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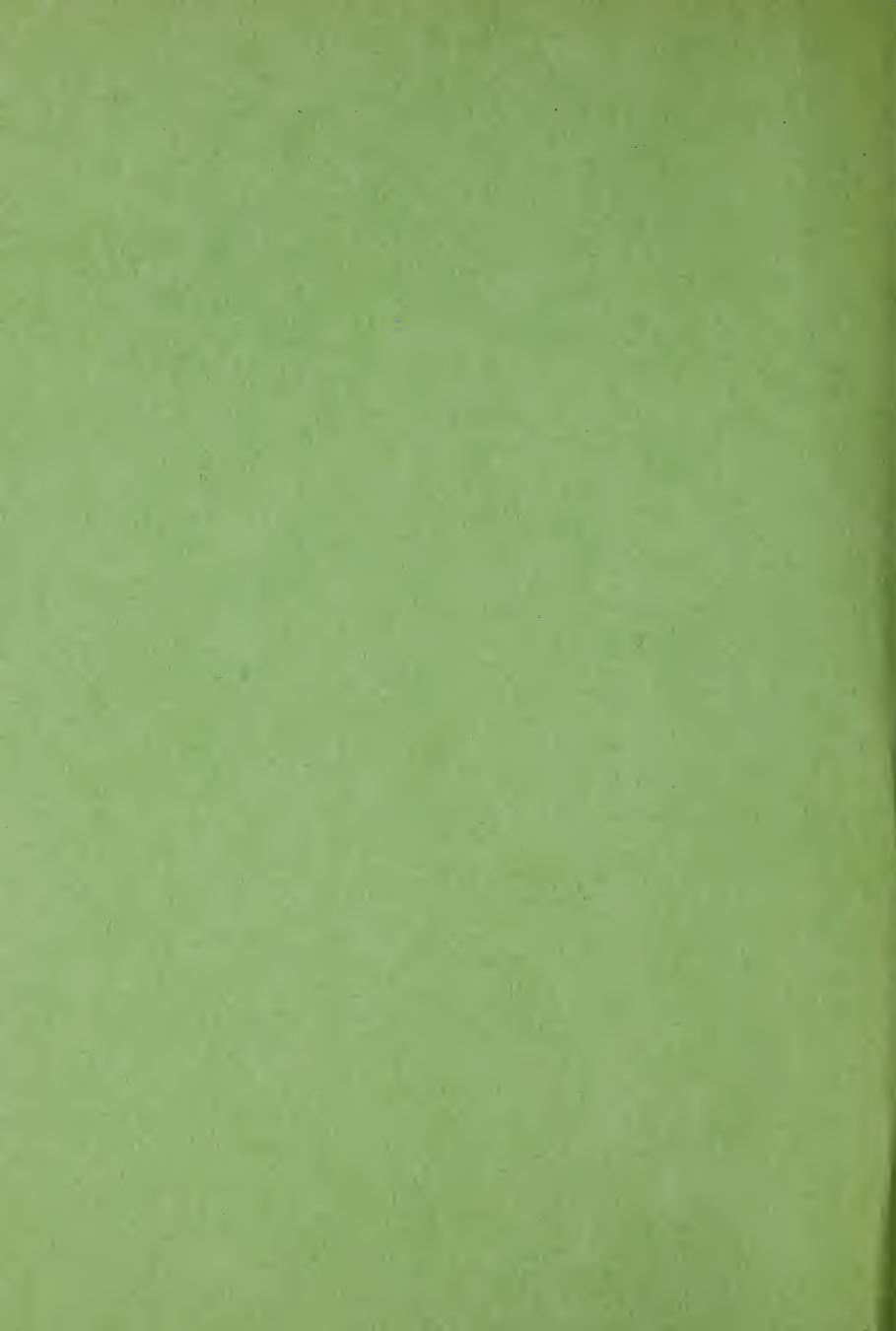
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WHAT IS WRONG AND HOW TO SET IT RIGHT



James M. Gillis C.S.P.
The Catholic Hour



WHAT IS WRONG AND HOW TO SET IT RIGHT

By

REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C. S. P.

Editor of The Catholic World

Seven addresses delivered in the nationwide Catholic Hour (produced by the National Council of Catholic Men, in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Company) on Sundays from November 2, through December 14, 1941.

