The *Fuzzy* Picture *of* ***Hitler's*** *Pope*

Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII by John Cornwell (New York: Viking, 1999).

The Roman who first identified the Catholic Church as the cause of his troubles likely had no idea he was sounding a theme that would outlive the Sybil's own prophecies. Antagonism for the Church has echoed throughout the West's history, from the days when the dynasties of Rome's western invaders struggled with the popes over Arianism, through the long Medieval conflict over the investiture of bishops, to the claims of intellectuals like Gibbon, Voltaire, Twain, and Marx. Every age seems to have its own version of what Leo XIII called the "hackneyed reproach of old date"-that the Church is "wholly unable to afford help in spreading that welfare and progress which justly and naturally are sought after by every well-regulated State."' The modern era has its own list of grievances, amply displayed in John Cornwell's book, *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII.* Through the life of Eugenio Pacelli (who became Pope Pius XII in 1939), Cornwell purports to show his readers that Catholicism's way of living in, and thinking about, the world is hospitable to atrocity, indifferent to the welfare of non-Catholics, and inimical to man's legitimate aspirations to social justice and a spiritually consoling sex life. It is an intriguing attempt, written in a compelling style that cordially invites the reader to overlook its numerous and basic lapses in judgment, accuracy, method, and rational coherence.

"Modern" Catholicism

It is difficult to frame a comprehensive indictment of such an ancient and universal organization as the Catholic Church. The line of her popes predates the founding of any present government by centuries, even millennia. Her theologians have held their own with every school of man's thought from Plato's Academy to Wittgentstein's Cambridge. The history of Western architecture is traced in her churches, the history of Western art is largely written by her patronage or condemnation. The development of law can be found, in large measure, in Justinian's Code, the gathering of Catholic nobles at Runnymeade, and the writings of Suarez and Bellarmine. The Church has operated within, and taught about, economies dominated by barter, fiefs, guilds, and multinational corporations.. The Church's historical endurance is not merely a Catholic boast, as Macaulay's words attest:

> She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshiped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.[2]

Lord Macaulay's observation brings the problem into sharp relief. A comprehensive indictment of the Church must account for a great deal of time and history; the broader the indictment, the more difficult it is to keep intact. If, as Twain contended, the Church oppresses the spirit of man, why have oppressive regimes sought to destroy it? If, as Gibbon claimed, the Church subverts the social order, why have absolutists like Phillip II and Franco protected it? No, indictments of a universal Church cannot succeed unless they are universal themselves. Otherwise, one only need fetch a contradictory example to crumble the indictment into a claim that certain

clerics acted badly rather than a serious argument that the Church is bad *per se.*

Unfortunately, Cornwell opens his book with an embarrassing attempt to moot this problem by abandoning all of the Church's history before the First Vatican Council in 1870. *His* reason is that the Council clearly interrupted Catholic history and created a new Church dedicated to what he variously calls "summitry," "centralism," or "the modern ideology of papal power." In this system, the Pope "rules the Church in a vastly unequal power relationship" that did not exist until "the late nineteenth and early twentieth centu ries."[3] This would have come as news to Pope St. Zosimus, who proclaimed in A.D. 418 that the power of ecclesiastical discipline descends from St. Peter, whose place and name are held by the reigning pope, who has "such great authority that no one can dare to retract" from his decisions.[4] It would have surprised Pope Nicholas I, who wrote in A.D. *865* that "[n]either by Augustus, nor by all the clergy, nor by religious, nor by the people will the judge be judged.... The first seat will not be judged by anyone...the judgment of the Apostolic See, of whose authority there is none greater, is to be refused by no one."[5] It would have stunned Martin Luther, whose preaching was often consumed by cries against the tyranny of the pope. The very document which Cornwell takes as the constitution of an historically unprecedented church, Vatican I's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ,* quotes numerous and even bolder assertions from churchmen throughout history, all of whom claim that Christ's Church is governed by the Pope in a vastly unequal power relationship.

Cornwell's rush to sever the Catholic Church of Pacelli's day from anything which had gone before is apparent in his discussion of the Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1917. Pacelli was one of its principal authors, and Cornwell overstates himself by repeatedly claiming that changes in the Code demonstrate a radical difference between the Church of Innocent III and the centralized, authoritative Church of modern times. Cornwell spends a good deal of time explaining how the Code's reservation of episcopal nominations to the Holy See is unprecedented, and how this concentrated enor-

mous power in the hands of the Pope. Fair enough, except that he appears to believe that before 1917 the selection of bishops was entirely a local affair with which the pope had nothing to do. It is true that the nomination of bishops before 1917 was governed by a hodge-podge of rules and arrangements which varied from country to country. But the Vatican's profound involvement in the both the nomination and selection processes, as well as the ancient law that no person could be invested in a see without the express approval of the Pope, indicates that the contrast is far less stark than Cornwell believes.

In fact, Cornwell's insistent focus on the newness of papal primacy has compelled him to condense the thousand-year investiture controversy into a peaceful nineteenth-century movement of modern and increasingly secular nations to voluntarily abandon their role in episcopal selection. Any schoolboy knows the famous story of Pope Gregory VII's excommunication of King Henry IV in 1076 and its vivid portrait of the king shivering in the snows outside the Pope's residence, making his penance in the hope that the anathema would be lifted. Henry IV was excommunicated for repeatedly appointing bishops without papal leave. Reforms and recodifications of canon law, each of them giving the papacy more control over the episcopacy, were a feature of the time. Pacelli's involvement with canon law is not unique. It is but one example of a trend which began a thousand years before when Cardinal Hildebrand, the future Pope Gregory VII, spent twenty-three years preparing changes in canon law designed to eliminate secular interference with episcopal selection and to strengthen the authority of the papacy, a vast work which culminated in Gratian's *Decretals.* Cornwell's enthusiasm for a "golden age" of decentralized episcopal selection seems entirely uninformed by the problems which plagued that method throughout the middle ages: problems like simony, factionalism within dioceses, and the multiplication ofbenefices. Cornwell does his readers a gross disservice by suggesting that the process of episcopal selection may be neatly divided into good democratic and bad autocratic periods by the institution of the 1917 Code.

As happens frequently in the book, Cornwell's awareness of

what he may not know tempts him to utter equivocations that end up adding more irritation than illumination. In his discussion of the "new" doctrine of papal primacy, for example, he inserts a word or two about the centralizing tendencies of "modern means of communication" as an element of the new Church, as though papal supremacy is less a matter of Catholic principle than the proliferation of telegraph wires. Cornwell makes another, more relevant equivocation when he briefly purports to limit his thesis to papal primacy as we have known it within living memory. Passing the dubious inclusion of 1870 "within living memory," Cornwell doesn't give any account of why the principles of papal primacy outlined by centuries of popes somehow differ from the principle known to living memory. Cornwell's book attempts to critically examine the Church through the lens of one life, lived during the same era as Vatican I (Pacelli was born in 1876). Allowing the "ideology of papal power" to embrace an earlier time would raise more questions that Cornwell is prepared to address, and might even vitiate his thesis that the Church's malice is only a modern phenomenon that is mirrored in Pacelli's life.

Still, Cornwell has no objections to the past, so long as it provides information that bolsters his theory that "Hitler's Pope" exemplified the anti-Semitic nature of the Church. He gives numerous examples of Catholic anti-Semitism during the late Roman, medieval, Renaissance, and early-modern eras. (The Bishop of Mainz calling St. Bernard to preach against a pogrom is not among them).

He concludes that Catholicism's hatred of Jews was so virulent, and formed so early, that "[i]t may well be asked why the Christians did not exterminate all Jews in this early period of the Christian Empire."[6] Indeed. This is the chief question which ought to be answered if Cornwell wishes to convince us that Catholicism perpetually teeters on the brink of a genocidal abyss. But Cornwell gives no fuller explanation than his depiction of papal primacy as an invention of the nineteenth century. There is little logic in this assertion, even if it were true. The institutional locus of a decision is not the same thing as the decision itself; democracies and monarchies have variously succumbed to, and defied, anti-Semitism.

Cornwell gives us no reason to believe that "papal summitry" requires anti-Semitism; the possibility of their being different seems never to have occurred to him. Cornwell does not give us Acton's critique of absolute power by arguing that papal summitry freed Catholicism to vent its anti-Semitic heart. But then, Acton's critique would not serve Cornwell's purpose. It would lessen, perhaps even eliminate, the importance Cornwell's own theory. The examination of a Church whose members inevitably long for the physical extermination of the Jewish people would involve far more than tracing administrative flow-charts and quibbling over canon law. Cornwell's apparent inability to notice such fundamental questions should strongly caution the reader against regarding his anti-papal stand as anything more than a fixation on Vatican I enlarged beyond reason by the fallacy post *hoc, ergo propter hoc.*

Did the Papacy Start World War I?

Remaining undeterred by the dimly perceived existence of earlier centuries, Cornwell insists that the 1917 Code of Canon Law is the masterwork of "papal summitry," the primary vehicle and motive for all the ills that have plagued the Church during this century. Cornwell's willingness to attribute any calamity to the papacy and the Code of Canon Law knows no bounds. For example, by 1914 Pacelli was an undersecretary in the Vatican's Secretariat of State. Cornwell claims Pacelli was single-handedly "choreographing" negotiations for a concordat between the Holy See and Serbia which would eliminate Austria-Hungary's old rights to intervene on behalf of Serbian Catholics. The concordat was rendered necessary by-of course-the 1917 Code, whose centralizing provisions demanded the readjustment of the Vatican's relationship to the states of Europe. Cornwell then mixes papal summitry, the Code, and Pacelli into a toxic compound responsible for the First World War. The reason? The concordat was signed four days before Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated. Since the concordat's repeal of Austria's right to protect Serbian Catholics was perceived as an insult by Austrian nationalists, the concordat added the final measure of anti-Serbian anger needed to goad Austria into issuing its fatal ultimatum

to Serbia.

Cornwell's handling of the Serbian concordat is another example of his ability to fixate on the papacy to the exclusion of the world. He writes that the episode reveals how Pacelli conducted Vatican diplomacy: with no awareness of its power to complicate and disrupt international tensions. It is difficult to look past his elegant prose, encountered while one is still reeling from learning that Eugenio Pacelli caused the Great War, to the mundane commonplace it states. Diplomacy carries risks, whether conducted by princes of the Church or Harvard graduates. The servants of a Church whose diplomatic tradition can be said to have begun when Leo I met Attila could hardly have been unaware of this fact. Cornwell's narrative shows that his papal fixation and its attendant historical myopia operate within centuries as well as between them. His version of the war's outbreak does not mention imperialism, the *realpolitik* of interlocking European alliances, the Austro-Russian rivalry for influence in the Balkans, the quest for Serbian independence, or any other cause which may have contributed (however slightly) to the eruption of hostilities, None of this seems to matter in Cornwell's circular thinking, which finds the cause of almost any twentieth-century tragedy in "the ideology of papal power" because "the ideology of papal power" caused almost all of the twentieth-century's tragedies.

The Pure White Wraith

Cornwell's personal portrait of Pacelli is also deeply impoverished, afflicted by rash judgments and a monotonous use of weird and ethereal overtones deployed to alienate Pacelli, who is called a "pure white wraith," from any sympathy the reader might wish to extend. Cornwell's pen gives us a portrait of Pacelli at his coronation, "ascetic face bloodless as parchment, his huge deep-set eyes gazing lugubriously out upon the faithful, look[ing] for all the world like a demigod."[7] In Pacelli's approval of the lodgings provided by the German government during his 1917 visit to the country, Cornwell finds "beady-eyed alertness to appropriate levels of deference."[8] It is strongly hinted that Pacelli's own piety was fake: "the poses he

struck in prayer put one in mind of a saint in a stained-glass window."[9] Cornwell never hesitates to dwell on anything which might suggest (however incorrectly) that Pacelli was self-indulgent and ostentatious. We are told several times that Pacelli rode in horse-drawn carriages-without being reminded that he was born in the age of horse-drawn transportation-and Cornwell tells us that when Pacelli, as papal nuncio sent to Berlin to foster peace negotiations in 1917, ate lunch with Kaiser Wilhelm II the lunch was attended by various princes. Anyone familiar with Germany during the Second Reich would know she had more "various princes" than Ziegfield had Follies Girls. But Cornwell routinely lards his narrative with such gossipy tidbits to give an impression of opulence that is often unwarranted.

Was Pacelli an Anti-Semite?

Most of the ballyhoo around *Hitler's Pope* focused on the "undeniable" evidence of anti-Semitism it exposed in Pacelli's character. Surprisingly, the evidence is scant, one might even say illusory. Perhaps Cornwell realizes as much, because he again offers one of his irritating equivocations. While insisting that the new material he has uncovered undeniablyproves Pacelli was an anti-Semite, Cornwell tells us that Pacelli's antipathy to Jews was "secret." [10] How, exactly, does one go about displaying a secret antipathy? Or, for that matter, how does a historian go about proving its existence? And if Pacelli's life displayed it, why does Cornwell claim it was hidden until he penetrated the Vatican archives to dig up the supposedly damning evidence? Some of the "strongest" evidence for Pacelli's racist anti-Semitism comes only from Cornwell's suspicion of anything having to do with Pacelli. For example, Cornwell recounts the virulently anti-Semitic writing published in some Roman newspapers during the Dreyfuss affair and-noting that Pacelli was a priest in Rome during that time-archly speculates that churchmen were bound to have been influenced by those articles, even though we have no idea whether Pacelli ever read the articles.

