently submerged, the above question obviously is not asked with God in mind. That this nation as a whole is not on God's side needs no proof whatsoever. The question rather relates to the Communist conspiracy. In regard to Communism, on whose side is the USA? To all honorable, intelligent, well-informed men and women, the answer is painfully all too self-evident. But, just as there are multitudes of members of the Conciliar Church who honestly believe that it is the Roman Catholic Church, so also there are multitudes of people who, even at this late date, continue to believe that the USA is anti-Communist. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, these men and women really think that the American government is being run by Americans. Imagine! Why, I'll wager that such people even think that men like Jesse Jackson, Michael Dukakis, Ronald Reagan and George Bush are anti-Communists!

Nothing could be further from the truth than the belief that America (its government, that is) is anti-Communist. Indeed, the record proves just the opposite. Not only is there no place in the world where, to my knowledge, America is really opposing Communism but there are numerous nations wherein the American government is either sustaining the Communists already in control (Soviet Russia, Red China, Yugoslavia, Poland among many others) or promoting the advance of the Communist conspiracy towards an eventual take-over. In Nicaragua even priests, God help us, occupy some of the top posts in the Sandinista (Communist) government. (Not surprisingly, the controlled national news media in America studiously avoids referring to the Sandinista regime as Communist.) How naive is any reader of these lines who supposes that the USA is against Communism in Nicaragua. And an excellent example of the complete phoniness and utter hypocrisy of the powers that be in the American government is the staunch anti-Communist government of South Africa. For some years now and with the issue of apartheid as a smoke screen, the USA has been working hard to bring South Africa to its knees. In a word, any genuinely anti-Communist nation today (Taiwan and South Korea, for example) which supposedly has America as a "friend" and "ally" is on very dangerous ground indeed and will undoubtedly be betrayed sooner or later.

Yes, on whose side is the USA? In the U.S. Congress it is becoming more and more of a rarity to get approval for even a mild piece of anti-Communist legislation. I recently read that some 24 current members of the House of Representatives are *openly* Marxist, but I'm sure there are many more who are secretly such. And the U.S. Senate, to be sure, has its proportion of Red sympathizers as well. As for the Department of State under the anti-American leadership of Secretary George Schultz, it remains today what it has been for the past several decades—flagrantly pro-Communist. And then there is that Secretary of Commerce, William Verity, one of the most recent of "our" President's appointees. How pleased the Reds must be with Mr. Verity in that vital cabinet position! But really, is there any individual in a high-level position in the federal government today who is genuinely and forthrightly anti-Communist? Apart from a few in the U.S. Congress, I know of none.

The merger of America and Soviet Russia is an essential intermediary step towards the ultimate objective of the New World Order, détente being one of the terms used to describe that merging process. The mere contemplation of the number of organizations and enterprises which are a part of this developing merger is both mind-boggling and exceedingly disheartening. Movements working towards the New World Order abound on the American scene, the New Age Movement being the most prominent among them; many scores of American corporations are engaged ever more increasingly in business with and in Soviet Russia; department stores from coast to coast are well stocked with merchandise produced by slave labor in Communist countries; so-called cultural exchanges are continuing at an accelerated pace; and so on and on. Yes, détente is very much alive and well. (The parallel term for détente in the area of religion is ecumenism, the ultimate goal here being a One World Church with John Paul II the prime mover towards that goal.)

When the official head of the most "evil empire" in history is actually welcomed on American soil by leaders of the government of the USA and by multitudes of its citizens, what more can or need be said to point up the abominable current state of this nation? Could it be, I wonder, that the enemies of God and country and freedom (primarily the conspiracies of Communism and Freemasonry) are now, for all practical purposes, in working control of the American government? In my opinion, it could well be. There was a time when I thought that the atheistic New World Order, if that utterly abhorrent concept were ever to become a reality, was something off in the far distant future. Needless to say, I no longer think so. While it may not be right around the corner, the New World Order is, I submit, much closer to realization today than even its most rabid promoters had expected it to be at this point in time. And this, I further contend, is due in considerable part to the impetus provided by John Paul II and Ronald Reagan. These two men, I have no doubt whatsoever, are two of the most powerful influences on the world scene today in furthering the advance of the Communist conspiracy towards its goal of global conquest and in the formation of the New World Order. †