	Page
Nov. 2 Cause and Cure: Deeper Down and Further Back	3
Nov. 9 Tell the Truth and Save the World	12
Nov. 16 The Fifth Freedom: From the Mass Mind	21
Nov. 23 Local or Universal: Patriotism or Internationalism?	31
Nov. 30 Total Reform or None: Economic, Political, Moral	41
Dec. 7 Politics in Religion? Religion in Politics	52
Dec. 14 From Christ and To Christ	61
Statement of the Catholic Hour's Purpose	73
List of Stations Carrying the Catholic Hour	74
List of Catholic Hour Pamphlets	76



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CAUSE AND CURE: DEEPER DOWN AND FURTHER BACK

Address delivered on November 2, 1941

The general title of this series, "What is Wrong and How to Set It Right," may seem ambitious to the degree of absurdity. The first reaction in the mind of the listener may be to ask "Who is this that thinks himself to hold the secret that has escaped Kings, Premiers, Presidents, Parliaments, Congress, Generals, Diplomats, Governmental Experts, Scholars, Philosophers, Statesmen? 'What is Wrong and How to Set It Right!' Such egotism! Such arrogance!"

But let me hasten to explain that my solution of the world problem is not my own. I make no absurd claims to be a creative mind; still less would I be guilty of the sacrilegious pretense of having received a private revelation from on high.

But I am a priest of the Catholic Church. The Church has been in this world a long, long time. She can recall precedents in the past for all that happens today. She can say out of her own experience, "There is nothing new under the sun." Nothing that happens, good or bad, can surprise her. She has seen it all before.

Furthermore, she has not grown old. "Ever ancient, ever new" describes her. She is neither senile nor moribund. Communists have a slogan, "Religion is opium." They must be thinking of Buddhism. Catholicism is not Buddhism, or any other system of spiritual stupefaction. The Church is alive, too terribly alive to suit her enemies.



I say she knows because she remembers. She says of one man, "He reminds me of Augustus Caesar, in the first century"; of another, "He is repeating the mistake of Emperor Henry IV and of Frederick Barbarossa in the eleventh century"; of another, "He seems to be trying hard to be a Nero, a Caligula, a Peter the Great, or an Ivan the Terrible"; of another, "He overruns a continent, destroying as he goes like Attila in the fifth century, Mohammed in the seventh, Tamerlane in the thirteenth. They come; they go. I remain and I remember."

What the Catholic Church remembers she passes on to her popes, bishops, priests, to any one who cares to ask. It is, therefore, neither absurd nor arrogant of a Catholic to offer a cause and a cure for the evils of the world. He can dip into the memoirs of his Church and bring forth some samples of the wisdom she has accumulated. Of old when skeptics challenged our Savior to say by what authority He taught, He replied, "My teaching is not my own, but his who sent me" (*John 17:16*).

So much by way of preamble, not to this one talk but to the series of seven.

Let us agree that the times are troubled. Some say that they are now more troubled than they ever were before. I don't think so myself, but I am not inclined to argue the point. Suffice it to say that the times are bad. The predicament in which civilization finds itself is serious. Say, if you will, that we are face to face with catastrophe; say even not face to face with it but in it up to our eyes; say that the hurricane no longer threatens but that it has struck the European continent and may be ex-

pected to strike the Americas at any moment. Call it not a hurricane but a cataclysm; say that the pillars that uphold the civilized world are tumbling at the hands of a maniac as the columns of the temple of Gaza fell at the hands of Sampson; tell me, if you think it true, that the world, now partially in ruins, will be destroyed entirely, that "all our pomp of yesterday (will be) one with Nineveh and Tyre"; say that we have come once again to the days when noble cities, once centers of art and culture and commerce, lie devastated, and that the ruins of them shall lie forever choked in weed as at Baalbek, or buried in the sands as at Babylon or Thebes. If you would pose as a prophet say that once again asps and basilisks will crawl over the stones of Rome as in the days of St. Gregory the Great, and, eight centuries later, of St. Catherine of Siena; say that the day may come, visualized if not prophesied by the British historian, when a traveller from "downunder" will stand "in the midst of a vast solitude" in the heart of London; say with that other Britisher, a writer of fiction who fancied himself in the role of prophet in the 1920's, who used to reiterate that if we ever had one more war like that of 1914-18, civilization would be set back a thousand years; wrap yourself if you will in the mantle of Jonas; cry "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed"; "yet forty days, or forty months and all the world—the world as we have known it—will be destroyed." Be as pessimistic as you please; let your diagnosis be as dismal and your outlook as despondent as you think the facts warrant; I still make bold to say that your tottering world can be propped up and made to stand; that even a ruined world can rise again. I know—that is to say my Church knows and she has

told me—the secret of the Rise and Fall of Nations, the cause and the cure of the collapse of civilizations.

The cause and the cure. You cannot know the cure unless you know the cause. In the cause is the cure. Cause and cure are the same, seen from different angles. The cause of collapse is negative; something has been taken away. The cure is positive; something must be replaced.