Suspicions aside, Cornwell offers only two pieces of significant evidence that Pacelli held anti-Semitic views amenable to Nazi racial

policies. In the fall of 1917, while serving in the Secretariat of State, Pacelli rebuffed a request for Pope Benedict XV to pressure the Italian government into allowing a shipment of palm fronds into Germany for a celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. Cornwell states there is no plausible explanation for this event other than Pacelli's anti-Semitism, which caused him to recoil at the idea of helping German Jews. Cornwell's own narrative provides, in disjointed fashion, one or two facts which suggest another explanation. Italy was at war with Germany. Due to Italy's conquest of the Papal States and the resulting hostility that was to last until the Lateran Treaty of 1929, the Vatican did not even have diplomatic relations with Italy. During this time, the Vatican's efforts to promote peace negotiations encountered Italian antipathy and suspicion (later proved incorrect) that the Pope wanted to use the opportunity to regain the Papal States.

Moreover, Cornwell does not record that Benedict XV had proposed another peace plan in August, 1917, which drew favorable reactions from the British and the Austrians. Germany's reply was inconclusive, noting mostly that the United States continued to demand the replacement of the German government as the price for peace. Nor does Cornwell relate that other peace initiatives were being made. All of these facts might have counseled diplomatic reticence to grant a request that the Vatican pressure the Italian government into acting on behalf of citizens whose nation was waging war On Italy.

Cornwell also mockingly refers to Pacelli's own explanation-namely, that the request did not seek the general kind of aid required by natural or civil rights, but instead asked for positive assistance in non-Christian worship-as a thin tissue of excuses which cannot conceal his hatred of Jews. The inability of Catholics to participate or assist non-Catholic, or non-Christian, worship is usually misunderstood in this fashion. It is surprising that Cornwell, a self-professed Catholic, would have no understanding of the restraints. Assisi lay eighty years in the future, and even those meetings make a distinction between the members of Christian and non-Christian faiths praying together and praying with one another. By the

disciplinary standards of the time, applicable to any non-Christian religion, Pacelli's concern was quite correct and based on something which cannot be so blithely identified as anti-Semitism. All in all, the allegation appears to say more about the kind of anecdotes Cornwell will accept as proof of a great evil than whether Pius XII was a racist.

The only other piece of evidence is a letter in which Pacelli recounts some dealings with German revolutionaries in Munich after the war's end. The revolutionaries had seized hostages and were regularly trespassing onto protected diplomatic enclaves. By common agreement among the foreign diplomats in Munich, Pacelli sent Monsignor Schioppa to speak with the revolutionaries' leader and obtain a promise to recognize the inviolability of foreign diplomats and their residences. Pacelli's account of Schioppa's meeting remarks that the revolutionaries were unkempt and their behavior chaotic, and uses phrases such as "a gang of young women, Jews like all the rest of them.... Levein's [the leader of the gang] mistress, a young Russian woman, a Jew and a divorcee.... Levein is...also Russian and a Jew. Pale, dirty, with drugged eyes, hoarse voice, vulgar, repulsive, with a face that is both intelligent and sly." Cornwell pronounces judgment: Pacelli has adopted the belief, later held by the Nazis, that Bolshevism is a Jewish plot. His "repeated references to the Jewishness of these individuals, amid the catalogue of epithets describing their physical and moral repulsiveness," proves that Pacelli's mind was mired in "stereotypical anti-Semitic contempt."[11]

Most historians or journalists would find it difficult to judge a life by two paragraphs in a long letter containing one man's account of another man's impressions. One might as well try to establish Cornwell's character by talking with someone who had met someone who had met Cornwell. Moreover, Cornwell does not even attempt to address the plausible view that Pacelli's letter was produced under the same cultural limits that distinguish, for example, the dons at Cambridge University during the 1920s from Nazi stormtroopers. Perhaps these concerns are the motive for yet another of Cornwell's irritating spasms of equivocation. After identifying Pacelli's letter

with Nazi claims that Bolshevism was a Jewish plot and with Nazism's later racist imagery for Jews, Cornwell inserts a phrase to the effect that Paceilli's words only give an "appearance" of anti-Semitism. Still, in the rest of the book Cornwell uses this letter as absolute proof that Pacelli was a racist, Jew-hating bigot.

Mishandling Sources

Cornwell's account of Pacelli's dealings with the Kaiser introduces us to another flaw in the book: namely, Cornwell's eagerness to abandon critical judgment whenever he is tempted by sources favorable to his thesis. A mainstay of Cornwell's narrative is his claim that Pacelli's human sympathies were obscured by his habit of seeing the world from the standpoint of an ambitious, ethereal demigod, a man fascinated by papal power as good in and of itself, without any need to care about the practical impact of power on real men and women. In researching Pacelli's peace mission to Germany, Cornwell was confronted by two different accounts of a lunch arranged for Kaiser Wilhelm II and Pacelli by Germany's Chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg. Cornwell picks the account which gives the most support to his staple theme that Pacelli's commitment to papal centralism obliterated his human sympathies; he appears to have picked it for that reason alone.

Pacelli's account of the meeting is mundane. He records the Kaiser giving a rambling and disjointed monologue featuring justifications for Germany's having joined and prosecuted the war; complaints about the Allies; discourses on Germany's legitimate geopolitical aspirations; and a plea that the Catholic Church and the Prussian army join to form a solid front against Germany's internal and external enemies. The Kaiser, on the other hand, tells us that it was Pacelli who always saw obstacles to peace, and had to be stirred by the Kaiser's magnificent words. When Pacelli caviled at unilateral diplomatic actions which might provoke Italian nationalists to forcibly resist the Vatican's peace initiatives, the Kaiser had to steel Pacelli for the task by asking a rhetorical question: "Was I now to believe that [Christ's] Viceroy on earth was afraid of becoming a martyr, like his Lord, in order to bring peace to the bleeding world;

all on account of the ragged Roman [rabble]? I, the Protestant thought much too highly of the Roman priesthood-particularly the pope-to believe such a thing."[12] Fortunately, the Kaiser says, he was able to put hope in Pacelli's breast. The nuncio grabbed the Kaiser's hand and exclaimed, eyes bright with tears, complete agreement with Wilhelm.

Pacelli's account of this meeting is contained in his contemporaneous diplomatic reports; the Kaiser's memoirs appeared in the 1920s. Cornwell believes the latter account because it was "apparently" written from contemporaneous notes. If it isn't clear whether they relay contemporaneous notes, then what. other reasons can we have for accepting Wilhelm's account over Pacelli's? Cornwell mentions the existence of other accounts, but does not bother to use them to support either version, although he has every reason to make that comparison. Wilhelm's instability of character and his willingness to dress himself up (literally and figuratively) in the best possible light are well known to any student of Imperial Germany. The Kaiser's turbulent and contradictory relations with Bismarck and the British royal family, the ludicrous "Willy/Nicky" correspondence between him and Tsar Nicholas II, would each suffice to rebuke such an unquestioning and favorable belief in Wilhelm's probity, seriousness, or distaste for self-flattering narratives in which he plays the savior's role. Cornwell's own portrait of Pacelli, the self-disciplined and meticulous functionary whose "beady-eyed alertness" weighs even the political implications of his hotel rooms, gives us more reason to accept his account over the Kaiser's. But Cornwell leaps over these valid concerns by insisting that the Kaiser's version is more believable.

It cannot be denied that the Kaiser's account is more useful for Cornwell's thesis. Pacelli appears as the burgeoning worldly dictator, concerned only with the practical compromises that attend the exercise of power. Cornwell uses the Kaiser's supposed peroration about the pope's unique role in world peace, as well as asides about Germany's role as Europe's bulwark against Communism (the October Revolution was months in the future), to suggest that Pacelli had finally found the synthesis of ambition and detached

spirituality which was to dominate Pacelli's life and motivate his complicity in Hitler's policies. The Kaiser's rhetorical question serves a neatly prophetic role in Cornwell's narrative, foreshadowing his belief that Pacelli's ambition, hostility to Communism, and anti- Semitism combined to support his reluctance to risk martyrdom for Germany's Jews. So the Kaiser's memoirs must be credible; they're too good to pass up. Unfortunately, this is not the only time the book suffers from such lapses.

The Reich Concordat

In 1930, Pacelli was made a Cardinal and appointed the Vatican's Secretary of State. Three years later, he negotiated a Concordat between the Vatican and the Nazi government (the "Reich Concordat"). The Concordat is the centerpiece of *Hitler's Pope.* It is presented as the culmination of Pacelli's dream of papal supremacy which caused him to betray Germany's Catholics by forcing them- via the Concordat's terms-to cooperate with Nazism's genocidal policies, even as Pacelli gave Hitler free reign to destroy German Catholic communities, political institutions, and social organizations. As occurs with his treatment of so many topics, Cornwell's analysis is flawed by basic factual errors, fuzzy analysis, and a refusal to seriously consider the situation at hand.

For example, Cornwell contends that the Concordat was Hitler's very first international treaty, a precious milestone sought eagerly by Hitler in order to strengthen his regime's legitimacy. This is untrue. Hitler's "very first" international treaty was the "four powers pact" he signed months earlier with Britain, France, and Italy. If Hitler needed an international treaty to bolster his legitimacy, he didn't need to dicker with the Vatican for one. Also, Cornwell claims Hitler wanted the Concordat because the Vatican's 1929 Lateran Treaty with Mussolini had not only established normal relations between Italy and the Vatican since the loss of the Papal States in 1870, but also "established the semblance of an unprecedented integration of Catholicism and the corporate [totalitarian] state." [13] This is yet another of Cornwell's irritating equivocations. What is the reader to understand by this phrasing? Is the reader supposed to think the

Lateran Treaty merely "established a semblance" of an "unprecedented integration" without actually creating an "unprecedented integration"? Is the reader supposed to conclude that this "integration," whose extent or scope is not described, is unprecedented because it actually changed something or because it only appeared to have changed something? Or is the reader supposed to swallow the blatant claim that the Church had become an integral part of European fascism without noticing?

The effect of this tendentious innuendo is compounded by Cornwell's inability to think critically about what concordats actually mean. He insists that concordats are like Church-issued certificates of wholesomeness which require Catholics to abandon any thought of disputing with a regime blessed by such an agreement and which signal the Church's approval of anything the regime is doing, or may do, in future. Thus, Cornwell writes sweepingly that the Reich Concordat imposed a moral duty on Catholics to obey the Nazis. But he curiously admits that the Holy See has always signed treaties with monarchs and governments inimical to its beliefs. Indeed, such treaties have been signed in hopes that they might protect the religious rights of Catholics, just as the Lateran Treaty and the Reich Concordat obliged Italy and Germany to respect Catholic schools and rescind decrees abolishing Catholic organizations.

Few would argue that the Vatican's concordat with Napoleon expressed its approbation for his rape of Europe, or that the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the United States in 1984 constitutes "the semblance of ari unprecedented integration of Catholicism and abortion rights." From St. Paul's preaching obedience to Nero, through Westphalia's dictum, *cuius regio eius religio,* to Pacelli's own day, the Church has always maintained that "[t]he right to rule is not...bound up with any special mode of government."[14] The Church has never been dogmatically concerned with the political mechanisms by which a government is established or perpetuated. Nor has she ever obliged the faithful to disobey, resist, or overthrow civil authority on legal, as opposed to moral, grounds: "The one only reason which men have for not obeying [civil authority] is when anything is demanded of them

which is openly repugnant to the natural or the divine law, for it is equally unlawful to command to do anything in which the law of nature or the will of God is violated." [15] In such a theology, treaties with the Vatican cannot possibly have the power Cornwell gives to the Reich Concordat.

The Reich Concordat was signed in the first year of Hitler's regime. It was signed two years before the Nuremberg Laws, five years before Kristallnacht, six years before the outbreak of World War II, and nine years before the Wannsee Conference. Hitler was supported by a majority coalition in the Reichstag, and the Enabling Act had already made him the undisputed *Fiihrer* of Germany. Even Cornwell is forced to admit that Nazi policies toward the German Church in the early *1930s* never amounted to a new *Kulturkampf*. But he insists that the Vatican ought to have foregone an agreement over concerns about the Reich's constitutionality or possible future actions, or over a dubious principle by which the Vatican's recognition grants a regime a "blank check" on the Catholic conscience.

Cornwell makes no effort to examine this contention in light of either Church teaching or common sense. His claims for the Reich Concordat's status in Catholic thinking would require the Church to sever contact with virtually every government on earth and, by converse application, require Catholics to deny in word and deed the legitimacy of those governments. Cornwell offers us nothing to justify such drastic measures as a matter of Catholic theology or practical politics and, more to the point, he does not even consider whether any facts *known in 1933* would have recommended such a policy with respect to Germany. The frequency with which he repeats his questionable assertions causes one to wonder whether he believes that the evil we now recognize in the names "Mussolini" and "Hitler" obviate any need to ask if legitimate concerns and reasonable aims could have prompted the Vatican to make agreements with them.