Restoring the Social Order to Christ the King

John Kenneth Weiskittel

It is not at all uncommon to hear the times in which we live referred to as "the post-Christian era." The humanists tell us that this is *their* age and say that Christians may participate in it only after checking their "outdated moral baggage" at the door. All may enter the temple of the New Age provided they are willing to bend a knee before the reigning "deity"—*Humanity.*

For Catholics who hold fast to the words of Our Lord and the teachings of the Church, notions of a "post-Christian era" are absurd. Had not Christ, in establishing the papacy, solemnly stated that "upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18)? And is it not, therefore, a dogma of our Faith that the Church will remain steadfast until the end of time as the Mystical Body of Christ and as the infallible voice of the Holy Ghost to all nations of the world? Thus, in absolute terms, the Christian era began with the Incarnation and will continue unto the Judgment.

Governments and individuals today are at variance with the Church on virtually any and every issue under the sun. So uniformly have the shapers of modern culture ignored the Catholic position that, far from its retaining its rightful preeminence in any discussion of the morally proper direction for society to take, the Church is not so much as considered as having anything worthy or viable to offer in these debates. Indeed, to such an extent is this the case that a visitor from another planet could be excused for not knowing that there *is* a Catholic side to the political, cultural, social and academic issues of our day.

That non-Catholic and even anti-Catholic thought has become institutionalized in those countries that once made up what is known in textbooks as Western Civilization is readily apparent to anyone who gives even casual consideration to the daily news. For any reader who argues that the situation, while serious, isn't quite as grave as it is being painted here, we submit a simple test which will demonstrate the crisis dramatically. Select a hundred people at random and ask them: "What is your single greatest fear?" We believe that, while a number of varied replies might be heard, the vast majority of responses would be reduced to two—AIDS and nuclear war. The point here is that, although it is not at all inappropriate to express deeply felt concern over a particularly virulent disease or the most devastating machinery of destruction ever conceived by the human mind, such fears pertain to the *natural* order. That very few would respond with a *spiritual* concern—the fear of offending God through sin or the fear of hell—reveals just how far secularism has gotten a grip on our culture.

This denial of the sacred duty to organize society in accordance with the will of God is rarely espoused directly. Legion are the number of politicians, for example, who routinely sprinkle pious sounding rhetoric in their speeches and then, just as regularly, support and perpetuate the murder of the unborn, welfare state socialism, amoral public education, the militant atheism of the Communists and a score of other policies equally repugnant to everything for which authentic Christian order stands. Surely, the present-day observer who examines the social programs of those nations that historically have been either officially or numerically Christian, even the Catholic ones, will search in vain to find any that have not been infected with this contagion, a contamination more fearful than AIDS since it strikes not at the bodies of a relatively few but rather imposes itself on the minds and souls, as well as the bodies, of the many. And the most sinister aspect is that, while the spread of this cultural virus has been facilitated by countless weak or unsuspecting agents, it was initially injected into national bloodstreams by men bent on bringing to an end the Christian (and, specifically, *Catholic*) order and, as Pope Leo XIII writes in *Humanum Genus*, "to bring back, after a lapse of eighteen centuries, the customs and morals of the pagans..."

Let us, then, briefly examine some of the most significant instances wherein the modern world has rejected the true social order and review what the Church teaches is needed to restore balance, sanity and the spiritual dimension to that world. Certainly, too, a corrective is in order to dispel the distortion of Catholic social teachings circulated by the Conciliar Church sect and its jet-set "pontiff."

The Right Ordering Of Society

In ages past the Church was accustomed to do battle against one or, perhaps, two organized forces at a time. The earliest foes were the Jews and the Roman Empire. After Rome was Christianized the principal enemies of Christ and His Church were, in turn, the barbarians of the North and the schismatics of the East. Next came the Protestants and Anglicans, followed at length by the Rationalists and Freemasons and, in the present century, by totalitarian regimes. Even the greatest internal crisis of the early centuries weathered by the Church revolved around but a single perfidious heresy—Arianism.