Now what is the cause of the sorry condition of the world? The vogue of the moment is to say “Hitler,” or “Stalin” or the twin-monster “Hitler-Stalin.” That answer simplifies matters. To personify the sins of a people or of a world saves thought. The Jews of the Old Testament indulged in that device; they laid the sins of the nation upon the scape-goat, and drove the beast out into the wilderness. “The serpent did deceive me,” said Adam. So today we find it convenient to make of Hitler the goat, the serpent and the devil all in one. But the world was in a bad way before Hitler arose, and it may be in a worse way when Hitler has disappeared. There are those who borrow Voltaire’s phrase if not Voltaire’s idea and cry “Blot out the infamous thing.” Voltaire’s infamous thing was ecclesiasticism. But it wasn’t ecclesiasticism that was endangering France. It wasn’t ecclesiasticism that brought on Revolution. The Revolutionists got rid of ecclesiastics but when the ecclesiastics were out of the way, Robespierre and Danton had the stage to themselves, and what a shambles they made of it!

Those who cry, “Blot out Hitler!” “Blot out Hitlerism!” do not remember. The Church remembers. Hitler is not a cause. Hitler is an effect. The cause that made Hitler will make something worse

than Hitler, if you get rid of Hitler and of nothing else. The same statement applies to Stalin. To get rid of Stalin and Stalinism will do no more good than to get rid of Hitler and Hitlerism, unless with Hitler and Stalin, Nazism and Communism, you sweep away the things that caused them.

Well then, what *is* the cause of Hitlerism and Stalinism and of the general demoralization of the world? Another easy "out" for those who like short cuts in thinking is to say "Versailles." I am no apologist for Versailles. The treaty could have been worse; it should have been better. It was vindictive and what is vindictive is foolish: "the wrath of man," says the Scripture, "does not work the justice of God"—(*St. James* 1:20). They who tried to punish Germany, punished Europe. If Versailles is the cause of Hitler, Versailles is also the cause of the *debacle* in France, of the humiliation of Dunkirk, of the bombarding of London, and of a thousand other visible and tangible calamities of the last few years. But Versailles is not the cause, pure and simple, of Hitler.

Besides, remember that Stalinism existed before Versailles under the name of Leninism. Leninism was a more violent and more dangerous form of Stalinism, and it has been in operation since 1917.

Still another view is that the present calamitous condition was caused by World War No. 1. That theory is plausible. Wars make wars. The Thirty Years' War and the Hundred Years' War were not one continuous war, so much as a succession of wars, one leading to another. Nevertheless I do not think that World War No. 1 was the cause of World War No. II. Philosophers make a distinction between cause and effect on the one hand and ante-

cedent and consequent upon the other. The Scholastics have a principle which may be rendered, "The cause of the cause is the cause of what is caused." If, therefore, you seek the root cause of all our troubles you will have to go further back and deeper down than Hitler, or Stalin, or Lenin, or Versailles, or the war of 1914.

The cause of the two wars, of the depression, of the prevalent political chaos, of the Revolution of Nihilism, is a philosophy. The philosophy that is taught even now in America, and that has been taught for two generations in England and the United States no less than in Germany, is a philosophy from which God is excluded. The idea seems to be that if you introduce God into a philosophy you make it not a philosophy but a theology. No more widely irrational idea ever took possession of the minds of learned men. Aristotle was no theologian, but he had a God in his philosophy. Socrates, the father of philosophy in the Western world, the philosopher *par excellence*, would have thought it madness to devise a philosophy without God. Not to run through all the philosophies that have been conceived and propagated since Socrates, be it said that not until recent times has any system of thought calling itself a philosophy rejected or ignored God.

When you get rid of God, you no longer have an Absolute. If there be no Absolute there remains only Relativity. The root cause of all the calamity that now exists and that threatens the death of civilization is the philosophy, or the many philosophies, of Relativism. I speak not of mathematical or astronomical relativity. What I have in mind as the cause of mental and moral anarchy is any and every system of thought which dispenses with the

Absolute, that is, with God. We often say in sermons to the people. "No God, no Ten Commandments; no ten Commandments, no moral law; no moral law, chaos." But that is only a hint of the harm that comes from getting rid of God.

I have read a philosopher who declares, "I will not hear of the Absolute, the very mention of the word 'Absolute' annoys me." Very well then, let us say there is no Absolute. All is relative. Truth is relative. Justice is relative. Right is relative. If there is no Absolute, there is no Universal. What was true in the time of Christ and in Palestine need not be true here and now in America. What seemed good to Moses for his people in the wilderness is not good for our people in a sophisticated urban civilization. No code of morals adapted to the temperate zone is good in the tropics. What is right and good and true and beautiful in England or the United States need not be good in Germany.

What next? If there be no Absolute Truth, Right, Justice, the door is wide open to such a philosopher as Thomas Hobbes who says "Justice is what the State says it is." If Justice is what the State says it is, Truth is what the State says it is, and Right and Virtue, Morality, Patriotism; everything is what the State says it is.