Cornwell also fails to give adequate thought to his suggestion that morals and reason obliged the Vatican to leave matters to the Catholic Center Party and the German bishops-to resist and, perhaps, defeat Hitler. While his narrative leaves no doubt about his belief that German Catholics would have muzzled Hitler, the facts

he occasionally inserts suggest otherwise. For example, his narrative praises the Center Party as an "impressive, independent democratic constituency" backed by something he calls "political Catholicism as a whole, a group that was naturally much larger than the Center Party vote, with extensive links and associations on many levels throughout the country."[16]

When it comes to facts, however, Cornwell is obliged to inform us that "political Catholicism" had given the Center Party only 13.9% of the vote in the elections which brought Hitler to power, and that by that time the Party had "no viable allies to form a coalition, and therefore no purchase on power."[17] Cornwell is also obliged to tell us that the Center Party conducted a straw poll after vigorous debate over whether the deputies should vote for the Enabling Act which solidified Hitler's rule; that only fourteen of the Party's seventy-four deputies opposed the. act; and, that a telling argument in the debate concerned threats to the personal safety of the deputies themselves. Cornwell also admits that during the months between the Enabling Act and the Reich Concordat, "Center Party deputies and members were subjected to a wave of terror: house searches, arrests, intimidation," and that 2,000 members of the Catholic Bavarian People's Party were arrested in a region where political Catholicism" had "enormous traditional strength." Meanwhile, Nazi officials were closing Catholic schools and banning all sorts of Catholic organizations, proclaiming that Catholicism aimed in every way to sabotage the government.

Cornwell's only conclusion from these facts is to heap further blame on Pacelli. The negotiations for the Reich Concordat went slowly, immobilizing German political Catholicism and preventing it from mounting any truly effective opposition to Hitler. (Elsewhere, Cornwell decries the unseemly haste with which Pacelli negotiated the agreement). Cornwell seems not to have grasped that matters had moved somewhat beyond the democratic process. Parliamentary parties are not very good at terror. Pacelli might reasonably have concluded that the days of Weimar were over; that Germany was bound to be ruled by a dictator such as Franco or Mussolini; and that the only hope of protecting German Catholics

was to bind Germany to an agreement with an outside power which retained its freedom of action and could at least attempt to intervene, using whatever leverage Hitler's need for international respectability provided. Cornwell gives no serious thought to his assumption that "political Catholicism" would have triumphed over a massive program of midnight arrests and beatings.

Instead, he offers the first of many nonsensical pictures which appear in *Hitler's Pope.* He tells us the Reich Concordat put Catholics under a moral obligation to obey the Nazis, but he insists that Hitler wanted the Center Party destroyed in order to protect his regime from Catholic political opposition. He insists that the Center Party was powerful enough to thwart Hitler even as he admits that it commanded less than a quarter of the popular vote and had no viable partners for a coalition, and no purchase on power. But he also says Pacelli sacrificed the Center Party to induce Hitler to sign the Reich Concordat, and that Hitler desperately needed the concordat as a diplomatic "first" to bolster the legitimacy of his regime. While conceding that the Vatican's negotiation of a concordat did not imply approval of Nazism or Hitler's policies, he insists that the Vatican's position was formed by a papal ideology that was sympathetic to Hitler's disgust for free and democratic societies. And throughout his relentless damnation of Pacelli for heeding the siren call of fascism, Cornwell maintains his own silence about what, precisely, the Center Party or the German Bishops could have possibly done to oppose the Third Reich. Perhaps this is because Cornwell's adamantine certainty in the power of "political Catholicism" would dissolve the moment a course of action was contemplated. Two thousand Center Party members in Nazi jails ought to be an indication that "political Catholics" were not in a position to write letters to the *Volkischer Beobachter,* publish their own newspapers, get on the radio, or engage in parliamentary offensives that would have either destroyed Nazi Germany or transformed it into something like Stroessner's Paraguay. Cornwell has not offered us history, but naive skylarking which has little serious value to anyone who wants more than a superficial appreciation of the period.

Humani Generis Unitas

Cornwell's unquestioning antagonism to Pacelli surfaces again in the discussion of *Humani Generis Unitas,* the famous "hidden encyclical" that was drafted, but never issued, in 1938 under Pius XI. Cornwell begins his narrative by telling us that Pius XI was moved by a general concern over the spread of anti-Semitism in Europe and a specific horror at the virulence of Nazi anti-Semitism. Cornwell then reviews the draft and concludes that it typifies Catholicism's anti-Semitic perspective: The draft encyclical, in his estimation, proclaimed that the "the Jews have brought their problems down upon their own heads, not because of their religion, not because of their race, but because of their purely secular man-centered political and commercial goals, for which they [were] now paying the price" at the hands of Mussolini and the Nazis. Cornwell also notes that the draft warned Christians about the "spiritual dangers" associated with "exposure to the Jews, so long as their unbelief and enmity to Christianity continue," and openly expressed the Church's reluctance to protect Jews due to the danger of becoming "compromised in defense of Christian principles and humanity by being drawn into purely man-made politics."[18] Cornwell writes that the draft exemplified the anti-Semitism proved by Pacelli's letter from Munich.

It is important to realize that a general knowledge of Nazi propaganda about the Jews suggests that Hitler would have been delighted to read such an encyclical. Cornwell's most pejorative descriptions of the Reich Concordat do not claim it endorsed the view that Jews were a threat to civilization, an idea which lay at the center of Nazi propaganda from the publication of *Mein Kampf* to the day Hitler shot himself. Nor does Cornwell dare to claim the Concordat forbade the Vatican from interfering in German affairs. Cornwell's tour of *Humani Generis Unitas* shows us a document which, if it had been issued by Pius XI, would have bound the consciences of all Catholics-as no concordat could ever do-to the belief that Jews were spiritually dangerous enemies, whom the Church could not protect without compromising the Gospel, and who may actually deserve their persecution by Hitler's regime. If Cornwell is accurately portraying the draft, there is no choice but to

conclude that if the Nazis wanted a blank check on the Catholic conscience, *Humani Generis Unitas* might well have given it to them. The problem arises, however, when Cornwell confronts the fact that Pacelli single-handedly prevented the encyclical from being approved by Pius XI and published to the faithful. Pacelli's 1919 letter, and his refusal to pressure Italy to ship palm fronds to Germany in 1917, have already proved to Cornwell beyond doubt that he was a racist anti-Semite. The dilemma is obvious. Why would an anti-Semite like Pacelli quashan anti-Semitic statement like *Humani Generis Unitas?* Cornwell can think of only one explanation: Pacelli buried the draft to avoid offending the Nazis by publishing something which "for all its prejudices...might have made clear to the world that the Pope condemned anti-Semitism.""

This is a bizarre judgment. According to everything Cornwell has written to this point, *Humani generis unitas* would have been the culmination of Pacelli's conciliatory policy toward Nazi Germany and hostile attitude toward the Jews, presented on a plate as the binding moral teaching of the Pope himself. Cornwell does not even ask the reader to consider whether Pacelli might have quashed the encyclical because of its contents, because it could have been easily misread by the faithful as an endorsement of Nazi policies. One can only conclude that, having nailed Pacelli's 1919 Munich letter to his mast, Cornwell must hound Pacelli, the "pure white wraith," by such accusations without regard to how badly his own book is marred in the process.

Pacelli and the Holocaust

Cornwell's treatment of the period 1939-1945 also suffers from a relentlessly negative bias, which often deprives his narrative of depth, or even coherence. Cornwell discusses Pacelli's acknowledged efforts to protect Jews from the Nazis in this sentence: "We cannot belittle Pacelli's efforts on the level of charitable relief, or his encouragement of the work of countless Catholic religious and laypeople bringing comfort and safety to hundreds of thousands. "[20] The rest of the book, unfortunately, gives an unrelievedly belittling and contradictory discussion of Pacelli's reaction to Hitler, the

Holocaust, and the Second World War.

For example, Cornwell condemns Pacelli's warning to the Allies of Hitler's 1940 offensive, claiming that the hostility it provoked in Berlin forced Mussolini to enter the war and forfeited Pacelli's role as a neutral peacemaker. A few dozen pages later, Cornwell excoriates Pacelli's unwillingness to support Allied demands for Germany's unconditional surrender as mere posturing conducted under a tissue-thin claim of Vatican neutrality. When Pacelli is neutral, Cornwell damns him for not supporting the anti-Nazi cause; when Pacelli acts sympathetically to Germany's enemies, Cornwell damns him for forfeiting Vatican neutrality. These and similar accusations dot the book like paint thrown from the end of a broad brush, appearing every so often without the benefit of a more of a coherent perspective on Pacelli's character than "Pacelli always does the wrong thing."

The book's most sophisticated attempt to examine Pacelli's character appears in the discussion of his participation in the 1940 plot to depose Hitler. Here, and for once, Cornwell tries to give a rounded appreciation of the risks Pacelli ran not only for himself and the Vatican, but for Europe:

> The risks were extreme. Had Hitler learned of it [the plot], it is likely that he would have wreaked harsh revenge on the Catholic Church in Germany. At the same time, Mussolini could have seen it as a breach of neutrality and the Lateran Treaty, justifying radical, even violent, measures against the Vatican. The Vatican, after all, depended even for its water and electricity supply on Fascist Italy, and could be entered at any moment by Italian troops.

Cornwell rightly concludes that this episode shows that Pacelli could be daring and steadfast when success seemed probable and if the risks were acceptable:

> [Whatever his decisions, good or bad, they were his own; and he was unafraid on account of his personal safety. His hatred of Hitler was sufficient to allow him to take grave risks with his own

> life-and...the lives of a great many others. When the risk seemed right, he was capable of acting promptly. His exterior personality seemed delicate, oversensitive, even weak to some. Pusillanimity and indecisiveness-shortcomings that would be cited to extenuate his subsequent silence and inaction in other matters-were hardly in his nature.[21]

This sound judgment, however, has only one role in Cornwell's evaluation of Pacelli's wartime papacy. For Cornwell, a pope so bold could have kept silent about the Holocaust only because he did not think Hitler or the Holocaust worth condemning.

This blackening of Pacelli's name owes everything to Rolf Hochhuth's 1963 play *The Deputy,* whose fictional dialogues between Nazi and Vatican officials describe Pacelli as an insincere sociopath who blandly countenanced the Holocaust for reasons of state. Hochhuth places the main charge against Pacelli, then as now, in the words of a fictional Jesuit priest dismayed by Pacelli's silence:

> a deputy of Christ
> who sees these things and nonetheless
> permits reasons of state to seal his lips
> hesitates even for an hour
> to lift his anguished voice
> in one anathema to chill the blood
> of every last man on earth-
> that Pope is...a criminal.[22]

Pacelli's failure to issue a public blast of condemnation, a great anathema "to chill the blood of every last man on earth," is the alpha and omega of the modern indictment. Cornwell's arguments for a great anathema rest on a series of questionable conclusions. First, that Pacelli was actually silent. Second, that a great anathema would not only have fulfilled the Church's theological mission, but that it would have had a practical benefit in stopping the Final Solution. Third, that since Pacelli could act fearlessly, his silence cannot have been motivated by any worthy concern. It could only have come from

a defective faith which was hostile to non-Catholics generally, and to Jews specifically. This review has already discussed the hasty and questionable manner in which Cornwell has arrived at the conclusion that Pacelli was a racist anti-Semite. Cornwell's conclusions about the practicality and effect of a "great anathema" are equally flawed by an easy handling of facts and an unwillingness to examine the situation in which the Church found herself during the 1930s and 1940s.

Pacelli's "Silence"

Cornwell calls the soundness of his own judgments into question by repeatedly telling the reader that Pacelli's reaction to Nazism and the Final Solution was "silence." For example, he says the Reich Concordat legally bound German Catholics to remain silent whenever the Nazis persecuted Jews. We are also told that Pacelli's anti-Semitism caused his silence about the Holocaust. A section called "Pacelli's Journey Into Silence" consumes much of the Chapter titled "Pacelli and the Holocaust." Pacelli supposedly agreed to maintain "silence about Nazi atrocities as the price for recognition of Vatican neutrality during the German occupation of Rome. However, when one reads between these lines, and also accounts for statements which Cornwell does not mention, one detects an audacious double standard under which "silence" only means "whatever Pius XII said."

Cornwell tells us that Pacelli was "outraged" when Cardinal Innitzer publicly welcomed Hitler into Austria and publicly supported the *Anschluss,* Austria's incorporation into Germany. Pacelli therefore summoned Innitzer to the Vatican, but Innitzer delayed in coming, and so Pacelli placed an article in *L'Osservatore Romano* declaring that Innitzer's actions did not represent the views of the Holy See and were not undertaken with the endorsement of Pius XI. Moved by this public rebuke, Innitzer traveled to Rome and was subjected to what Cornwell calls Pacelli's icy presence. Innitzer was ordered to sign a statement that the consciences of Austrian Catholics were not bound by Innitzer's welcome. Innitzer was allowed to see Pius XI only after he had signed this document, and Cornwell

says this audience was the "most tempestuous" ever given by that Pope. Cornwell presents this episode as evidence of Pacelli's dictatorial bent, his outrage being solely directed at independent and localized action. He makes no attempt to support this judgment, which seems rash, given that Pacelli's humiliation of Innitzer followed the publication of the encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* ("With Burning Sorrow") by less than a year.