Today, however, the war is all-out and being fought on any number of fronts against many opponents (some of whom are united with one another only in their hatred of Christ). This anti-Christian army consists of some old nemeses, such as Communist, Socialist and Masonic groups, as well as such newer ones as Secular Humanists, New Agers and various strains of false Christians (Modernists, Liberation Theology devotees and smaller movements). Whatever differences they may have, all are presently engaged in dismantling what is left of Christian social order in the world.

Before going further, it would be well to define the term, *social order.* What do we mean by it? In *Summa Contra Gentiles,* Saint Thomas Aquinas calls order "the unity arising from the apt arrangement of a plurality of objects."

Order in society, then, depends on the harmonious interaction of citizens and classes and on the enactment of laws that preserve these right relationships. (It should be noted, if it isn't already clear, that "society" as alluded to in this study refers to *civil* society and not to its highest form, the Roman Catholic Church.)

Proper arrangement of the social order necessarily requires a commitment from its leaders to organize it in such a way that the public good is pursued only along lines consonant with a Christian outlook. Failure to do this diminishes its legitimacy. Pope Leo XIII, writing in his 1892 encyclical *Au milieu des solicitudes*, observes:

> When the State refuses to give to God what belongs to God, by a necessary consequence it refuses to give to its citizens that to which they, as men, have a right. For, whether one likes it or not, the true rights of man spring precisely from his duties toward God. Hence it follows that the State, by failing in this way to accomplish the principal object of its institution, finally becomes false to itself and denies that which is the reason of its own existence.

That social chaos is the inevitable product of such a secular State is spelled out by the same pontiff ten years later in *Tamesti*:

> The case of governments is much the same as that of the individual; they also run into fatal issues if they depart from the way...Let Jesus be excluded and human reason is left without its greatest protection and illumination; the very notion is easily lost of the end for which God created human society, to wit: that by the aid of their civil union the citizens should attain their natural good but, nevertheless, in a way not in conflict with that highest and most perfect and enduring good which is above nature. Their minds busy with a hundred confused projects, rulers and subjects alike travel a devious road, bereft as they are of safe guidance and fixed principle.

And, the abortion chambers of our day being a most heinous example, this "devious road" ultimately leads to acts of legalized sin.

Pius XI's Reorganization Plan And The Modern World

For the past century or so the assault on the Catholic idea of society has been unrelenting. As long ago as 1877 Pope Pius IX, who 13 years earlier included various false beliefs about the State and civil order in the *Syllabus of Errors*, reminded Catholics of their obligation "to stave off the imminent dissolution of society." His immediate successor, Pope Leo XIII, wrote a series of outstanding encyclicals showing what constituted ethically sound activities in the social, political and economic spheres and condemning Communists, secret societies and liberal economists as among those set on overturning Christian order.

One of Leo's most famous papal letters, *Rerum Novarum (1891), served as stimulus for another great encyclical written some 40 years later by Pope Pius XI, Quadragesimo Anno*. More than any other twentieth-century Pope, Pius has spoken out on these crucial matters, and his nearness to our own age makes his comments all the more telling.

Quadragesimo Anno, like the letter it commemorates, is concerned with "reconstructing the social order." Both are great charters defending the rights of the working class against the often unjust practices of employers in capitalist States and against the siren songs of Socialism and Marxism. The free enterprise system is never condemned as unlawful by its nature but it is castigated insofar as, left to flourish without moral and legal constraints, it tends to glorify avarice and materialism, trample the weak and give inordinate wealth and power to the most cunning or ruthless. Pius XI describes the situation thus:

> ...it is patent that in our days not alone is wealth accumulated but immense power and despotic economic domination are concentrated in the hands of a few, and that those few are frequently not the owners but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their own good pleasure. This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the lifeblood to the entire economic body and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production so that no one dare breathe against their will. This accumulation of power, the characteristic note of the modern economic order, is a natural result of limitless free competition which permits the survival of those only who are the strongest, which often means those who fight most relentlessly and who pay least heed to the dictates of conscience.