But from the day when Jesus Christ stood before Pilate and Herod, from the day, long before that, when the Prophets of Israel confronted a recalcitrant people, and were stoned to death, the martyrs have refused to accept the idea that whatever the State says is true is true indeed; that the State can make or unmake right or wrong; that the State can create or destroy morality with an edict; that the State can declare an unjust war just; that the

State can put its official stamp upon fanaticism and make it patriotism; that the State can permit or abolish religion at will, or say what religion shall be tolerated and what religion be outlawed; that the State in brief can take possession of the whole man, body and soul; that the State can proclaim its own Absolute Sovereignty with the words, "Nothing above the State; nothing beyond the State; nothing outside the State."

This blasphemy is the essence of Nazism and of Communism; ultimately, philosophically, they are one and the same. The two add up to this: There is no Absolute God; the only Absolute is the State.

One step more and you have Hitler and Lenin and Stalin. Louis XIV did not say, but the dictators do say, "The State? I am the State." The State is personified in the leaders of the State. The leader *is* the State.

But the final and supreme result of an atheistic philosophy is that when you get rid of the Absolute God you clear the way not only for the Absolute State, but for the Absolute man. When the Roman religion was in decay and the idea of a supreme God waned, the Emperor had himself declared God. Caesar Augustus was god. Nero was god. Caligula was god. The early Christians were slaughtered because they would not offer incense to the emperor-god.

Now there are documents aplenty, and they are authentic, to show that the children in the schools of Germany are taught, and their elders with them, that the Ultimate Absolute is Adolph Hitler; that all their thoughts and actions must be inspired by him and be made to conform to his will. In a word, the leader of the State takes the place of God.

“If there were no God we should have to create one,” said Voltaire. He might have worded it differently. When the philosophers say there is no God, the people make to themselves a god. When the people make their own god, it is a monster, a god of blood and passion, a fiery fanatical god; a god who flies easily and frequently into a frenzy; a ruthless, bloodthirsty god, a maniac god issuing crazy commands, a threatening god breathing fire like Moloch, a god who dreams and plans to subdue the whole world and make of all men his footstool.

That’s the kind of god you get when you reject the One True Absolute God. For mankind must have and will have a god, some kind of god. If the philosophers don’t know that, they don’t know man; and how can one be a philosopher if one doesn’t know human nature?

Yet almost every modern philosophy denies God or ignores God. They who say that there is not in their philosophy a place for an Absolute, that is to say a God, are the makers of Lenin and Stalin and Hitler; they with their philosophy are the cause of chaos. It rejoices them to see the people and those who pretend to explain affairs to the people focusing attention upon some scapegoat. The guilty ones remain unnoticed in the general confusion.

Let us repeat: The cause behind the cause of Nazism and Communism, and of all the evils that flow from those two poisoned sources, is Atheism.

The cure is to bring back God, the Ultimate Absolute Truth, Justice, Right. Do that and you shall have a basis upon which to reconstruct even this tottering civilization.

TELL THE TRUTH AND SAVE THE WORLD

Address Delivered on November 9, 1941

When Pope Leo XIII opened the Vatican archives to the world, inviting any and all, Catholics, non-Catholics, Jews, agnostics, skeptics, friends and enemies of the Church, to come and make use of that vast treasury of historical documents, insisting only upon the one condition that they should present credentials of scholarship, he quoted St. Ambrose who had said fourteen hundred years earlier, "Tell the Truth; God has no need of a lie." The invitation and the quotation were no mere gesture, but a splendid demonstration of courage and honesty, an act of faith in the adage, "Truth is great and it will prevail." There were in those archives, records aplenty of the work of the Church as creator and director of Christian civilization; records of trial and triumph; but there was also much first-hand information of the humiliation of the Church because of scandals amongst her members and her leaders. No organization can live for a century, still less for nineteen centuries, and not discover an occasional rascal under its roof. "There is a skeleton in every closet," and it is often jocosely said that every proud house if it goes a few generations back will find a horse-thief among its ancestors. Horse-thief? Aristocracy, royalty, nobility will find among their forbears usurpers, regicides, murderers, assassins. The first barons were robber barons; early kings came to their thrones generally by killing their predecessors, perhaps their fathers or brothers, and by a blood-purge of all possible rivals. It would be a rare noble house that would lay open its family history to the eyes of the world.

But the frankest of all historical records are the Sacred Scriptures. They tell the truth, even when the truth is horrifying, as in the case of King David's being an adulterer and a murderer, or when it is scandalous, as in the case of St. Peter's swearing that he never knew Jesus Christ. "It must needs be that scandals come" (*Matt.* 18:7), said Jesus, and "A man's enemies will be those of his own household" (*Matt.* 10:36). Before a half century of Christian history had passed, St. Paul had to complain that some of those who belonged to the Church had been guilty of such vices as were unheard of among the heathen. By the fifth century we find St. Augustine asking and answering in his vivid way, "Who are the enemies of the Church? Pagans? Jews? Worse than these are bad Christians." Always there is among the great leaders of the Church this refreshing truthfulness. Only the lesser and more timorous apologists think it necessary to conceal truth for the sake of edification.

