

# Papal Interest in Geopolitical Power

During the years 1798–1870, the papacy reeled from Pope Pius VI's arrest and death, the rise of the Italian Republic (nation) in 1861, and then threats to its sovereign control over the Papal States (approximating 20% of what is now Italy).

In the middle of this period, a powerful pope arose, Pope Pius IX. He would become the longest serving papal leader in Catholic history (1846–1878). During his tenure, he began to reassert the church's authority as a "superpower."<sup>1</sup>



Pius IX infiltrated the citizenry of those Papal States with spies. People were tortured for minor offences. The tribunals of his priests wielded almost unlimited power. Anti-Semitic crimes were rampant. Human dignity was degraded and people were heavily taxed.

In the middle of his "tenure," he published a sweeping list of what the papacy viewed as societal "wrongs," called the Syllabus of Errors. The following are a few of those things the church considered detestable (note these are "errors" – thus, the Roman Catholic position is in opposition):

15. Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, guided by the light of reason, he shall consider true. – Allocution "*Maxima quidem*," June 9, 1862; Damnatio "*Multiplices inter*," June 10, 1851.

16. Man may, in the observance of any religion whatever, find the way of eternal salvation, and arrive at eternal salvation. – Encyclical "*Qui pluribus*," Nov. 9, 1846.

17. Good hope at least is to be entertained of the eternal salvation of all those who are not at all in the true Church of Christ. – Encyclical "*Quanto conficiamur*," Aug. 10, 1863, etc.

18. Protestantism is nothing more than another form of the same true Christian religion, in which form it is given to please God equally as in the Catholic Church. – Encyclical "*Nosctis*," Dec. 8, 1849.

24. The Church has not the power of using force, nor has she any temporal power, direct or indirect. – Apostolic Letter "*Ad Apostolicæ*," Aug. 22, 1851.

42. In the case of conflicting laws enacted by the two powers, the civil law prevails. – Ibid.

43. The secular Dower has authority to rescind, declare and render null, solemn conventions, commonly called concordats, entered into with the Apostolic See, regarding the use of rights appertaining to ecclesiastical immunity, without the consent of the Apostolic See, and even in spite of its protest. – Allocution "*Multis gravibusque*," Dec. 17, 1860; Allocution "*In consistoriali*," Nov. 1, 1850.

44. The civil authority may interfere in matters relating to religion, morality and spiritual government: hence, it can pass judgment on the instructions issued for the guidance of consciences, conformably with their mission, by the pastors of the Church. Further, it has the right to make enactments regarding the administration of the divine sacraments, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Hogue, John; *The Last Pope* (Element; Boston, MA – 1998), p. 230.

dispositions necessary for receiving them. – Allocutions *"In consistoriali,"* Nov. 1, 1850, and *"Maxima quidem,"* June 9, 1862.

55. The Church ought to be separated from the .State, and the State from the Church. – Allocution *"Acerbissimum,"* Sept. 27, 1852.

#### ERRORS HAVING REFERENCE TO MODERN LIBERALISM

77. 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. – Allocution *"Nemo vestrum,"* July 26, 1855.

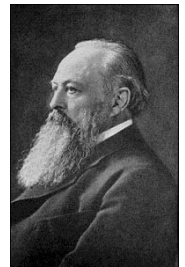
78. Hence it has been wisely decided by law, in some Catholic countries, that persons coming to reside therein shall enjoy the public exercise of their own peculiar worship. – Allocution *"Acerbissimum,"* Sept. 27, 1852.

Pius IX convened the first Vatican Council in 1869, which decreed **papal infallibility** and affirmed the dogma of the **immaculate conception of Mary**. The Council's deliberations were temporarily cut short when Italy declared war against the Papal States, and then the city of Rome. In spite of fierce resistance, these areas were absorbed into the Italian nation in October of 1870.

#### Papal Power – A Reflection

During this time, historian, philosopher and moralist Lord Acton wrote:

"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." He was alluding to the papal horrors that had been promulgated. Acton's writings remain as one of the world's most brilliant on personal liberty.