Now, more than half a century after Pius wrote these words, this concentration of power is, if anything, even greater. It is a power that extends well into the political process: the big banking and corporate lions are able to do more than buy candidates and influence votes; they are, in many cases, at the very seat of government. (Examples, past and present, of the superrich in power include Franklin Roosevelt, Averill Harriman, the Kennedy's, Rockefellers, George Bush, Pete DuPont and Armand Hammer.) And, although it is through a free market that fortunes are made, the urge to dominate has led to laws that hurt the small businesses and pave the way for monopolies. John D. Rockefeller has been quoted as saying, "Competition is a sin."

This progress is illustrated in what Pope Pius XI calls "a threefold struggle for domination":

> First, there is the struggle for dictatorship in the economic sphere itself; then the fierce battle to

acquire control of the State, so that its resources and authority may be abused in the economic struggle; finally, the clash between States themselves...Free competition is dead; economic dictatorship has taken its place. Unbridled ambition for domination has succeeded the desire for gain; the whole economic life has become hard, cruel and relentless in a ghastly measure. Furthermore, the intermingling and scandalous confusing of the duties and offices of civil authority and of economics have produced crying evils and have gone so far as to degrade the majesty of the State. The State, which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above party contention, intent only upon justice and the common good, has become instead a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed. As regards the relations of peoples among themselves, a double stream has issued forth from this one fountainhead: on the one hand, economic nationalism or even economic imperialism; on the other, a not less noxious and detestable internationalism or international imperialism in financial affairs which holds that where a man's fortune is, there is his country.

In the intervening years, the internationalists have become so entrenched here and around the world that propaganda for "globalism," "interdependence" and other catchwords for world government is pushed in churches, schools, the news media and by government officials on a daily basis. As part of the Reagan-Gorbachev summit talks, U.S.-based restaurants such as Pizza Hut and McDonald's are opening franchises in Russia. (Reagan's subsequent visit there has shown more clearly the falseness of his "anti-Communism.") In this and other collaborative efforts we see but another step towards the creation of that godless superstate whose proponents were so roundly condemned by Pope Saint Pius X and Pope Benedict XV. And *international imperialism* has been developed into a highly sophisticated weapon of diplomatic pressure for the One-Worlders. Through the nebulous instrument of "world opinion" nations that fall in line with the intents of the internationalists can count on generous aid via sources like the World Bank (the tab often is picked up by unwitting U.S. taxpayers), while those that refuse to be assimilated into the system (South Africa being a key modern example) can expect only sanctions, boycotts and other economic reprisals.

On the face of it, it makes no sense whatever for international financiers, multinational corporations and Western governments to join forces with their sworn enemies, the Communists. How, it has been asked many times, could the U.S. State Department possibly permit American firms to trade with Eastern Bloc nations at the same time G.I.'s were being killed in Vietnam in a war their own government told them was to contain Communism? This and similar questions can best be answered when one comes to the realization that these powerful Insiders have more in common with the Reds than they do with us. Neither the Communists nor their Western benefactors honor the Kingship of Christ but, instead, are Naturalists who claim that human ingenuity is self-sufficient in the solving of world problems. Father Denis Fahey, C.S.Sp., makes the following observation about this breed in *The Mystical Body of Christ and the Reorganization of Society*:

> Men imbued with the naturalistic attitude will insist that the highest social organization is the individual State or the whole group of States tending to coalesce into the world-state. They will aim at eliminating every vestige of the Supernatural Life from social organization. For those who are aware of the importance for the world of respect for the Rights of God and who understand the meaning of the Redemption, Naturalism is the forerunner of decay and death.

In his 1922 encyclical, *Ubi Arcano*, Pope Pius XI explicitly condemns One-Worldism and indicates the only means of securing lasting peace and order in the world: "No human institution exists which can impose upon the nations an international code...But there is a divine institution which can guarantee the sanctity of the law of nations, an institution which, embracing all nations and transcending them, is endowed with supreme authority and evokes veneration through its plenary powers of rule—the Church of Christ." This sentiment was also expressed 20 years before by Pope Leo XIII in an apostolic letter reviewing his pontificate. Lamenting the widespread disorders plaguing society, he writes:

> ...Just as Christianity cannot penetrate into the soul without making it better, so it cannot enter into public life without establishing order...But the return of Christianity will not be efficacious and complete if it does not restore the world to a sincere love of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In the Catholic Church Christianity is incarnate. It is identified with the perfect spiritual society, sovereign in its own order, which is the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ and which has for its visible head the Roman Pontiff, successor of the Prince of the Apostles...Society, so sadly gone astray, must reenter the bosom of the Church if it wishes to recover its well-being, its repose and its salvation.