Pope Leo, therefore, was following an excellent tradition when he said, "Tell the Truth; God has no need of a lie."

Now I would not say that political organization, even our own United States of America, enjoys miraculous vitality like that of the Church. The Lord God did not promise that the gates of hell should not prevail against the government at Washington. But I do believe that our country enjoys the blessing and the protection of Divine Providence. When we sing, "Our Fathers' God to Thee, Author of Liberty," we are enunciating a theological truth. Also when we find in the Declaration of Independence the statement that the fundamental

rights of man are "unalienable" because with these he has been endowed by his Creator, we recognize a Catholic dogma lifted from St. Robert Bellarmine or St. Thomas Aquinas and by them deduced from the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There was a debate years ago upon the question, "Is God in the Constitution?" God is not only in the Constitution and the Declaration, God is in the framework of the government, in the courts, in the legislatures, in the council room of the Cabinet, in every department and bureau of the Administration. "In Him we live and move and have our being," not only as individuals but as a nation.

Therefore, the State having God's protection should not be afraid of the Truth, should not think to gain advantage with a lie. God deserts the man or the nation which takes refuge in a lie. God is affronted with a lie: God is wounded by a lie. If God could be killed He would be murdered by a lie. We do not say alone that God reveals truth, or teaches truth, or enjoins the truth; that He smiles upon truth, or blesses truth. God is Truth. Some ancient superstitions maintained that there were two gods, a good god and a bad god, each trying to destroy the other. That was a superstition indeed and therefore a heresy, but what is a superstition or a heresy but the distortion of a truth? Jesus, True God of True God, says, "I am the Truth," and He calls Satan, "Father of Lies and of Liars."

There, if you can but see it, is the Battle of the Ages, the battle between the Truth and the Lie. Whatever other war we are in, or may be in, we are in that war. We cannot fight the battle for Truth with a lie. Pope Pius X gave to one of our Paulist Fathers in private audience a motto which that

priest, Father Doyle, quoted thereafter incessantly, "We cannot build the Church upon the ruins of charity." No nor upon the ruins of Truth. Neither can we build the nation upon the ruins of Truth. There are many traitors and there is much treason in the body politic at all times and especially in time of stress and crisis; but the most vicious traitor is the one who attempts to serve his country with a lie; and the most dangerous of all treasons is the idea that a good big thumping lie, or even a surreptitious lie, a lie told with skill and finesse, can be of use in the defense of the nation.

All these declarations, if you permit them to remain in the realm of theory, abstract from reality, are platitudes. But transfer those platitudes from the sphere of theology into the realm of statecraft and tell me if it is unnecessary to say them.

Who is master of the political world and the diplomatic world, the world of international relationships? Christ or Machiavelli? Christ or Talleyrand? Christ or Metternich? Can you, by any stretch of the imagination, represent to yourself Christ as a politician? Or as a diplomat? He says, "Let your speech be 'yes, yes'; 'no, no'" (*Matt. 5:37*). How far would you get in the world of diplomatic negotiation with that?

I remember to this day a fragment from what was perhaps the first Good Friday sermon I ever heard. The priest in the pulpit said, "There met on the porch of the Pretorium in Jerusalem on the fatal day of the Crucifixion, two men, face to face, one of whom was the exponent of the wisdom of this world, the other was He Who said 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Pontius Pilate was the worldly-wise man; he was a politician. What chance had Christ

before the bar of a man politically minded? The political mind believes in shifts and turns and tricks and compromises. Pilate could not judge the Divine Victim standing before him, on the merits of the case. In the back of his mind he had the thought of Herod. 'What will Herod say? What will Herod do? And Tiberius Caesar. What will Caesar think? What will Caesar do? And my position! And my career! And my fortune! This poor Galilean speaks of Truth. But what is Truth? What is Truth but an abstract quality, in the face of things and persons that are real?' So the lie killed the Truth."