He was a Roman Catholic – yet, his writings were brutally honest. Of St. Bartholomew's Massacre in 1572 he reflected that there was no evidence to absolve the Roman church–state from premeditated murder.<sup>2</sup>

"The story is much more abominable than we all believed," Acton noted. "S. B. [St. Bartholomew's Massacre] is the greatest crime of modern times. It was committed on principles professed by Rome. It was approved, sanctioned, and praised by the papacy. The Holy See went out of its way to signify to the world, by permanent and solemn acts [its authority]."<sup>3</sup>

Later, speaking of another time of European terror, he said:

"The object of the Inquisition [was] not to combat sin.... men learned that outward submission must be given [to the church]. All this [was] to promote authority more than faith. When ideas were punished more severely than actions ... men understood that authority went before sincerity."<sup>4</sup>

The Roman church–state made it an act of Christian duty and "mercy" to kill a heretic.

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<sup>2</sup> Robbins, John W.; *Ecclesiastical Megalomania* (The Trinity Foundation – U.S. – 1999), p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> Acton, Add. MSS 5004; Robbins, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> As quoted in Robbins, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

“The papacy contrived murder and massacred on the largest and also on the most cruel and inhuman scale. They [the popes] were not only wholesale assassins but they made the principle of assassination a law of the Christian Church and a condition of salvation.... [The papacy is] the fiend skulking behind the Crucifix.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Ingrained Coercive Power**

Roman Catholic history is veiled in darkness. A central historical figure in contemporary church thinking is the Dominican priest Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274 A.D.). He is considered the greatest and most influential Catholic philosopher and theologian, especially in ethics, metaphysics and political theory.<sup>6</sup>



In his best known work, *Summa Theologia*, he notes that heretics are on the side of sin and deserve not only to be excommunicated but severed from the world by death.<sup>7</sup>

He also said that it was lawful to take another’s property openly or in secret for “extreme need.” It is not theft if it is in support of life for oneself or his neighbor.<sup>8</sup>

This philosophy simply means “need” makes another’s goods one’s own. “Need” is the ultimate moral title to property. “Need” gives the right to take possession of another’s goods.

The writings of Thomas Aquinas were later endorsed by the Council of Trent and then made the official dogma of the Roman Church-State by Leo XIII in his 1879 encyclical, *Aeterna Patris*.

Jesuit-trained Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) was the oldest “reigning” pope (age 93 when he died). He was responsible for the emergence of modern-day Catholic social teaching from his encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labor). That changed the Roman Catholic Church’s perception of and relationship to world authorities!



Sidestepping religious issues, it addressed social inequalities – capital and labor. The right to hold private property was to be limited because civil authorities might demand it be opened for public use. Capitalism and communism were to be seen as flawed political systems. But the encyclical was later seen as fascist thought.

The exploitative genius of *Rerum Novarum* was then promoted by Pope Pius XI in a similar encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (On the Reconstruction of Social Order) (1931). This new document revealed the papacy’s interest in explorative control of society. He noted:

“Under the guidance and in the light of Leo’s Encyclical was thus developed a truly Christian Social Science, which continues to be fostered and enriched daily by the tireless labors of those picked men whom We have named the auxiliaries of the Church. They do not allow it to remain hidden in learned obscurity, but bring it forth into the full view of public life, as is clearly shown by the valuable and well-frequented courses founded in Catholic Universities,

<sup>5</sup> Acton, Jan. 1, 1870, *Correspondence*, 91; Robbins, *op. cit.*, p. 117

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Aquinas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas)

<sup>7</sup> Aquinas, Thomas; *Summa*, II–III, Q.11, art. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 7<sup>th</sup> article.

Academies and Seminaries; by social congresses and 'weeks' held at frequent intervals and with gratifying success; by study circles; by sound and timely publications spread far and wide.