Catholic Action—Now Is The Time

The topics discussed in this article have been necessarily limited, due to space considerations, but it may be stated here that there is not one of the myriad woes confronting modern society that does not at its root involve a rejection of the Church and her teachings and a certain weakness on the part of Catholics to fight for right. Leo XIII blamed the spread of Masonry in part to the reluctance of the faithful to enter the fray, and Pius XI bluntly stated in 1937: "There would be today neither Socialism nor Communism if the rulers of nations had not scorned the teachings and the maternal warnings of the Church."

The time has come for us to behave truly like the Church Militant. None of us has the slightest trace of an excuse for

not speaking out clearly and often for the Rights of God insofar as we are able. We must be willing to endure the hatred of the world in defense of Christ and His social order. We must not grow disheartened at the task at hand but, rather, as Pius XI states, "Let us thank God that He makes us to live among the present problems...it is no longer permitted to anyone to be mediocre."

This means that we must *act*. Belgian Canon Joseph Cardijn, working in the first half of this century, drew up an "inquiry method" for Catholic Action groups that still may be used with confidence. First, we are to *observe* the moral issues in our society; second, we must *judge* them in light of Church teaching; and third, we need to *take whatever morally lawful action is necessary* to bring about change consistent with the Kingship of Our Lord. This should be carried out under the guidance of our clergy.

Whether or not society is to turn back to God in our lifetime is, humanly speaking, unknowable, yet it is clear that we do not have the luxury to remain spectators on the sidelines. Our sainted Pope Pius X gives us the challenge in his encyclical on Catholic Action, *Il fermo proposito* (1905): "We have been like rabbits, too frightened of anything and everything...we must cease fearing to give offense...To carry out this work aright we must have divine grace and the apostle receives none if he is not united to Christ. Only when we have formed Jesus Christ within ourselves shall we more easily be able to give Him back to the family and society." †

Pray the Rosary Daily

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About the "rights of men," as they are called, the people have heard enough: it is time they should hear of the Rights of God.

(Pope Leo XIII)

If unbelievers see we cannot talk accurately about what we see, how will they respect what we say or write about the unseen?

(Saint Augustine of Hippo)

Spiritual books are like a mirror which God places before us in order that we may see ourselves in them and hence correct our faults and adorn ourselves with every virtue.

(Pope Saint Gregory the Great)

I didn't care for reading newspapers...which are ordinarily full of lies and trivia.

(Saint Anthony Mary Claret)

The lay apostolate has, as every apostolate has,...two functions: conservation and conquest, and both are urgently needed in the Church today. And, to speak very plainly, the Church of Christ is not thinking of giving ground without a struggle to her declared enemy, atheistic Communism. This combat will be pursued to the end, but with the weapons of Christ!

(Pope Pius XII)

Let prayer be the weapon which you always have at hand.

(Saint Mary Mazzarello)

Modern times are dominated by Satan and will be more so in the future. The conflict with hell cannot be engaged by men, even the most clever. The Immaculata alone has from God the promise of victory over Satan.

(Father Maximilian Kolbe)

SAINT BRIDGET OF SWEDEN

Jill Wiesner

The year 1300 marked the dawn of the Renaissance, a period of upheaval in Europe and of great suffering for the Church. Princes vying with one another for power destroyed the unity of the Holy Roman Empire and turned with hatred on the Pope whenever he interfered with their ambitions. Wars racked Europe, followed by the Black Death.

But the fourteenth century was also a period of great heroism and of saints in the most unlikely places, devoting their lives to God and exerting a holy influence on those around them.