The whole world of diplomacy, of political maneuvering, of the art of influencing the popular mind, the world of what we have come to call "propaganda"—a tragic case of a good word gone wrong—is built upon the Satanic principle that when a certain end is to be achieved one must not be scrupulous about the means to the end, and that a lie can be pressed into service of the truth. The Man Who said, "This is why I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (*John* 18:37), was surrendered to the mob by the man who said "What is truth?" (*John* 18:38). Yea, what is Truth? says the politician, the diplomat, the advocate of expediency, the opportunist, the man who considers himself "practical" in contrast to dreamers and idealists and perfectionists. What is Truth? says the practitioner of *Realpolitik*. Truth is something mystical, unreal, unattainable, non-existent; something at best relative. Your truth is yours; my truth is mine; Churchill's truth is true for Churchill, Roosevelt's truth is true for Roosevelt, Stalin's truth is true for Stalin, Hitler's truth is true for Hitler, Mussolini's truth is true for Mussolini. What is

Truth? Something elastic; something that can be expanded or contracted indefinitely. Something that can be approached but never grasped. What is Truth? An *ignis fatuus*, a will o' the wisp. What is Truth? A mercurial thing that slips away from under your finger. What is Truth? Truth is what comes from the tongue of an *enfant terrible*—to the mortification of the mother. Truth is what escapes a man when he is in his cups: "*In vino veritas.*" In his sober senses he would never permit the truth to pass his lips. To get the truth from a diplomat you must make him drunk and if he be a good diplomat he will not get drunk, not that he thinks it a sin to get drunk, but because he fears that if his tongue be loosened with drink he may betray himself and his vocation and his cause and his country by telling the truth.

There is a classic passage on this subject from the *Book of Morals* of Pope St. Gregory the Great in the sixth century.

"The simplicity of the just man," he says, "is laughed to scorn. The wisdom of this world is to hide one's feelings by artifices, to use language to conceal thought." (Talleyrand, by the way, gets credit for that epigram but it was twelve hundred years before him.) "This is the wisdom," continues St. Gregory, "which makes false seem true and true seem false . . . This kind of art youth acquires by practice; young men pay to learn it. But the wisdom of the righteous is contrary to all this. They seek to avoid deception, to use words to express their thought, to love the truth because it is the truth and to avoid falsehood. But again I say this simplicity is made a matter of derision: the wise of

this world believe simplicity to be foolishness and innocence stupidity.”

Obviously the world changed since St. Gregory's day, 1400 years ago. Like the Bourbon kings, the world forgets nothing and learns nothing. It makes the same old mistakes in the same way forever and forever. It still utilizes the lie for its purposes. And, therefore, with other evils, we have wars forever and forever.

In a radio speech a few months ago General Pershing said, “I must tell you that we can defend all things we hold most dear only if we make up our minds to face the truth without flinching and to act upon the truth without hesitating.” On almost the same day the Pope made a fervent appeal for truth-telling in regard to the war, and Marshal Petain was explaining to the French people that their humiliation had been brought about by persistent lying. As for myself, I have again and again in writing and speaking expressed the conviction that neither this war nor any other war would have occurred if premiers, presidents, diplomats, directors, statesmen, congresses, parliaments could by some miraculous means have been persuaded to tell the truth. The cause *par excellence* of this war and of all wars is lying.

I say this war and all wars. I am not now focusing my attention upon any one crisis in the world's history. My remarks are not for particular but for universal application. I am not examining one phenomenon under the microscope. I am sweeping the whole terrain with a field glass. I quote Pershing, an American; Petain, a Frenchman; and the Holy Father as one who above all others speaks for all time and all places.

As it happens, I find also in the words of Salazar of Portugal an excellent example of the idea I would convey. That extraordinary man, one of the most enlightened of civil rulers in our day, follows a few simple principles of administration. One of these principles he expresses thus: "I allow no one the liberty to write falsehoods, but I never prevent anyone from formulating whatever judgments he pleases if they are *based on actual facts.*"

Some call that man a natural born genius; some call him a saint. All observers say that he works miracles—of a sort. One who has studied Salazar's plan of government carefully calls it "an applied resume of Catholic political philosophy and of the papal encyclicals." Another enthusiastic admirer of Salazar, though not of the same religious faith, asks, "Does not the key to peace depend in the last analysis upon statesmen—whether democratic or totalitarian—whose ideal guide, as in the case of Salazar, is first and foremost the simple rules laid down by Christ?"

To that question I would reply, "undoubtedly!" The key to peace is the Gospel, and the backbone of the Gospel is truth.

The last war ended in 1918. In the 1920's came a flood of books of the "Now It Can Be Told," "More That Must Be Told" sort. When war is over, truth will out. But when the war is on or when the war is coming on, there are those who hold it is not expedient to tell the truth; they think a little shading of the truth, a little whittling down of the truth, or even occasionally, when it seems necessary, a good solid blow in the face of truth, is all to the good. But truth will out, and when it comes out, those who have used the lie, propagated the lie, trusted in the lie, will be

discredited. They may be in their graves, but their bad repute will follow them.

A more important objection to the use of the lie is that God is Truth. This is metaphysical. It smacks of the theological. But it is the profoundest truth of all. He who lies—in any cause—crucifies Truth. He who lies does his part in the obliteration of God, one might say in the annihilation of God. If a sufficient number of such persons appear in the commonwealth, if the custom of abusing the truth prevails, God cannot but desert the nation. The worst crime against the State is treason and treason is a form of lie. But treason to the State is less evil than treason to Truth. Treason to Truth is treason to God. The State is built upon God; and so is the world. And so is civilization. To save the State and the civilized world the first and most important means is to tell the truth.