While *Mit Brennender Sorge* was issued by Pope Pius XI, there is no dispute that Cardinal Pacelli was a significant, if not primary, force behind its drafting and publication. Perhaps this fact has moved Cornwell to claim that the encyclical is proof of "residual anti-Judaism," part of a complex of Catholic sympathies which bound the Church to "the very right-wing nationalism, corporatism, and Fascism that have sustained anti-Semitism or complicity in anti-Semitism on racial grounds."[23] From this description one would expect a right-wing regime which sustained anti-Semitism to welcome the document. But the facts show that it was printed in secret and smuggled by Catholic messengers into the pulpits of every German priest to be read on Passion Sunday. Afterwards, as Cornwell tells us, the Nazis shrieked in outrage at what they considered a "subversive document' and a direct attack on the Nazi state. They shut down the German firms which had secretly printed the encyclical and arrested many of those firms' employees. Hitler himself condemned *Mit Brennender Sorge* and threatened further measures against the Catholic Church in Germany if it continued to assume rights that only belonged to the Nazi state. Yet Cornwell insists that *Mit Brennender Sorge* was part of the Vatican's "silence" because the encyclical's condemnation of Nazism was a mere "subtext" in which there appeared "no explicit condemnation of anti-Semitism," and which confined itself to some words "in reference to natural law, that *might* be applied to the Jews."[24]

There is an arguable case that the Nazi's reaction to *Mit Brennender Sorge* was not the result of a deranged hysteria that somehow kept them from grasping its "residual anti-Judaism" and general sympathy with fascism's view of the world. In the encyclical, when Pius XI discusses the Church's attempts to sow the seeds of

peace in Germany, he calls Nazis "the `enemy' [referred to in] Holy Scripture"-the enemy is Satan-who "oversowed the cockle of distrust, unrest, hatred, defamation, of a determined hostility overt or veiled, fed from many sources and wielding many tools, against Christ and His Church." Pius XI mocked the intellectual foundations of Nazism, writing that only "superficial minds could stumble into concepts of a national God, of a national religion; or attempt to lock within the frontiers of a single people, within the narrow limits of a single race, God, the Creator of the universe, King and Legislator of all nations before whose immensity they are `as a drop in a bucket.'"

Pius XI called Nazi racial ideology (which was, by 1937, fairly well known to be hostile to Jews, Slavs, and other non-Aryans) as something which "exalts race, or the people, or the State, or a particular form of State...above their standard value and divinizes them to an idolatrous level," and which "distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God." Anyone *who* believes such *an* ideology, said Pius XI, "is far from the true faith in God and from the concept of life which that faith upholds." *Mit Brennender Sorge* did not spare the "culture" of Nazism formed by its love of Wagnerian myth: "Whoever follows that so-called pre-Christian Germanic conception of substituting a dark and impersonal destiny for the personal God, denies thereby the Wisdom and Providence of God.... Neither is he a believer in God."

Pius XI did not content himself with these complaints. He also gave a warning of disaster to anyone who accepted the deification of Hitler via the *Fuhrerprinzip:* "Should any man dare, in sacrilegious disregard of the essential differences between God and His creature, between the God-man and the children of man, to place a mortal, were he the greatest of all times, by the side of, or over, or against, Christ, he would deserve to be called prophet of nothingness, to whom the terrifying words of Scripture would be applicable: `He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them.'"[25]

Cornwell pays *no* mind to this possible reading of the encyclical. He portrays *Mit Brennender Sorge* as a mundane list of complaints about the violation of Catholic rights guaranteed by the Reich

Concordat. He minimizes the encyclical's appeal to natural law as something which "might" pertain to Jews. In fact, the barest acquaintance of this Catholic concept knows that the natural law governs all men, whether or not they profess Christianity. Pius XI even says as much in *Mit Brennender Sorge:*

> We are especially referring to what is called the natural law, written by the Creator's hand on the tablet of the heart (Rom. II. 14) and which reason, not blinded by sin or passion, can easily read. It is in the light of the commands of this natural law, that all positive law, whoever be the lawgiver, can be gauged in its moral content, and hence, in the authority it wields over conscience. Human laws in flagrant contradiction with the natural law are vitiated with a taint which no force, no power can mend.[28]

Cornwell's failure to make an unbiased evaluation of Pacelli's sentiments in *Mit Brennender Sorge* has caused him to be distastefully cavalier in characterizing Innitzer's recall to Rome as nothing but Pacelli's attempt to make churchmen dance to the tunes of "papal summitry" and "complicit silence." Cornwell ought to have at least discussed whether Pacelli's humbling treatment of Innitzer might not have resulted from the Austrian's public contradiction of the anti-Nazi position of *Mit Brennender Sorge* and its exhortation for the clergy to witness that position by word and example.

The possibility that Pacelli and the Church might have fundamentally and publicly disagreed with Nazism ought to have been evident to Cornwell, whose research brought him into close contact with records of Vatican Radio's broadcasts under Pacelli's papacy. Vatican Radio denounced Hitler's proposed new world order as "a world order which is as dry as the desert, an order which is the same order as the order of the desert. It is being achieved by the exploitation of human life. What these falsehoods call life is no life. It is dissolution-it is death."[27] In 1940 Vatican Radio told Germans that "Hitler's war is not a just one," and "God's blessing cannot be upon it."[28] It warned that, "Jews and Poles are being herded into separate ghettos, hermetically sealed and pitifully inadequate," and stated that "the horror and inexcusable excesses committed on a

helpless and homeless people have been established by the unimpeachable testimony of eyewitnesses."[2o] By 1943, Vatican Radio was assuring countries which engaged in deportations and slave labor that the "curse of God" would afflict them.[30] But Cornwell has only one perspective on Vatican Radio: that it was run by unruly Jesuits and muzzled by Pacelli whenever the Germans complained about its broadcasts. The reader is presented with another nonsensical picture. Here we are given Pacelli, now Pope Pius XII, who is so powerful and vigilant that he controls the very content of Vatican media (as he did by inserting an article into the Vatican's newspaper about Innitzer), and whose powers have reached unprecedented heights due to "papal summitry." And we are also given the Jesuits, priests who take a special vow of personal obedience to the Holy Father. And we are expected to believe that these Jesuits rebelliously seized control of the Vatican's only radio station in order to broadcast anti-Nazi propaganda in direct opposition to the Holy Father's policy of "complicity" and "silence." Pacelli did reduce Vatican Radio's scathing commentary on Nazi policies and atrocities due to the pleas of Catholics who were subjected to Nazi reprisals, as well as the Allies' habit of putting their own propaganda in Pacelli's mouth and then claiming Vatican Radio as the source. But if the issue is Pacelli's "silence," then shouldn't we receive a more thoughtful discussion of whether Pacelli might actually have been responsible for the anti-Nazi broadcasts rather than Cornwell's bizarre picture of a "Jesuit conspiracy" to defy Pacelli?

Another nonsensical picture appears when Cornwell's discusses-or, more accurately, fails to discuss-the Nazi's own attitudes toward Pacelli. The day after *Mit Brennender Sorge* was read in Germany's Catholic churches, Nazism's official newspaper condemned the "Jew-God and His deputy in Rome."[31] The Nazi media also objected to Pacelli's election as Pope-six years after the Concordat-because he was "a servile perpetrator of Pius XI's doomed policy" who was "always opposed to Nazism and practically determined the policies of his predecessor," and because "Pius XI was a half-Jew, for his mother was a Dutch Jewess; but Cardinal

Pacelli is a full Jew."[32] Cornwell does not find such things indicative of Pacelli's relations with the Nazis. Indeed, he does not mention them at all. He prefers to quote cables from German diplomats touting their influence with Pacelli, such as Ambassador von Bergen's cable about a meeting with Pacelli one day before *Mit Brennender Sorge's* release in which Pacelli, referring to the state of tension between the Vatican and Germany due to repeated Nazi violations of the Concordat, received the ambassador with friendliness and assured him that friendly relations would be restored as soon as possible. Cornwell takes the cable, and only the cable, as irrefutable proof that Pacelli "secretly promised to mitigate the strength of *[Mit Brennender Sorge]* by private diplomatic reassurances to the Germans" because Pacelli "believed the Jews had brought misfortune on their own heads."[33] What results from Cornwell's discussion is another nonsensical picture of Pacelli being able to "take much credit for the final" version of *Mit Brennender Sorge* and arranging its secret distribution within Germany, then promising to mitigate the encyclical-which contains what Cornwell calls "residual anti-Judaism"-in order to please the anti-Jewish Nazis, who then publicly vilify Pacelli for continuing the anti-Nazi sentiments proclaimed by the same encyclical.

A Paradigm of Suspicion

A demonstration of "silence," a pure and unpunctuated absence, does not require such tortuous explanations or omissions of fact. But Cornwell feels entitled to level the claim of "silence" because he thinks he has already established Pacelli's anti-Semitism beyond any doubt, thus creating a paradigm of suspicion that can be abandoned only if a statement cannot be reconciled with it by even the most tortuous anti-Semitic or pro-Nazi gloss. So, for example, Cornwell quotes with approval the condemnatory verdict of Helen Fein, that "no representative of the Vatican 'ever publicly told Catholics that they must not cooperate [in the Holocaust] because Germany was killing Jews systematically and totally, and killing Jews was a sin.'" It is not enough for a pope to condemn the Nazis; he must do so with certain words which, in the author's hostile judgment, cannot

possibly be reconciled with a paradigm of suspicion.

A good example of this method can be found in Cornwell's attempt to bolster his weak case for Pacelli's anti-Semitic sentiments by discussing Pacelli's 1943 encyclical *Mystici Corporis.* After relating the encyclical's discussion of the Church of Christ as visibly extant in the Catholic Church in communion with the Pope, Cornwell concludes that this vision of Christianity is inimical to a sense that Jews are fellow human beings. In the encyclical's assertion that salvation is not beyond the hope of. even hardened sinners who still retain the Christian faith, Cornwell finds only an exculsionary metaphor in which "Catholics, no matter how grievous their sins, could rest assured that they were part of the people of God, while those who refused to pay allegiance to the Pope, however good and decent, were to be regarded as excluded." Because Pacelli's vision of the Church can be labeled a "rejection of social responsibility" which denies "the solidarity of the human race" and confirms the prejudice "that non-Catholics were alien to the human race,"[35] then that's all his encyclical could really mean.

By reading *Mystici Corporis* consistently with the paradigm of suspicion, Cornwell has unwittingly revived an old anti-Catholic slander: Catholicism's stress on communion with the Pope compels Catholics to hold allegiances that are inimical to the common good. One cannot help but compare his severely tortured examination of the encyclical with the views of the famous anti-Catholic crusader, Ellen Gould White:

> It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy. His sophistry lessens the obligation of the divine law and gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes them to cherish false conceptions of God.... Thus the minds of men are blinded, and Satan secures them as his agents.... The Roman Catholic Church...misrepresenting the character of God, has resorted to practices no less cruel and revolting. In the days of Rome's supremacy there were instruments of torture to compel assent to her doctrines.... There were massacres on a scale that will

> never be known until revealed in the judgment.... Such was the fate of Rome's opponents...."

Cornwell claims *Mystici Corporis* misrepresents God's character and the nature of sin because it supposedly teaches that God's charity only concerns Catholics who "pay allegiance to the Pope"- who may then sin without fear of losing Heaven (thus echoing another of White's claims, that Catholicism's teaching on absolution encourages men to sin).[37]

The paradigm of suspicion can excise a great deal of contradictory information. Consider this selection from *Mystici Corporis:*

> [C]orresponding to this love of God and of Christ, there must be love of the neighbor. How can we claim to love the Divine Redeemer, if we hate those whom He has redeemed with His precious blood, so that He might make them members of His Mystical Body? For that reason the beloved disciple warns us: If any man say: I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not. And this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God love also his brother. " Rather it should be said that the more we become "members one of another, " "mutually careful one for another," the closer we shall be united with God and with Christ; as, on the other hand, the more ardent the love that binds us to God and to our divine Head, the closer we shall be united to each other in the bonds of charity.[38]

Likewise, this excerpt from Pius XII's first encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus* calls Cornwell's judgments into question:

> The first of these pernicious errors, widespread today, is the forgetfulness of that law of human solidarity and charity which is dictated and imposed by our common origin and by the equality of rational nature in all men, to whatever people they belong, and by the redeeming Sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ on the Altar of the Cross to His Heavenly Father on behalf of sinful mankind.
> In fact, the first page of the Scripture, with magnificent simplicity,

> tells us how God, as a culmination to His creative work, made man to His Own image and likeness; and the same Scripture tells us that He enriched man with supernatural gifts and privileges, and destined him to an eternal and ineffable happiness. It shows us besides how other men took their origin from the first couple, and then goes on, in unsurpassed vividness of language, to recount their division into different groups and their dispersion to various parts of the world. Even when they abandoned their Creator, God did not cease to regard them as His children, who, according to His merciful plan, should one day be reunited once more in His friendship.'

Cornwell's paradigm will not allow him to adjust his claims in view of these words. He dismisses *Summi Pontificatus* as nothing but papal rhetoric that failed to *clearly* denounce Nazi Germany. But both *Summi Pontificatus* and *Mystici Corporis* show that Pacelli was aware of the fact that some human beings weren't Catholics. Indeed, Cornwell's whole book rests on Pacelli's awareness of this fact. But the paradigm of suspicion depends on the belief that Pacelli must have been personally antipathetic to Jews and sympathetic to the Nazi way of thinking, and so Cornwell cannot see that Pacelli's words might suggest a different view.