Saint Bridget of Sweden, a princess, wife and mother, never allowed herself to be lured by worldly attractions. Born about the year 1303 to Birger Persson, governor and provincial judge of Uppland, and his wife Ingeborg, Bridget was carefully instructed in religion by her pious parents. From the age of seven she manifested great devotion to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother. When she was ten she was deeply affected by a sermon on the Passion of Christ. Soon after, she had a vision of Jesus, hanging on the cross and covered with fresh blood. He spoke to her, telling her that He suffered because of those "who despise me, and spurn my love for them." For the rest of her life Bridget could not meditate on the sufferings of Jesus without weeping.

At the age of thirteen, on the advice of her parents, she married eighteen-year-old Ulf Gudmarsson, Prince of Nierck. Their marriage was a happy and holy one and they were conscientious parents to their eight children (the youngest of whom is Saint Catherine of Sweden). Faithful to the duties of her station, Bridget also devoted much time to the care of the sick and the poor. Severe with herself and gentle with others, she was beloved by all who knew her. She and her husband spent their free time in the company of learned and holy monks.

In 1335, Bridget was called to the court of Magnus II, King of Sweden, to be principal lady-in-waiting to his queen, Blanche of Namur. Her duties at court proved to be a great hardship for Bridget, the young king and queen having little interest in anything but pleasure and luxury. Though they were fond of Bridget, they found her holy exhortations irritating. Unable to convince them to amend their ways, Bridget finally asked for a leave of absence from the Court.

Ulf and Bridget used their respite from the royal court as an opportunity to make a long pilgrimage to the shrines of the Magi in Cologne, Saint Mary Magdalen in Provence and Saint James in Compostela. On their return to Sweden Ulf became seriously ill. His condition worsened rapidly and he was given Extreme Unction. But Bridget's efforts and prayers on his behalf obtained his recovery. Having come so close to death, Ulf realized how temporary the things of this world really are and, with his wife's consent, he entered the Cistercian monastery at Alvastra. One year later he died there in the odor of sanctity.

After her husband's death, Bridget renounced her rank of princess and divided her property among her children so that she might devote herself to serving the poor. "Charity for the suffering members of Jesus Christ, mortification and prayer became her sweetest delights."

In 1344, she founded a religious congregation at Vadstena, giving it the name of the Order of the Most Holy Savior. This Order was consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary who "triumphs over all heresies." The nuns were to recite daily the Office of the Blessed Virgin and to assist each day at a High Mass in honor of Mary, after which the Salve Regina was to be sung. Before beginning Vespers and after reciting the Ave Maria, they were to ask pardon of one another by saying, "Pardon us for the love of God and His Most Holy Mother, if we have offended you by word, deed or sign; as for us, if you have offended us in any way, we willingly pardon you." They were to observe frequent fasts, wear coarse garments and observe almost continual silence. The Rule of her congregation was approved by Pope Urban V in 1370.

Though Bridget was the dearest friend of all who were in need, she was the implacable foe of anything which would offend God. She fearlessly went to Court to rebuke King Magnus, the queen, the nobles and the bishops for their scandalous behavior. Though the king took her words to heart and tried for a time to reform, he was soon seeking her support for a "crusade" against the Letts and the Estonians. She saw through his scheme—which was nothing more than an excuse for plundering his weaker neighbors—and found herself no longer welcome at Court.

She was loved by the Swedish people, however, as her Christian behavior was an inspiration to them. Many of them were newly converted and Bridget, who "was kind and meek to every creature and had a laughing face," strengthened them in their Faith.

In 1349, undaunted by the Black Death which was ravaging Europe, Bridget traveled to Rome for the jubilee year of 1350. Rome, abandoned by the papacy since 1309, was in a tragic state. The Pope reigned from Avignon under the watchful eye of the king of France. This sorry period for the Church is known as the "Babylonian Captivity" because the seventy years spent in Avignon were the same duration as that of the Jews in Babylon. In 1303, the French king, Philip the Fair, "the first absolute monarch of Europe," had sent hired thugs to attack Pope Boniface VIII who has opposed

Philip's policy of taxing the clergy. The elderly Pontiff was subjected to such indignities and cruelties (such as being struck with an iron glove) that he died a few weeks later. His successor, Benedict XI, was found dead soon after he had excommunicated those responsible for the crime—and it was rumored that he had been poisoned. At the next papal election, Philip, ruler of the most powerful nation in Europe, made sure that the new Pope was French. Clement V and the six Popes who came after him were French, elected in France and under the influence of the French monarch.