THE FIFTH FREEDOM: FROM THE MASS MIND

Address delivered on November 16, 1941

We may take it for granted that Americans in general believe in Democracy. We are dedicated to that belief. We swear to it. We would die for it. Some of us are so devoted to Democracy that we are not content to possess it ourselves, but are all afire to communicate it to the rest of the world as if it were a gospel or a Divine Revelation. So impetuous is our zeal that we don't stop to ask the rest of the world if it wants Democracy. "My house," said the jocular host, "is Liberty Hall: under this roof you do what you please: if you don't we make you." Certain extravagant devotees of Democracy think that all the world must value what we value and live as we live or be compelled to do so.

We live for Democracy. We would die for Democracy, but don't ask us to define Democracy. Does it mean, in accordance with the old Latin maxim, "*Vox populi, Vox Dei*," "The voice of the people is the voice of God"? Does it mean not only that officials are elected but that justice is determined by majority vote? Does it mean that when the people have solemnly declared their judgment, that judgment is infallible? Can questions of right or wrong, true or false, be decided by vote? Granted that the question of war or peace may be decided by majority vote—majority of the people or majority of the representatives of the people—does that vote carry with it a guarantee that the war is a just war or the peace a righteous peace?

Hundreds of critical questions like these are flung at us by those who prefer a dictatorial government. They assail what they call "the democratic principle" of determining matters of infinite importance by the ridiculous process of counting noses. If that were indeed the democratic principle it would be right to ridicule and rail at it.

Now I will not, as the current saying has it, "go out on a limb" with a definition of Democracy. What concerns me in this address is not Democracy in the political sense but the principle sometimes carried over from the political sphere into the moral world, the principle that if a sufficient number of people follow a course of conduct, that course of conduct must be right and good and true. Whatever be the correct definition of Democracy, that definition is fatally wrong. Numbers do not make truth. When the first Christians came into the Western World from Palestine they were not one tenth of one percent of the population even of the Mediterranean area, and, if you set them over against the vaster regions beyond the border of the Empire of the Caesars, they were numerically so insignificant that the Romans and the Persians and the Indians and the Chinese might have considered them not worth counting at all. And yet, as we have been reminded by the title of an excellent new book borrowed from the medieval *Chanson de Roland*, *The Heathen are Wrong* and the Christians, be they few or be they many, are right. Before the end of the second century, however, the Christian orator Tertullian, declared, "We are but of yesterday, yet we fill your cities, islands, forts, towns, councils, camps, . . . the palace, the senate, the forum; we have left you only the temples of your gods." It would be

dangerous, however, to use that argument in proof of the Christian religion. Later on, Mohammedanism spread as rapidly; and in our own day we have seen in Turkey and in Russia atheism supplanting religion with incredible popular acquiescence. It would be a crazy logic that would attempt to prove that Christianity was true in Russia under the Czar, false under Stalin, and true again when Stalin goes to his reckoning. Yet that would seem to be the conclusion if the maxim that what the majority decides or what the majority accepts is right.

But that crazy logic and that curious conclusion are in vogue here and now in America, not perhaps in the political world, but in the social and moral world. Recently I heard, not for the first but for the hundredth time, of a woman formerly a Catholic—of a sort—who justified her divorce and remarriage on the ground that “times have changed.” The Gospel says that remarriage after divorce is sinful. The people of America three hundred years ago, two hundred years ago, seventy five years ago believed the Gospel and consequently accepted the Gospel teaching on marriage and divorce. But now if the majority of the people have ceased to believe in the Gospels, does that invalidate the teaching of the Son of God on marriage and divorce?

In the early centuries there was a heresy called Arianism which denied that Jesus was the Son of God. Various emperors after Constantine favored the heretics and persecuted the Catholics with such violence and such success that as one historian said epigrammatically, “The world awoke to find itself Arian”; and St. Anthanasius, defender of orthodoxy, was “alone against the world.” But would any one

say that Christ was God while Constantine reigned and ceased to be God under Constantius, or that Christianity was true until Julian the Apostate came to the throne but that thereupon paganism became true again?

In a much later century Queen Elizabeth believed in the Mass; then disbelieved in the Mass. Was the Mass true in England while she believed and did it become idolatrous when she changed her mind? They say that on and off she was Catholic and Protestant and that there were suspicions that she was privately an atheist. Now should England be Catholic if and when Queen Bess was Catholic, Protestant when she was Protestant, and was it proper and fitting that England should be atheist at heart if its queen was atheist at heart?