"Nor were these the only blessings which followed from the Encyclical. The Doctrine of ***Rerum Novarum*** began little by little to penetrate among those also who, being outside Catholic unity, do not recognize the Authority of the Church; and thus Catholic principles of sociology gradually became part of the intellectual heritage of the whole human race. Thus, too, We rejoice that the Catholic Truths, proclaimed so vigorously by Our illustrious Predecessor, are advanced and advocated not merely in non-Catholic books and journals, but frequently also in legislative assemblies and in courts of justice."<sup>9</sup>

Pope John XXIII followed by appealing to all people to live as "one community," working for the "common good" in another encyclical, *Mater et Magistra* (Christianity and Social Progress), May 15, 1961. This brought emphasis to the need of a "world moral order."

Then Pope Paul VI wrote another encyclical, *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples) (March 26, 1967), p. 26, in which he said:

"It is unfortunate that on these new conditions of society a system has been constructed which considers profit as the key motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligation. This unchecked liberalism leads to dictatorship rightly denounced by Pius XI as producing 'the international imperialism of money.' One cannot condemn such abuses too strongly."

Pope John Paul II later took this up with a crusade against capitalism, calling it "the system of injustice and harm that cried to heaven for vengeance."<sup>10</sup>

Though freedom and religious liberty are promoted as a "human right" within the realm of the "common good," it must be interpreted through the "socialist eyes" of Rome!<sup>11</sup>

Then John Paul II released *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (On the Social Concerns of the Church), December 30, 1987).

Intriguingly, the whole encyclical emphasizes the need of state intervention in economic planning and control, minimizing free enterprise! Promoting centralization of power is a growing mantra of this church, paralleling the current geopolitical moves of the New world Order.

### **Today's Social "Thinking"**

As the world solidifies a "new world" interest, Pope Benedict intensifies his moves to be at its ***administrative center***. Catholic "social doctrine" lends itself neatly to be a "leading partner!" He has called for "one community" in the encyclical *Caretas en Veritate* (Charity in Truth), under a centralized moral authority.



<sup>9</sup> Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), II.

<sup>10</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, pp. 20, 35-36 – 1981.

<sup>11</sup> Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation* (1986), p. 79.

“To manage the global economy ... there is urgent need of a true world political authority ... to seek to establish the common good.”<sup>12</sup> A moral base, founded on moral leadership, is required to protect society.

What Benedict XVI is promoting, Professor Martin Fitzgerald of Redfield College, Sydney, calls the purification of “the finest achievements of western civilization, freedom and equality.” He sees the pope as trying to recover the idea that we are social by nature because we are equally children of God. He appeals to make mankind more than neighbors but brothers; more than equality but fraternity. But to achieve this, he wryly observes, history has shown that it requires a police state!

Kishore Jayabalan, Director of Acton Institute, Rome, noted in a recent newsletter (July/August 2012) that Pope Benedict’s call for a moral order based on “faith and reason” as an idealism is impossible to achieve. Such attempts, historically, always lead to coercion, penalties and persecution. The central authority that Benedict dreams of will quickly become tyranny.

Thomas Aquinas captured its essence long ago when he noted that some may have to be killed to purify the whole. That becomes the ultimate “**solution**” to create a “common good.” Intriguingly, Hitler called the genocide of the Jews the “final solution.”

A **moral basis** for a geopolitical order will soon be demanded. The idealism of a “common good” will cease to protect the “minority,” as it appeals for some spiritual or moral “standard.”

The Bible has much to say about that global standard. God earmarked it as an “abomination,” which He warned would lead to desolation. Christians need a precise grasp of what **that** is, described in detail in Daniel and later in Revelation. Intriguingly, Jesus personally appealed to us to reference those sources (Matthew 24:15).

One must reflect, carefully analyze, evaluate, each word coming from Rome. The Bible says that it **will** become that geopolitical leader. Its moral base will be riveted on a common religious standard. A new world order is part of apocalyptic prophecy and is now pending!

Though the papacy has amazing documents on the rights of individuals and an elevated view of religious liberty, there are always qualifiers!

“This Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.”<sup>13</sup>

What do the words “within due limits” mean? We will soon see – they will be coercive to a few.

That should invite concern! Prophecy is unfolding. The ten horns are soon to be crowned – then a leader that the world wonders after and worships will be seen. A countdown has begun.

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<sup>12</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caretas en Veritate*, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> *Declaration on Religious Freedom*, promulgated by Paul VI, December 7, 1965.

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