In 1938 Cardinal Pacelli attended the International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest. He addressed the members, and his speech contained this phrase: "As opposed to the foes of Jesus who cried out to his face, `Crucify him!' We sing him hymns of our loyalty and our love. We act in this fashion, not out of bitterness, not out of a sense of superiority, not out of arrogance toward those whose lips curse him and whose hearts reject him even today. "[40] Bolstered by his own paradigm, Cornwell does not hesitate to read Pacelli's words as approval for the idea that the Jews who killed Christ and thus deserved the persecution they were experiencing in Hungary and Germany at the time. But Catholic leaders have used the metaphor of persecuting Christ against anyone, Jewish or not, who attacks the Church or the Christian faith. St. Bernard of Clairvaux used it in the twelfth century to rebuke the contumacious William, Duke of

Aquitaine. When Bernard saw William at mass, Bernard held up the consecrated host and advanced upon the Duke with these words:

> We have besought you, and you have spurned us. The united multitude of the servants of God, meeting you elsewhere, have entreated you, and you have scorned them. Behold! Here comes to you the Virgin's Son, the Head and Lord of the Church which you persecute! ... Will you scorn him as you have scorned his servants?[41]

Could Pacelli's vilification have referred, in the tradition of St. Bernard, to the fascists of Germany and Hungary? He spoke one year before he helped write *Mit Brennender Sorge's* identification of the Nazis with the Enemy of God, and Catholic tradition has long held that Satan inspired the men who crucified Christ. But Cornwell does not ask such questions. For him, it is enough that *some* Catholics believed the Jews (and not the sins of mankind) were responsible for Christ's death; and that Nazi propaganda *sometimes* made use of this prejudice; and, that Pacelli's words can still be glossed in an anti-Semitic manner. The paradigm of suspicion has kept Cornwell from discussing his subject openly, just as it has kept him from considering if *Summi Pontificatus* and *Mystici Corporis* are really condemnations of Nazism rather than tacit endorsements of a genocidal mentality.

Cornwell is unaware that the paradigm of suspicion doesn't illuminate Pacelli's thoughts as much as it displays Cornwell's own tenacity. This is why we read such bizarre portraits of Pacelli as an anti-Semite who obstructs anti-Semitic statements; a pliant accessory of Nazism whom the Nazis plot to capture or destroy; a neutral wraith who boldly plots to overthrow Hitler; a despot who cannot control his own small radio station; and, a Pope who preaches universal love and solidarity while claiming that Jews aren't really human beings. Cornwell's unquestioning adherence to his theory has likewise misled him into damning Pacelli for "silence" when Pacelli repeatedly made statements which can at least be read as uncompromising condemnations of Nazism. The paradigm of suspi-

cion deprives his analysis of value, because it can be used on anything or anyone-including, even, Cornwell himself.

A Practical Anathema?

Previous criticisms of Pacelli have assumed that the Allies were ignorant of the Holocaust and that only he could have exposed it and thus caused the Allies to end the Holocaust. With the advent of scholarship such as *The Myth of Rescue,*[42] and more information about the Allies' knowledge of the Final Solution, these criticisms have lost their apparent strength. Cornwell admits that details of the Final Solution were known *to* the Allies by 1942. He does not suggest that Pacelli could have stopped the Holocaust by exposing it or triggering changes in the Allied war effort. Instead, he argues that a great anathema could have thwarted or ameliorated the Final Solution by encouraging popular resistance to the Nazis or intimidating Germany and her allies into mitigating their "war against the Jews." His discussion is again flawed by a failure to think seriously about the shape of the world in 1940-1945 and an unbounded opinion of Pacelli's ability to control dictators, soldiers, and civilian populations.

Cornwell's discussion of the physical difficulties of communicating anathemas from fascist-dominated Rome is rather tortuous. He begins soundly enough by noting that after the Vatican expressed sympathy for the nations invaded in 1940 Pacelli, on his way to celebrate Mass, was attacked by a mob of Italian fascists yelling "Death *to* the Pope."The Vatican's immediate vulnerability to fascist violence rightly convinces Cornwell that Pacelli could not have engaged in a massivepropaganda offensive:

> The Holy See was now besieged, surrounded by a country at war with the Church's eldest daughter, France, and with Great Britain, a country for which Pacelli had respect if little direct knowledge.... Pacelli had only limited scope for action. His cables and messages to nuncios around the world could be intercepted. His newspaper could be stopped at the gates of the Vatican. His radio station could be jammed. An encyclical aimed at Germany

could be destroyed, or altered before publication.[43]

But Cornwell insists these limitations vanished during 1942 because Pacelli could have exploited the communications outreach of the Allies. His suggestion that the occupation of Rome had ended is premature; the Allies did not liberate the city until June, 1944. Until then, the Vatican was surrounded by Italian fascists and German troops. Indeed, the Vatican's susceptibility to easy violence during this entire period is highlighted by Cornwell's discussion of the Nazi plan to attack the Vatican and kidnap Pacelli in 1943. And Cornwell relates how at least one of Pacelli's wartime messages were altered by the Nazis before publication and distributed as pro-Nazi propaganda. But he doesn't think it necessary to explain why the Gestapo or the SS couldn't also have thwarted "the communications outreach of the Allies" by stopping distribution of the Vatican newspaper, jamming Vatican radio, or suppressing another encyclical targeted at Germany.

His insistence on 1942 as the year when Pacelli could have communicated the great anathema is apparently caused by the rhetorical convenience of Allied special pleading. Myron Taylor, an American envoy sent by President Roosevelt to the Vatican, arrived in Rome during that year. Oddly, Cornwell cannot fathom how Mussolini allowed an American diplomat to enter Rome, calling it remarkable. In truth, however, Mussolini was obliged to permit Taylor's arrival by Article 12 of the Lateran Treaty of 1929, which Cornwell had already described as integrating the Catholic Church with Mussolini's government." Taylor's mission to Rome is the focal point for Cornwell's discussion of Allied diplomatic initiatives designed to bring the Vatican into a propaganda war against Germany: "Taylor... aimed to convince the Pontiff that the Americans could not lose the war.... [H]is principal mission was to plead with Pacelli to speak out, and to this end he assured him that America was on the side of right." Through Taylor, Cornwell introduces us to other Allied diplomats whom he combines into a sort of Greek chorus that demands, on pain of damnation, Pacelli's uncompromising expression of hatred for the Holocaust and his endorsement of the Allied

war effort. Cornwell takes Pacelli's non-compliance as proof of the Pope's ambivalence to Nazism and hard-heartedness toward the Jewish people. Quoting British diplomat Francis D'Arcy Osborne, Cornwell says Pacelli's inaction resulted in "a renunciation of moral leadership and a consequent atrophy of the influence and authority of the Vatican.[45]

Cornwell's discussion of Allied demands is, unfortunately, something of a cartoon. Taylor, Osborne, and the rest were not saints pleading with the Pope to do God's will. They were worldly diplomats enlisted in the service of their respective governments. No British or America diplomat pleaded with Pacelli to condemn the indiscriminate bombing of civilians in enemy-held cities by the Royal Air Force or the U.S. Army Air *Corps.* Taylor did not beg Pacelli to condemn America's imprisonment of guiltless Nisei families, whose businesses and property were then confiscated in a manner eerily similar to the Reich's theft of Jewish businesses and homes. No one wanted the Pope to call for an end to the Allies' common policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, which all of them had condemned *as* a German atrocity earlier in the war. While Allied diplomats eagerly presented Pacelli with dossiers containing details of the Final Solution (which contained a great deal of information provided to the Allies by the Vatican), none of them presented similar dossiers about what one may call, with some delicacy, the reluctance of British and American troops to take Japanese prisoners in the Pacific. Even a condemnation of Soviet atrocities would have been unpalatable to the Allies, who routinely muzzled any suggestion that the Soviet Union was anything other than a glorious partner in the war to save democracy from Hitlerism. Part of Taylor's mission (not discussed by Cornwell) was to ask Pacelli to mollify tensions among the Allies by changing Pius XI's anti-Communist encyclical, *Divini Redemptoris.*[46] Cornwell's condemnation of Pacelli for rebuffing these one-sided appeals makes full use of the paradigm of suspicion, creating a grossly flawed evaluation of Pacelli's thoughts during these years.

Cornwell focuses his scorn on Pacelli's radio broadcast on Christmas, 1942, which is portrayed as a shocking anticlimax to the

heroic efforts of Allied diplomats to get Pacelli to act like a Christian. In that broadcast the Pope asked for a vow to renew civilization in the name of "those hundreds of thousands who, without any fault of their own, sometimes only by reason of their nationality or race, are marked down for death or gradual extinction."[47] Cornwell damns the broadcast for trivializing and denying the Holocaust because it scaled down the Holocaust's millions of victims to hundreds of thousands, none of whom were specifically identified as Jews. Both criticisms highlight the inadequacy imposed by Cornwell's paradigm of suspicion. The claim that Pacelli trivialized the Holocaust can be viewed as a near-paranoid suggestion that Pacelli's inability to quote a spot-on number of Holocaust victims in the middle of World War II is tantamount to absolving the murders which Pacelli's rhetorical number failed to include. As to Cornwell's other criticism, one wonders if a mature judgment would really call Pacelli's comment insufficient because it only failed to mention Jews, as though the murder of Slavs, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholic priests, the mentally handicapped, Protestants, and Center Party members in the death camps has some lesser moral significance.

Cornwell uses a tortuous legalism that reads the Pope's words, "sometimes only," as a qualification intended to legitimate some of the Final Solution. Obedient to his paradigm, Cornwell entirely ignores Pacelli's unqualified and universal reference to all victims as innocents killed "without fault of their own." Cornwell's use of hermeneutic suspicion always produces nonsensical pictures. To paint Pacelli as "complicit" with Hitler, Cornwell must say that "Hitler himself could not have wished for a more convoluted and innocuous reaction from the Vicar of Christ to the greatest crime in human history.' The reason? Pacelli had only one initiative to offer in 1942, a paltry call for a vow "by men of good will to bring society back to its immovable center of gravity in divine law, and for all men to dedicate themselves to the service of the human person and the service of a divinely ennobled human society."[48] The paradigm of suspicion has no limits. In Cornwell's hands it can even transform divine law, the preservation of human dignity, and a call to create a divinely ennobled human society into a canting piety that tolerates

the Nasiz and Auschwitz.

As a self-professed journalist conducting a broad and fearless examination of papal history, Cornwell ought to have realized that a Pope is obliged to take a different view of divine law and Christian civilization. The paradigm of suspicion has kept Cornwell from imagining, even for an instant, that a man charged with the spiritual welfare of the whole world might have broad aims which are inconsistent with Myron Taylor's demand for propaganda that exalted the Allies' godliness while urging them to pursue an unlimited holy war against the demonic Germans. The phrase *Gott mit uns,* "God with us," was emblazoned on the belt-buckle of every Wehrmacht soldier. Cornwell is too hasty, one might even say sloppy, in allowing the paradigm of suspicion to deny Pacelli credit for his unwillingness to utter a pro-Allied version of that same twisted shibboleth.

An Effective Anathema?

An argument that Pacelli failed to make a futile gesture would not carry much force, and so Cornwell finds himself consistently overestimating, even imagining, the effect which a "great anathema" would have had on the progress of the Final Solution. One of Cornwell's examples is the deportation of Jews from Hungary. This is doubly significant for Cornwell because Pacelli personally intervened and, so Cornwell claims, demonstrated his invincible power to thwart the Nazi genocide. As proof, Cornwell tells us that the deportations began under the supervision of Adolf Eichmann soon after the Nazis invaded the country in March, 1944. In May, 1944 the papal nuncio in Istanbul learned, by reports of Auschwitz escapees, that the camp was being prepared to receive Hungary's Jews. After this report reached the Vatican, Pacelli ordered the nuncio to Hungary to warn Hungary's government against violating God's commandments, and to avoid any action against which the Holy See would feel obliged to protest.

But late in June, 1944, Swiss newspapers began reporting that deportations had begun in Hungary. Pacelli protested strongly to Hungary's ruler, Admiral Horthy, via a telegram sent on June 26.

The following day, Horthy replied that he would do all in his power to obey Christian principles and stop the deportations. Unfortunately, Cornwell laments, the Pope had waited too long. The Jews had already been deported from almost all areas of Hungary. While Cornwell says many thousands of Jews were saved by the intervention of Catholics (acting without Pacelli's encouragement), the Pope's protest was still too late. An earlier protest, Cornwell says, "might have made a significant difference." [5]

Cornwell's narrative is difficult to reconcile with all the facts of this episode. While he notes that Pacelli's protest was preceded by the Swiss press' reports, he does not mention that the deportations were exposed by a British News Service telegram sent from Switzerland *at the request of the Vatican."* Cornwell often uses the word "complicity" to describe Pacelli's reaction to the Holocaust. It is difficult to imagine a definition of the word that can embrace exposing Nazi crimes and misdeeds to Nazism's enemies. The evidence at Eichmann's trial showed that the main deportations from Hungary abducted more than 440,000 Jews in 147 freight trains, running two to three per day. They began in mid-May 1944 and continued feverishly until July 9-a time which was more than a month before the Vatican exposed them in the world press and less than two weeks after Horthy made his promise to Pacelli. Eichmann and other Nazis worked with demonic fervor to thwart Horthy's orders. On one occasion they even used SS troops to intimidate Hungarian guards and deport 1,500 Jews from a camp in Kistaresa. Eichmann was also planning, with the approval of the German Foreign Ministry, a swift roundup and deportation of Hungary's remaining Jews (located mostly in Budapest) scheduled for *the middle or end of July, 1944.* His accomplice was Horthy's own Interior Minister, who continued to plot the last deportations despite Horthy's orders; the two men had tentatively scheduled a full-scale resumption of deportations for August 20, 1944. Horthy, acting on his promise to Pacelli, thwarted this plan.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1944 Hungarian Catholics engaged in heroic efforts to protect the Jews who still remained in the country... Cornwell's insistence that this local effort found no

favor with Pacelli is more a product of Cornwell's thesis rather than the facts. He fails to note the European broadcast of a speech to Hungarian Catholics by Archbishop Spellman of New York, made at the request of Pacelli, which urged them not to yield to a "false, pagan code of tyranny" which was acting "in direct contradictions of the Catholic faith professed by the vast majority of the Hungarian people."[52] The Germans, disgusted at Horthy's cooperation with Pacelli and Horthy's attempt to negotiate an armistice with the advancing Soviets, arrested him in mid-October. Deportations resumed under the fanatical puppet regime of the "Arrow Cross" established by the Nazis, and continued until the country was overrun by the Red Army in December, 1944. In all, Catholic efforts saved over 170,000 Jews from the death camps; Cornwell's "many thousands" is somewhat of an understatement.[53]

Cornwell's suggestion that Pacelli indolently frittered away months doesn't square with the fact that Vatican officials acted promptly upon learning of the preparations in Auschwitz; instigated the exposure of the deportations; and immediately obeyed Pacelli's order to telegram a stern warning to Horthy only days later. Moreover, the example of Hungary is not particularly favorable for Cornwell's unquestioning belief in the efficacy of a "great anathema." On the one hand, it indicates that papal pressure could (and did) have a salutary effect on local regimes that might otherwise have fully cooperated with the Nazis. On the other hand, it demonstrates the limitations of papal activity during war, limitations imposed not only by obvious difficulties of communication but also by the ferocious tenacity with which the Nazis pursued the Final Solution.