Urban V, the reigning Pontiff in 1350, was a good and holy Pope but, safe and secure in the papal palace in Avignon, he was reluctant to undertake the journey to Rome. The site of the Holy See, founded by Peter, remained abandoned.

Rome, without the Pope, was in a state of chaos. Its beautiful buildings had fallen into disrepair; the churches suffered from neglect. Robbery and murder were common and vice paraded openly in the streets.

Upon her arrival in Rome, Bridget set about caring for the poor, the sick and pilgrims. She was present at 5:00 a.m. Mass each day, went to confession every day and received Holy Communion several times a week.

Solicitous for the care of souls, she rebuked the worldly clergy "who did not trouble about souls at all." She wrote many letters to Pope Urban V at Avignon, begging him to return to Rome and warning that, if the Popes did not return to Italy soon, "they would forfeit not only their temporal but also their spiritual authority." Finally, in 1368, the Pope came back to Rome. But, after enduring insults, threats and curses from hostile factions for two years, he and the papal court fled back to Avignon. Four months later Urban V died.

Bridget wrote to his successor, Gregory XI, urging him to return the papacy to its rightful home. She was joined in her entreaties by Saint Catherine of Siena. (Pope Gregory did finally return, ending the "Babylonian Captivity" four years after Bridget's death.)

In 1371, accompanied by her daughter Catherine and two of her sons, Bridget made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. When she returned in March of 1373, her health was failing rapidly. On July 23, after receiving the last Sacraments, Bridget died in a state of ecstasy. She was canonized on October 7, 1931, by Boniface IX. She is the patron saint of Sweden.

Though she lived in a time of worldliness and disorder, Saint Bridget of Sweden had only one desire: to serve her suffering Savior with her whole heart and soul. Through her intercession may we be equally single-minded so that, with her, we may praise God for all eternity. †

A SPELLBINDING DEVELOPMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC RACE

Earlier this year *The Athanasian* carried an article on the growing witchcraft movement in America. There it was noted that Salem, Massachusetts, has an "official witch"—Laurie Cabot. You'll never guess who gave her the title! Why, Michael Dukakis, that's who!

It's true. David W. Dow, writing in the August issue of *The Twilight Zone Magazine*, reveals that the Democratic candidate for President was doing more while chief executive of the Bay State than engineering an "economic miracle." Dow opens his tongue-in-cheek column by throwing around a few names of potential candidates in search of one who "would best represent the Twilight Zone" (the stranger and more fantastic the candidate, the better). Finally, he hit upon Dukakis. Dow writes:

> Why? Well, as some of you might remember from our interview with Laurie Cabot (June, 1987), he was the one who bestowed the honorary title of "Official Witch of Salem" upon her in 1977.

An accompanying photo shows the two together at the time of the recognition. Laurie, clad in black robe and amulet, appears to be giving the camera the evil eye (under more mascara than anyone this side of Tammy Faye Bakker), while Mike grins rather lamely. The caption reads: "Has Dukakis locked up the 'witch' vote?"

Dow says that he's a little shocked that, in a "year in which skeletons are being torn, screaming, from their closets," no one in the press has seen fit to drag this one out before the public. He's been unable to get a response from the Dukakis camp. (The four offices he called, including National Headquarters, declined comment.) Laurie Cabot was more cooperative. She told Dow that she wasn't sure for whom she would vote. She says she feels favorable towards Dukakis but adds: "I like what Jesse (Jackson) has to say."

Things could get interesting if Governor Dukakis becomes President Dukakis. Among the tough decisions facing him will be what post to give Ms. Cabot. He may have to invent one. "Official Witch of the U.S.," say, or "Ambassador Witch to Haiti"? Why not "Secretary of the Department of Seances and Psychic Services"? Maybe she would cast a spell on "nasty" South Africa. And who could complain? After all, Nancy Reagan has her very own astrologer—and couldn't be happier.