In this regard, it is unfortunate that Cornwell's select bibliography does not include Lucy Dawidowicz's landmark 1975 book, *The War Against the Jews.* She examines the Nazis' internal discussions and memoranda and demonstrates that they saw the Final Solution as an inextricably logical, necessary, and strategic outgrowth of the same war they were waging on the Allies. Hitler's regime was so committed to the Final Solution that German generals complained about the diversion of military resources (particularly rail transport) away from the struggle against the Soviet Army in order to achieve

the desired level of transportation to the death camps. Thus, the Nazis conceived and spoke of all their actions as a "war against the Jews."[54] Cornwell does not seem to have thought about the speed with which the Nazis prosecuted this "war," nor their ferocity in the face of the international outcry generated by the Vatican's protests: 440,000 Jews were taken from Hungary in the six weeks before the Vatican even learned of the deportations. Eichmann, Heydrich, and the rest were not a group of timid and guilt-ridden men, prone to half-measures and ready to abandon the point of their professional lives the moment anyone made noise about what they were doing. They were shockingly dedicated to their "cause," and willing to ignore almost any obstacle to their murderous program.

For this reason the Hungarian pattern was repeated, with some variations, across wartime Europe. In 1942 the Nazis deported 15,000 Jews from the Netherlands. Catholic bishops and Reformed churchmen protested in a vehement telegram to Dr. Seyess-Inquart, the *Reichskommisar* who governed Holland for the Nazis. Seyess-Inquart offered to exempt Jewish converts to Christianity, provided their conversions could be documented before 1941. Cornwell describes the results of Seyess-Inquart's maneuver:

> The Dutch Reformed Church acquiesced, but the Catholic archbishop of Utrecht rejected the bargain and issued a pastoral letter of clear denunciation to be read in all the Churches. As a result, the Germans rounded up and deported all the Catholic Jews they could find, including Edith Stein, the Jewish Carmelite philosopher who had pleaded with Pius XI to make an urgent statement against anti-Semitism back in the spring of 1933. Stein later died in Auschwitz.[55]

When the pro-Nazi Republic of Slovakia enacted anti-Jewish laws, Pacelli's Secretariat of State protested in a note delivered to the Slovak ambassador to the Holy See:

> With the deepest sorrow the Holy See has learned that also in Slovakia, a country whose population almost totally honors the best Catholic tradition, a "Government Ordinance" was

> issued...establishing special "racial legislation" and containing various regulations in open contrast with Catholic principles.... In fact the Church, universal by the will of her divine Founder, welcomes to her bosom people of all races, and views all mankind with a maternal solicitude for the purpose of creating and developing among all men feelings of brotherhood and love, in accordancewith the explicit and categoric teaching of the Gospel.... [56]

The note drew a vicious reply from Slovakia's Prime Minister, Vojtech Tuka:

> It is incomprehensible to the [Slovak] government that ecclesiastic circles and especially the Catholic clergy should today adduce so many protests against the elimination of the Jews, who in the past were most responsible for the misery of the Slovak people.... The [Catholic] Slovak clergy save for a few honorable exceptions has rarely showed such zeal for the interests of its own people as it does now for the interests of the Jews.... [57]

Slovakia then deported 58,000 Jews (75% of the Jewish population) to the death camps. Although subsequent intercession by the Vatican's nuncio succeeded in bringing a temporary halt to Slovala's cooperation, the Germans occupied Slovakia and took another 13,500 Jews." Cornwell either fails to mention such events or attempts to minimize them. An example is his description of the Vatican's protests over the deportation of Jews by Vichy France: "[T]he nuncio in France fully apprised the Vatican of every stage of the deportation; he also *went through the motions of* confronting Petain with the distress of the Catholic Church at the measures, but Petain turned a deaf ear. "[59] Cornwell doesn't explain why we ought to distinguish these "motions" from the activity of papal diplomats in Hungary, which he claims to prove that Vatican protests always halted the Holocaust. Cornwell's refusal to look more squarely at such cases should cause the reader to seriously question Cornwell's unquestioning belief that a "great anathema" would have stopped the Final Solution.

Cornwell's lack of sober thinking about the Vatican's influence

is no more evident than in his suggestion that a "great anathema" could have ended Hitler's career. The examples he uses are highly problematic, and Cornwell handles them in contradictory ways. Two involve successful local protests against Nazi orders to remove crucifixes from German Catholic schools in 1936 and *1941.* Nazi anti-Catholicism was not as firmly or vigorously pursued as Nazi anti-Semitism, and both incidents involved only sporadic actions by local Nazi officials. Despite these facts, Cornwell makes a blithe leap from these two protests (during fifteen years of Nazi rule) to the conclusion that German civilians could always thwart Nazi policies by means of popular protests. More to the point, however, is that Cornwell's evaluation has involved him in a self-contradiction about the Reich Concordat. He has invested a great deal of time and effort in persuading the reader that Pacelli's diplomacy neutered popular German resistance to Hitler. Yet these protests only sought Nazi obedience to Article XXIII of the Reich Concordat, which obliged the Nazis to preserve (and even establish) Catholic schools. This is deeply troubling, not because this fact alone disproves Cornwell, but because he has apparently refused to allow himself (or the reader) to take such events under consideration when evaluating either the wisdom of Pacelli's diplomacy or the morality of his diplomatic purposes.

Another (and similarly-flawed) example is Bishop Galen's protests against the Nazi euthanasia program conducted in Germany during the early 1940s. Cornwell admits that there "are reasons to suppose that Galen's intervention was not crucial to the reduction of deaths." (The Nazis had, in fact, opened large euthanasia centers in occupied Poland and moved their euthanasia operations eastward). But he insists that Galen's resistance shows what German Catholics might have achieved by ignoring the Vatican. Cornwell mentions high-level Nazi discussions about assassinating Galen only in passing, as though they added nothing to an appreciation of the response the Nazis would have made to a non-violent publicity campaign conducted by German Catholics. Likewise, Cornwell doesn't think it worthwhile to mention the Nazis' retaliatory arrests and murders of Bishop Galen's priests. Cornwell's affection for his anti-Vatican

thesis has apparently prevented him from informing the reader about *Pacelli's* support for Galen and the *Vatican's* opposition to the Nazi euthanasia program. The Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* ran a public condemnation of the program as "contrary to both natural and divine law."[60] Pacelli himself congratulated Galen's preaching, and Galen was among the first cardinals elevated by Pacelli after the war. One is not so much troubled by Cornwell's judgment as by his refusal to allow the reader access to such facts, which are arguably necessary to a balanced appreciation of the Vatican's reaction to Nazi policies.

Cornwell's last example is a truly remarkable protest against the deportations of Jews from Berlin in 1943. Nazi security forces rounded up 10,000 of Berlin's remaining Jews for eventual deportation. German gentile women married to 2,000 of the Jews repeatedly protested for their husbands' release, braving SS warnings that violence would be used against them. Cornwell states: "It was the sole public demonstration of its kind by German Gentiles to free Jews, and it was wholly successful."[61] The implication is obvious. If only the Vatican had not destroyed "political Catholicism," thus enabling Catholics to act against the Final Solution, the Holocaust may have been averted. But this protest was not directed at the deportation Jews *per se,* but at the deportation of Jews with non-Jewish German spouses. One wonders whether the Nazis would have dealt with a comprehensive protest in a different fashion. It is also ironic that Cornwell is bitterly critical of the Church's use of Nazi and international law to protect Jewish converts to Catholicism as examples of Vatican hard-heartedness and hypocrisy. His criticism leaves the impression that he believes protests on behalf of Jews with legal claims on Gentile institutions are shining acts of courage-but only if the protestors are German Gentiles and not Vatican diplomats.

Cornwell's suggestion that German Catholics could have overthrown Hitler by violence is particularly disturbing for its overstatement and fuzzy thinking. Cornwell's discussion of the *Kulturkampf,* the Catholic struggle against Germany's attempt to repress Catholicism in the nineteenth century, notes that Catholics engaged in

political murder and mass violence. Farther in the book, he claims the *Kulturkampf* provided a model for Catholics to respond to the Nazis. Even if he did not intend the suggestion, Cornwell's use of the *Kulturkampf* has not accounted for some significant differences between Bismarck and Hitler. Bismarck had to contend with a parliament and federated governments which enjoyed large measures of independence. Hitler faced neither obstacle, either before or after the dissolution of the Center Party. Bismarck was not served by legions of fanatics capable of mass murder. Bismarck could not have used the pretext of a world war to tar protestors with accusations of treason; conduct blanket censorship of the news; or engage in universal oppression through an enormous network of secret police operating above the law. There is no book comparable to Cornwell's in popularity that takes as its theme an indictment of the Russian Orthodox Church for failing to destroy Soviet Communism by violence or passive resistance, and the reason points to the flaws *in* Cornwell's thinking about Catholics in Germany. Totalitarian regimes are not more vigorous extensions of nineteenth-century European monarchies. Total states are characterized by far broader theories of legitimacy, more vicious institutions for detecting and punishing dissent, and the command of social contexts which give them unprecedented and immediate power over the jobs, homes, and lives of their subjects. Ghandi demonstrated and struggled against a constitutional monarchy. The workers and children whom, Cornwell claims, the Church should have thrown into battle against Hitler would have written a bloody and tragic history beside which even Amritsar would pale.

By using the hypothetical success of *a* German Catholic revolt to implicate Pacelli as "complicit" in Hitler's regime, Cornwell has unintentionally fallen prey to the very old stereotype of the Catholic who gives immediate and unthinking obedience to any order of the Roman autocracy. In setting the stage for Pacelli's complicity, Cornwell describes the Catholic Church which greeted the new pope in 1939:

As he looked out upon the powerful forces assembling for war,

> Pacelli could call on the loyalty and devotion of a half-billion souls-indeed, half the populations of Hitler's new Greater Reich were Catholics, including a quarter of the SS-and this at a time when the bishops, clergy, religious, and faithful were bound together in an unprecedented unity of discipline. Pacelli had no army to call upon, but half a century of burgeoning centrist papal authority gave him extraordinary sway over the hearts and minds of the Catholic faithful. The Pope, by his own self-estimation, was the supreme arbiter of moral values on earth....[62]

Taken in context with his praise of the violent and non-violent resistance which accompanied *the Kulturkampf,* Cornwell's mentioning of the SS cannot be passed over in silence. To even hint that a quarter of Himmler's troops would have deserted him on Pacelli's orders because of "an unprecedented unity of discipline" is simply reckless. The United States (home of the Klan) and England (where Guy Fawkes day is still celebrated) are not the only nations in which Catholics have been subjected to suspicion and political limitations from this very same belief: namely, that they owe-and will give-unquestioning obedience to every command of the Pope. Cornwell appears to have embraced this stereotype to further his thesis that a word from Pacelli would have caused German Catholics to leap (figuratively or literally) at Hitler's throat. Two Popes had already told Catholics, including the SS men to whom Cornwell refers, that Nazism was "nothing but apostasy" and "contrary to the Faith of Christ."[63] Religions and nations are populated with real human beings, none of whom are immune from the temptation to shrink from their faith for worldly gain, from fear, or because of a fatally skewed perception of political necessity. One wonders about the book Cornwell would have written if Pacelli had called for rebellion and provoked only the apostasy of thousands and the deaths of hundreds of thousands. Cornwell's leaping over such concerns to embrace a repugnant stereotype has only deprived his analysis of the depth it could have gained by appreciating these tragic aspects of human nature.

Cornwell's paradigm of suspicion has also led him to indict

Pacelli whenever he reached a fork in history that is in any way amenable to hypotheses about a different decision producing a more favorable outcome. Both Pius XI and Pacelli called Nazism "apostasy" and a "pagan idolatry of race" during the 1930s. But their words were not enough because they were not sufficiently public or forceful to bind the consciences of all Catholics. *Mit Brennender Sorge* condemned the entire Nazi worldview in a way that did (and still does) bind the consciences of Catholics. But the encyclical was not enough because it did not specifically use the words "Jews" and "anti-Semitism." Pius XII protested deportations and mass killings, but his protests were insufficient because he did not call for a crusade against Hitler.