— *John Kenneth Weiskittel*

(The next issue of *The Athanasian*, that of September 1, 1988, will contain articles by Mr. Weiskittel on both George Bush and Michael Dukakis.)

(In order to get this newsletter issue to the printer on schedule, the following article was written but a few hours after the Econe consecrations on June 30. This should be kept in mind in reading the article in the event that any substantial changes may have occurred in the situation between that date of June 30 and the date of July 15 on this issue of ***The Athanasian.****)*

ARCHBISHOP MARCEL LEFEBVRE AND THE CONCILIAR CHURCH

For a number of years now Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre has been making some very strong statements regarding the Conciliar Church. Typical of these is the following (July 29, 1976):

> That Conciliar Church is a schismatic Church because it breaks with the Catholic Church that has always been. It has its new dogmas, its new priesthood, its new institutions, its new worship—all already condemned by the Church in many a document, official and definitive...The Church that affirms such errors is at once schismatic and heretical. This Conciliar Church is, therefore, not Catholic. To whatever extent Pope, bishops, priests or faithful adhere to this new Church they separate themselves from the Catholic Church.

The above statement, please note, is dated almost exactly twelve years ago. In view of the utterly abominable current state of the Conciliar Church and of the heretical words and deeds of John Paul II over the past decade, those words are far more applicable today than they were then when Paul VI was still alive. And, it should be emphasized, Archbishop Lefebvre has spoken and written in a similar vein from time to time. Indeed, in a letter dated less than a year ago (August 29, 1987) and addressed to the four priests whom he planned to consecrate bishops, he writes of the "See of Peter and the posts of authority in Rome being occupied by anti-Christs." Pretty strong language, right?

A "sedevacantist" is a traditional Roman Catholic who believes that the Chair of Peter is presently vacant, who believes, that is, that John Paul II is not a valid pontiff. As all regular readers of *The Athanasian* are well aware, I am a "sedevacantist," being absolutely convinced that John Paul II is a non-Pope. Now, in view of the Archbishop's "disobedience" of John Paul II in the matter of the consecrations, it could be that some of my fellow "sedevacantists" among the laity have the impression that Archbishop Lefebvre has, or is about to, become one of us. Hence, the reason for this article.

Despite his strong and impressive statements over the years against the Conciliar Church, Archbishop Lefebvre and his Society remain to this day a part of that Church for the simple reason that he has never separated himself and his Society from it. While he logically justifies his "disobedience" of John Paul II in the matter of the consecrations, the point is that he acknowledges John Paul II as a valid Pope, the Vicar of Christ. As for the excommunication normally attached to such an act of consecration of bishops without papal approval, the Archbishop likewise justifies his action as permissible under present circumstances and not cause for excommunication. But here again he is not at all rejecting his belief in the validity of John Paul II but merely contending that the excommunication does not apply in the situation in question. And has not the Archbishop said that the Conciliar Church is not Catholic? That being the case, should he not be delighted to be excommunicated from it?

On the day this article is being written (June 30, 1988) Archbishop Lefebvre did consecrate four bishops at the seminary of his Society of Saint Pius X in Econe, Switzerland—and, having done so without the approval of John Paul II, he and the four bishops allegedly incurred automatic excommunication. To "sedevacantists," to be "excommunicated" by a non-Pope is, of course, ridiculous. Archbishop Lefebvre, however, while he maintains that his "excommunication" is without justification—and, hence to be ignored—*nonetheless clearly recognizes John Paul II as a valid Pope.*

Over the past 20 years or so no other bishop in the world has taken a stand on behalf of the One True Church which Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre has taken—and for this we "sedevacantists" should be very grateful to him. Most regrettably though, he never took the action which (it always seemed to me) would be and must be the logical consequence of his various statements—that action primarily being a twofold one of a complete break with the Conciliar Church and a public declaration that, to the Archbishop's mind, John Paul II is a formal heretic. And so Archbishop Lefebvre and his Society of Saint Pius X remain today what they have long been: members of the non-Catholic Conciliar Church of the non-Pope, John Paul II.

— Fr. F. Fenton

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