In this litany, "pray for us" is replaced by "if only." If only Pius XI had issued *Humani Generis Unitas,* the world would have known that anti-Semitism was wrong. If only *Mit Brennender Sorge* had said "Jews" and "anti-Semitism," Hitler would have been compelled to resign. If only Pacelli had called for a crusade, Hitler would have been overthrown. "Alternative history" is risky because it can tempt an author to take his subject lightly by conjuring imaginary futures which have no serious connection to the times and circumstances in which his subjects actually lived. Of course Pacelli *could* have done things better, or at least otherwise. But the difference between "better" and "otherwise" is not always as small as Cornwell assumes it to be, and his assumption has led him to present crystal clear visions of futures that have not been realistically examined. It is plausible to say that "if only" John Brown had fought harder, he would have ended slavery and prevented the Civil War; but it is plausible only because it ignores everything about Harper's Ferry, slavery, and the Civil War.

For these reasons one is not surprised to find *Hitler's Pope* recounting events in a surrealistic, almost imaginary, fashion. A limited civil disturbance on behalf of *2,000* Jews married to German gentiles in *1943* (which left 8,000 for transportation to the death camps) is interchangeable with what Catholics ought to have done ten years before. The stabbing of a German mayor during the *Kulturkampf is* projected fifty years forward to prove that Catholic

resistance could have toppled Hitler. Pacelli's post-war encouragement of Cardinal Mindszenty's resistance to Communism, which embraced the idea of that cardinal's martyrdom, is thrown backwards by fifteen years to prove that Pacelli's had no equally fundamental objection to the Nazis. Even though the Nazis weren't rounding up the Jewish husbands of German gentiles in 1934, and even though the Church's situation in the early 1930s was not as severe as it was during the *Kulturkampf,* Cornwell expects everyone to have behaved as though such things were always happening.

It is unclear whether Cornwell writes this way from a historian's natural and proper use of thematic coherence or simply because he isn't interested in the validity of his theme to begin with. He's insistent that Pacelli could have changed history for the better by openly declaring a moral war against Germany. But he never identifies any point at which Pacelli would have been morally obliged, or politically astute, to unleash this offensive. Had Cornwell made such an attempt, he might have gained a more elegant appreciation of the complicated limits and enormous uncertainties which Pacelli actually confronted. The Nazis themselves had not settled on extermination as the means of the Final Solution until 1942; the post-Wannsee phase of their genocidal war consumed only thirty-six months until the American and Soviet armies finally met at the Elbe. Cornwell's difficulty in adequately addressing events and their relationship to Pacelli's decisions is understandable. But it ought to have stirred him to a greater impartiality in discussing the judgments of men who lived without the luxury of fifty years' worth of scholarly debate over most practical, or even the most moral, course of action.

Cornwell's enthusiasm for the "great anathema" is also marred by his apparent refusal to place himself in the fisherman's shoes. The fate of St. Maximilian Kolbe, and of thousands of other priests murdered by the Nazis both inside and outside the death camps, is hardly mentioned. The Nazis' vicious response to the Dutch Archbishop's complaint ought to have demonstrated the legitimacy of Pacelli's concern over Nazi reprisals, but Cornwell tersely dis-

misses such concerns as post-war fictions created to give Pacelli an alibi for his cowardice. In 1942, the year the Nazis determined to pursue their racial policies to their awful conclusion, Pacelli wrote an encyclical to be published in Poland condemning Nazism. He had it delivered to Cardinal Archbishop Sapieha in Krakow. Pacelli's messenger recorded Sapeiha's response:

> Archbishop Sapieha opened the package, read several pages and commented in a very understanding manner. Then he opened the door of the stove...and threw the correspondence into the fire.... [Hie said: "Thank the Holy Father very much, dear Monsignor. No one is more grateful to the Holy Father for his interest than the Poles. It is not necessary for us to have an external demonstration of the love and interest of the Pope regarding our troubles, when that would only serve to increase our sufferings. This is precisely the case, Monsignor.... [D]on't you know that if I publicize these words or if they are found in this house...all the heads of the Poles will not suffice as a reprisal? Come, come, Monsignor, it is better not to speak of this. Why, yes, the Jews! ... But here they kill everyone. What is the purpose of saying what everyone knows? Naturally we know that the Pope is with us. But why speak about the sorrow and the condemnation of the Pope, if it serves only to augment our troubles? ...

The Archbishop went on to describe Krakow's ghetto, created by the Nazis, and said:

> Do you see, Monsignor Paganuzzi, what we have been reduced to? But the saddest fact is that we have to leave those unfortunate people without help, isolated by the entire world. They are people dying for whom even a word of comfort is lacking. In order not to abbreviate their days we cannot, we must not speak. We live the tragedy of those unfortunate people and no one more than the Poles would like to help them; no one is in such an impossible situation of trying to help the Jews. Between Jews and Poles there is no difference. The Nazis have taken from us our bread, our freedom. At least, let us keep ourlife...and, with life, the hope of

seeing the end of our Calvary. [64]

Any evaluation of Pacelli's position ought to reflect on the similarities between the Vatican's position within occupied Europe and the Jewish officials who "governed" Nazi ghettos. Both were unarmed, confronting the superior physical power of the Nazis on a daily basis; reluctant to call for resistance that might only have generated a pointless slaughter; concerned about the impact each decision would have on the Nazis; desperate to spare as many as possible without provoking even worse atrocities. Could Nazi-dominated Europe have been Pacelli's "ghetto"? Could the situation in Europe have influenced Pacelli with similar pressures, and with analogous concerns, to the Judenrat?

There is, of course, no direct comparison. The Nazis weren't engaged in a program to exterminate Europe's Catholics, and Pacelli's Church had a worldwide constituency and influence that Europe's Jews did not. But there are enough similarities to cause Cornwell's unqualified charges of "complicity" to sound uncomfortably like the easy slurs that the Jews, through the "cooperation" of the Judenrat, were themselves "complicit" because they did not cry out loudly enough or fight the Nazis at every available opportunity and with every available means.

Cornwell is too quick to charge that Pacelli's motivation was the scandalized cowardice for which Peter rebuked Christ:

> And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of mend[s]

A thorough and fair appreciation of Pacelli's response to the Holocaust would have set this Scripture next to another, and considered whether Satan's voice might have been among those demanding that

Pacelli declare a crusade against Germany:

> And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee. And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.[66]

This was Pacelli's dilemma. It would be an almost intolerable burden for any man. Cornwell has given us no cause to justify the view that Pacelli was unaware of it, or did not try to carry it well. Omissions of important facts, mishandling of crucial evidence, and constant use of unstable and tortured reasoning to keep Pacelli's life inside the paradigm of suspicion yield an indictment that could just as easily damn a firefighter for failing to see through smoke, lifting apparently immovable wreckage, or not running fast enough.

Religious Catholicism

The most painful aspect of *Hitler's Pope is* Cornwell's proposed antagonism between the socially useful and the religious dimensions of Catholicism. He does not try to understand them as aspects of a single faith. He discusses them as irreconcilable religions which only share a common metaphorical language. Cornwell approves of a truly relevant Catholicism which strives for the salvation of human communities through political and economic activism within a decentralized church structure which has abdicated spiritual rulership. He rejects a supernatural Catholicism which believes in "dual realms of darkness and light beyond the mere `veil of appearances,' where reside the Godhead...and all the angels and saints, opposed by the powers of Prince of Darkness."[67] Echoing Marx's dictum about religion as an opiate, Cornwell claims religious Catholicism's focus on individual salvation encourages a disastrous apathy (even antipathy) about the earthly well-being of the human race. Proceeding from his selective and flawed reading of *Mystici Corporis,* Cornwell demonstrates the impersonal malice of religious

Catholicism by placing a rhetorical question in the mind of Pacelli and all similarly religious Catholics: "If the death of an individual is a mere passage of the soul through the veil of appearances to eternity, what price the death of six million individuals that are `other,' that do not belong, that form no part of the Mystical Body?"[68] The greatest of Pacelli's sins, greater even than his "silence," was, it seems, his commitment to religious Catholicism:

> Pacelli's failure to respond to the enormity of the Holocaust was more than a personal failure, it was a failure of the papal office itself and the prevailing culture of Catholicism. That failure was implicit in the rifts Catholicism created and sustained-between the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the secular, the body and the soul, clergy and laity, the exclusive truth of Catholicism over all other confessions and faiths. It was an essential feature. of Pacelli's ideology of papal power, moreover, that Catholics should abdicate, as Catholics, their social and political responsibility for what happened in the world and turn their gaze upward to the Holy Father and, beyond, to eternity.[69]

Religious Catholicism is barren because it focuses on the interior life, demanding "discipline, obedience, humility" and-of course-"scrupulous chastity," as well as other forms of oppression such as the Church's ban on artificial contraception.[70]

Cornwell identifies this religious Catholicism as the darkest cloud over the dome of St. Peter. It apparently doomed Paul VI to settle the issue of abortion and contraception by the "autocratic fiat" *of Humanae Vitae* rather than by democratic recourse to the Church as a whole. A more heavenly decentralization would have resulted in the approval of artificial contraception and brought a wealth of spiritual consolation to millions-and mooting the problems created for Catholics who do not obey this teaching. Cornwell tells us that this kind of Catholicism rules the thoughts John Paul II who, "[d]uring a period in which many theologians were turning to more rationalist, sociological solutions," became hopelessly ensnared by a fascination with "the otherworldly conflict between the powers of darkness and the powers of light."[71] Thus, the current Pope per-

petuates an empty crusade against abortion, contraception, hedonism, and unbridled capitalism while more serious problems are eroding the prestige and strength of the Church. It is Cornwell's hope that when John Paul II dies the Church will awaken and cast off the dead hand of Pacelli's religious Catholicism, returning to the decentralized freedom which existed before Vatican I.

Cornwell's description of the hostility between religious and socio-political Catholicism focuses largely on populism *versus* hierarchy; authority and obedience *versus* listening to the people and appropriate consultative bodies"; tyranny over the believer *versus* a Church that is of, by, and for the believer. It strangely echoes the American Protective Association's critique of Catholicism, voiced by Rev. Josiah Strong:

> Manifestly there is an irreconcilable difference between papal principles and the fundamental principles of our free institutions. Popular government is self-government. A nation is capable of self-government only so far as the individuals who compose it are capable of self-government. To place one's conscience, therefore, in the keeping of another, and to disavow all personal responsibility in obeying the dictation of another, is as far as possible from self-government, and, therefore, wholly inconsistent with republican institutions. It is the theory of absolutism in the state, that man exists for the state. It is the theory of absolutism in the church that man exists for the church. But in republican and Protestant America it is believed that church and state exist for the people and are to be administered by them. Our fundamental ideas of society, therefore, are as radically opposed to Vaticanism as to imperialism, and it is as inconsistent with our liberties for Americans to yield allegiance to the Pope as to the Czar. [72]

The similarity doesn't lie in the reform proposed by the APA (outlawing Catholicism) or Rev. Strong's conflation of American nativism and the Gospel of Christ: Cornwell would have the Catholic Church grow in man's (deserved) estimation. The similarity lies in the thesis that institutional rulership within a revelatory framework is antithetical to true Christianity, which consists of self-determining

groups of equal and independent believers vigorously pursuing happiness through society's political and economic arrangements. But two of Cornwell's examples of religious Catholicism might have caused him to hesitate before declaring an unbridgeable gulf between religious and social religion.

Cornwell tells us that the dogma of the Assumption, proclaimed by Pacelli in 1950, holds that the Virgin Mary was assumed body and soul into Heaven, "where she sits enthroned as a queen above all the angels and saints."[73] Ever alert to Pacelli's vaunting ambition, Cornwell tells readers that this dogma is a sheer invention, imported from "disputed early Christian tradition for which there is no Scriptural basis."[74] Cornwell's assertion of novelty is questionable. Catholics were liturgically celebrating the assumption as early as A.D. 500. As for Scripture, Catholics find support for the dogma in the life of Enoch and the twelfth chapter of Revelation.[75] While accusing Pacelli of indifference to politics, Cornwell is at a loss to explain the significance of the dogma in terms which are not political. The dogma is variously an anti-Communist ploy, a vehicle for Pacelli's vanity, or away to distract Catholics from social concerns by exalting an individualized piety which focuses on divine love, obedience, chastity, and the desire for Heaven.

Cornwell takes similar liberties with the canonization of Maria Goretti in the same year. When she was eleven years old, Maria was subjected to repeated sexual demands by a young man named Allesandro Serenelli. When she refused to take off her clothes and cried to a nearby adult, Serenelli flew into a rage and stabbed her to death. Cornwell is anxious to show us how religious Catholicism is enthralled to interior, personal piety at the expense of social concerns. He contrasts Maria's refusal with Pacelli's supposed "complicity" in the Holocaust, and wonders at the social indifference displayed by Pacelli's decision to canonize her, as though only interior concerns like chastity are worthy of resistance unto death. But Cornwell hasn't adequately established that Pacelli ordered anyone to submit to the Holocaust or refused to protest Nazi anti-Semitism. More importantly, Cornwell also ignores a significant aspect of Maria's life. Serenelli served 27 years in Italian prisons for

his crime. During the eighth year of his sentence, Maria appeared to him in a dream offering him, in the form of lilies, forgiveness and hope. This miracle was a major factor in the decision to canonize her. Serenelli reformed, and after his release (nineteen years later) he visited Maria's mother and begged her forgiveness. Serenelli lived a quiet life employed as a gardener by a Capuchin monastery. He died in 1970, leaving a written testimony in which he thanked Maria for her forgiveness, credited God for the change in his life, and hoped his example might encourage others to do good and avoid evil.

Cornwell's use of these events to bolster his theme that religious Catholicism teaches a "gnostic" creed that scorns human happiness in favor of realms of light and darkness, pitting individual piety against society's welfare, does not seem to have been preceded by much thought about the natures of either religion or justice. Cornwell doesn't seem to understand very much about gnosticism, which isn't distinguished from orthodox Christianity by a belief in supernatural realms of good and evil but by its claim that all creation is evil. The gnostics did not locate evil in man's quest for social justice; the gnostics located evil in the physical bodies of men, the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the ground upon which we walk. Cornwell has been misled into identifying the gnostic's revulsion for material existence with the Christian idea that human happiness embraces more than this world. If Pacelli was a "gnostic" for believing that Satan and Heaven were real, so were the progenitors of anything we might possibly call Christian: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."" The Christian mind puts these realities at the center of the universe, and finds them at the root of the Holocaust. While it is not surprising that men of our time, imbued with an ideological theory of religion, would deprecate Catholicism for these beliefs, it is surprising to find Cornwell among them.

In his preface to *Hitler's Pope,* Cornwell says he began the book as a pious Catholic with the intention of completely vindicating Pacelli, only to experience "moral shock" at the depths to which this revered figure had sunk under the weight of religious Catholicism's

gnostic tendencies. Cornwell's basic perspective, which has given us this tangled critique of Catholic "gnosticism," is bound to an ideological frame of mind that regards faith as one of many legitimating ideologies ultimately constructed by men and which must, like all the others, be judged on its ability to produce happiness *in* this life. But in any view worth calling "religious," things like artificial contraception cannot bring "spiritual consolation" unless they are in fact able to do so, and whether they are so able depends on man's place within those realms of light and darkness beyond the visible world. We may want artificial contraception, and see great good in it. But a basic idea of almost any religion is that what we want, *or* see great good in having, is not always what we *ought* to want or have. If Christian cosmology is not about real things, and the utility of God and the Devil depends on our choice of metaphors, how could we avoid regarding even "good" and "evil" as insubstantial metaphors for our own decisions? How could we avoid the same moral perversion identified by *Mit Brennender Sorge:*

> Take care, Venerable Brethren, that above all, faith in God, the first and irreplaceable foundation of all religion, be preserved in Germany pure and unstained. The believer in God is not he who utters the name in his speech, but he for whom this sacred word stands for a true and worthy concept of the Divinity. Whoever identifies, by pantheistic confusion, God and the universe, by either lowering God to the dimensions of the world, or raising the world to the dimensions of God, is not a believer in God."

Cornwell's idea that human life is best and most truly lived without continual submission to divine teaching that can actually forbid one's sincerest desires for happiness poses serious problems for his criticism of Pacelli. Justice must come from somewhere. If it does not come from a realm of light beyond our command we might as well pledge ourselves to follow the Athenians who heralded another, more ancient, massacre: "[W]e should say what we really think, and aim only at what is possible, for we both alike know that in the discussion of human affairs the question of justice only enters where there is equal power to enforce it, and that the powerful exact what

they can, and the weak grant what they must.""

A fair argument can be made that a religion is a useless encumbrance unless it offers real hope for a better life, both in this world and in a world to come. If salvation lies in victory, and if victory lies only in what this world can see, Stalin was right to ask how many divisions the Pope commanded; in such a world, martyrdom is the nadir of folly. A hope that can survive cruelty and indifference must spring from the belief that one can transcend the world even if he fails to change it. If this life is the sole focus of our efforts, then only a fool would extend friendship to those who may not repay it. Deitrich Bonhoeffer and Maximilian Kolbe did not act after making neat and realistic calculations of their ability to change the politics of their times, but by "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."' By refusing to take their faith seriously in all its dimensions, Cornwell has badly misapprehended the source of religion's beneficial power and, in the case of Catholicism, the role which miracles and dogmas have in sustaining that power.

When Cornwell disparages the Assumption, he overlooks the possibility that religions which are concerned with Heaven as a real place populated by a real God who glorifies real people, assure us that love will not go unrequited no matter how cruelly it is persecuted or denied. That kind of faith brings the courage to love, and to love first. When he mocks the canonization of Maria Goretti and Pacelli's preaching about divine forgiveness in *Mystici Corporis*, he neglects to appreciate that religions which teach God's eagerness to work a transforming redemption assure us that there is always hope for changes which transcend human expectations. They give us the courage to try, an escape route from the interior despair which manifests itself so readily in violence and cruelty.

Addressing himself to science, Fulton Sheen offered the interesting observation that it takes an odd mind to admit the existence of physical laws but deny the existence of a law-giver. Religious Catholicism takes the same point of view with respect to the human race: Doesn't the brotherhood of man imply a common Father? In a world where a peasant girl can become the Mother of God and

Queen of Heaven, and a Heavenly Father's love can cause repentant killers to spend their lives in the prayerful care of rosebuds, any good is possible. One might ask whether an evil as great as Auschwitz can be vanquished in any other kind of world. Unfortunately, the question has not occurred to Cornwell. He prefers to scowl at gnosticism and superstition while trying to replace a Father in Heaven with a surrogate compound of politics, economics, and sexual liberation.

In the Christian frame, social justice is a function of divine justice, and this Christians must shout from rooftops. But the Christian God has also said we cannot redeem the world unless we are willing to be redeemed ourselves. One wonders how Cornwell, upon finishing his book about the Nazi era, could find either comfort or inspiration in the prospect of billions working feverishly to create utopia without regard for "realms of light and darkness" or the health of their own souls.

Conclusion

Until I read *Hitler's Pope* I was quite content with the old wisdom that a book can't be judged by its cover. The cover of *Hitler's Pope* is a photograph that shows Pacelli, resplendent in Church regalia, striding from a building. In the background, a soldier wearing the distinctive coal-scuttle helmet like those used by the Nazis presents his rifle in a rigid salute. A car's door is being held open by a third man, who wears a black uniform and a peaked, officer-style cap like those worn by the SS. He too, is saluting Pacelli. The picture's impression of Pacelli leaving a meeting with Nazis, guarded and honored by their most notorious henchmen, is worth 10,000 words. "Truly," one thinks, "this man must have been Hitler's Pope."

Criticism after the book's initial release has caused the publisher to reluctantly identify the photograph-in microscopic print on the bottomof the back cover-as a depiction of "Eugenio Pacelli, before his election to the papacy, leaving a reception for President Hindenburg in Berlin, 1927." So the cleric in the photograph is not a pope, after all. He is a diplomat. The building. does not belong to the Third Reich. It belongs to the Weimar Republic. The meeting

was not with Hitler. It was with General Hindenburg, who disliked Hitler. The saluting soldier is not a Nazi hailing a compliant Pope. He is only a Weimar guard rendering conventional diplomatic honors. The man holding the car's door is not an SS officer honoring the Pope with a salute like those made to a superior officer. He is just a chauffeur touching his cap.

But the publishers have continued to exploit the photograph's shock value by expediently blurring everything besides Pacelli's image. Now, again, the soldier *might* be a Nazi honor guard, the chauffeur *might* be a saluting SS man, and the cleric *might* be the Pope himself. Perhaps this is as it should be. The fuzzy picture sums up Cornwell's work. In both, we are only allowed to see Pacelli striding forcefully through a manipulated image that cannot accurately inform us about his surroundings, his purpose, or his place in history.

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NOTES

1. Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei* If *2,* (1885).

2. Thomas Babington Macaulay, *On Ranke's History of the Popes.*

3. John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope; The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999), *3.*

4. Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum,* trans. Roy J. Deferrari and published as *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1957), *47. The* text is Pope *Zosimus'* letter to the African Bishops titled *Quamvis Patrum Traditio* and written on March 21, A.D. 418.

5. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum,* 132-134. The reference is to the Pope's letter *Proposueramus guidon* to the Byzantine Emperor Michael, A.D. *865.*

6. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 25.*

7. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 212.

8. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 63.*

9. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 269.
10. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 295.
11. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 74-75.
12. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 68.
13. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 143.
14. Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei* ¶ 4 (1885).
15. Leo XIII, *Diuturnum,* ¶ 15 (1881).
16. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 133.
17.Ibid.
18; Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 191;
19. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 192.
20. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 317.
21. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 236, 240.
22. Rolf Hochhuth, *The Deputy,* Act II, p. 102 (New York: Grove Press, 1964).
23. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 280.
24. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 183 (emphasis mine).
25. Pius XI, *Mit Brennender Sorge,* IT 5, 7, 8, 11 & 17 (1937). The Scriptural reference in the last quoted sentence is to the Second Psalm: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." Psalm 2:1-5 KJV.
26. Pius XI, *Mit Brennender Sorge,* If 30 (1937).
27. Camille Cianfarra, *The Vatican and the War,* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1944), 256.
28. J. Derek Holmes, *The Papacy in the Modern World,1914-1978* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 129.
29. Ron Rychlak, *Hitler, the War & the Pope,* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2000), 135.
30. Rychlak, 187.
31. Rychlak, 93.
32. Rychlak, 110.

33. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 296.*

34. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 325.*

35. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 276-277.*

36. Ellen Gould White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982), *569.*

37. See White, *Great Controversy, 567.* She writes, "[T]he church's claim to the right to pardon leads the Romanist to feel at liberty to sin; and the ordinance of confession, without which her pardon is not granted, tends also to give license to evil."

38. Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis,* ¶ 74 *(1943).*

39. Pius XII, *Summi Pontificatus* ¶¶ *35-36* (1939) (scriptural citations omitted).

40. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 185-186. Cornwell gives no source for this selection.

41. C. Warren Hollister, *Medieval Europe: a Short History* (New York: McGraw Hill, *1990),* 194.

42. See William Rubenstein, *The Myth of Rescue: Why the Democracies Could Not Have Saved More Jews from the Nazis,* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

43. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 244.

44. Joseph Sadow & Thomas Sarro, Jr., *The Coins and Medals of the Vatican* (New York : Sandord Durst, 1977), 106-114. Article *12* provides, "Italy recognizes the right of the Holy See to passive and active Legation, according to the general rules of International Law. Officials accredited by foreign Governments to the Holy See shall continue to enjoy...all the prerogatives of immunity enjoyed by diplomatic agents under International Law, and their headquarters may continue to be within Italian territory whilst enjoying the immunity due to them under International Law, even in the event of their State not having diplomatic relations with Italy: It is understood that Italy undertakes in all cases to allow the freedom of correspondence for all States, including belligerents, to and from the Holy See, as well as free access to the Apostolic See by Bishops from all over the world."

45. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 288-289.*

46. Rychlak, 162.

47. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 292.

48. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 293.

49. Ibid.

50. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 326.

51. Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies,* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), 248-249.

52. Robert A. Graham, *Pope Pius XII and the Jews of Hungary* (United States Catholic Historical Society), 5-6.

53 Martin Gilbert, *The Second World War: a Complete History,* (New York: H. Holt, 1987), 50. Dawidowicz gives *a* survival figure of 160,000 out of an original wartime population of 650,000, of whom 20,000 died during the winter of 1944. See Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: Bantam, 1981), 515-517.

54. Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945.* The book was originally published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston in 1975. It is unfortunate that Cornwell has included the phrase "war against the Jews" in the nuncio's telegram without any qualification or discussion. A credulous reader would be easily misled into accepting this language to express the belief that the Holocaust was a legitimate war rather than as what it really was-an example of the distasteful but necessary phrasing used in diplomatic efforts, akin to American diplomats referring to the "People's Republic" of China when China is governed by a blood-stained tyranny.

55. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 286-287.

56. Joseph L. Lichten, A *Question of Judgment: Pius XII and the Jews* (National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1963).

57. Lichten, *A Question of Judgment.*

58. All figures for Slovakian deportations are from Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews,* 511-512.

59. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 288 (emphasis supplied).

60. Frank J. Coppa, ed., *Controversial Concordats: The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler,* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 162.

61. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 196.

62. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope,* 215.

63. Henri Daniel-Rops, A *Fight for God: 1870-1939,* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1965), 313.

64. Sr. Margherita Marchione, "Pope Pius XII's Presumed `Silence,'" *Homiletic & Pastoral Review,* March, 2001.

65. Mark 8:31-33 KJV.

66. Luke 4:9-12 KJV.

67. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 273*

68. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 294.*

69. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 295.*

70. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 345, 353-354.*

71. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 366.*

72 Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis,* (New York: The American Home Missionary Society, 1891).

73. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 343.*

74. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope, 343.* Cornwell errs by stating that the dogma requires the belief that the Virgin Mary did not undergo bodily death. Pacelli's decree establishing the dogma, *Muneficentissimus Deus,* does not touch on the subject of Mary's death. It says only that the ever Virgin Mary, *having completed the course of her earthly life, was* assumed body and soul into heavenly glory." Pius XII, *Muneficentissimus Deus,* ¶ 44 (1950). There was (and remains) dispute between and among Catholic and Orthodox divines about whether Mary underwent death prior to the assumption.

75. Enoch lived for *365* years, after which he "walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Genesis *5:24* KJV). St. Paul adds to this when he states that by faith "Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5 KJV). Catholics have also long held that the Book of Revelation shows Christ's mother in Heaven, "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." (Revelation 12:1) This queenly woman is at the center of a war between Satan and God's angels,

which ends with Satan's being "wroth with the woman," and going forth "to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Revelation 12:17 KJV).

76. Ephesians 6:12 KJV.
77. Pius XI, *Mit Brennender Sorge,* ¶ 7 (1939).
78. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*
79. Hebrews 11:1 KJV.

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