Does truth follow the vicissitudes of kingdoms and empires? Does Christ go out and Wotan come in with Hitler? Does religion become "opium" because Lenin and Stalin say so? Does truth dawn and die with the day, ebb and flow with the tide? Are truth and right and justice and virtue subject to the whim of a ruler? "Justice is what the State says it is," according to Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher two hundred and fifty years before Nazis and Fascisti discovered the idea. But is it? Or is justice as fixed as the stars above a revolving world? Is truth also what the State says it is, or has truth an independent existence, changeless in spite of the ever-changing whims of men?

The Declaration of Independence speaks of "unalienable rights." Is that a piece of oratory? Or is it a philosophical and theological truth that the fundamental rights of men remain whether or not kings, empires, parliaments, congresses acknowledge them.

To come to the more particular point I would make. If we deny the right of the rulers of men to create or to annihilate right and justice and truth and virtue, shall we concede that right to the people? If a whole people or a majority of the people approve the denial of fundamental rights to a certain race of men, let us say in some places Negroes and in other places Jews, do Negroes and Jews thereby justly forfeit "unalienable rights"? If a tyrant—man or State—denies the right of Protestant pastors or Catholic priests to preach the Gospel, as in Nazi Germany, does the command of Christ, "Go teach," "Go preach" cease upon the moment? "We must obey God rather than men," says St. Peter (*Acts* 5:29). Have times changed so that now we must obey men and disobey God?

I use these examples from the world of politics only as analogies. My primary concern is with the moral world.

When people speak of "immorality" they usually have in mind indecency, obscenity, or some other violation of holy purity. But is there not a deeper immorality—that which considers moral principle elastic, evanescent, fickle as the whims of man—or of woman. *La donna e mobile*, says the operatic aria, *qual pium al vento*: "Woman is fickle as a feather in the wind." Justice is pictured as a woman, and so is Truth. Are Justice and Truth blown hither and thither with every breeze?

The deepest and most dangerous immorality of all is the immorality that thinks what was true yesterday may be false today or tomorrow; that what was vicious in our grandparents' day may be virtuous now; and that a change in ethical principles must

follow a change in the mind of the majority of the people. If that be an interpretation of democracy it is a disastrous interpretation.

The same phenomenon appears in the world of business and of the professions. I know many business men, lawyers, physicians who lament the trend to the unethical in the special worlds in which they operate. They tell me that the tide is running against them, that too many of their rivals have reduced business ethics and professional ethics to three principles: "Everybody's doing it"; "If I don't do it some one else will"; and "You can't do business nowadays on old-fashioned principles." Especially in metropolitan cities they say the ethical degeneration is obvious. They blame this set of persons or that, but they all seem agreed that decline if not actual decay is upon us. "It is easy enough," they add, "for you preachers to tell us to stand firm, to hew to the line and all that. But we have families to support, homes to maintain, food and clothing to buy. To do business on the morals of a past generation is as impossible as to do business with the methods of the past generation. We must do what the others do or be sunk. The crowd is running all one way; we cannot forever buck the stream. They call us fools, fossils, reactionaries if we don't swing in with the multitude."

No priest or preacher can fail to be aware of the difficulty of following strict business and professional morals. But no moralist, unless he abdicate his position and turn renegade to his vocation, can acquiesce in moral laxity. Right is right if nobody does it. Wrong is wrong if everybody does it. What the business man needs and what the professional man needs is a new declaration of independence. A cen-

tury and a half ago here in America our forefathers declared for political independence. It may be that the day has come to declare for moral independence. They declared in 1776 independence from the tyranny of a king; in 1941 it may be advisable to declare independence from the majority. As any student of history knows full well, it is easier to defy a Nero or a Caligula or an Ivan or a Hitler or a Stalin than to defy the crowd. Louis XVI was a mild-mannered gentleman personally, but the mob that came into power when he had been guillotined was the wildest, craziest, most bloodthirsty that the world has known, though they carried banners with the democratic slogan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

To go further back and higher up, Jesus might have been spared by Herod—Herod didn't care; or by Pilate—Pilate wanted to be just; but what sealed the doom of our Savior was that mad mob in the streets of Jerusalem. You may ask justice from a tyrannical king. He may listen. But if you speak of justice to a raging mob you only infuriate them the more. Government of the people is a boon and a blessing when the people are sane and just, but when the people become a mob, they are more cruel than Nero or Caligula or Peter the Great.

There remains one other tyranny, social tyranny, which generally slides into moral tyranny. In the world of entertainment, public and private, the world of the theatre, of the dance, of eating and drinking—especially drinking—it is said to be no longer possible to follow one's own will and way, to plan one's own life. If a woman refuses to follow the styles in dress, even though the styles be indecent and perhaps in her case absurd, she must go to no end of inconveniences and expense, and be ready

for ridicule. So in the world of entertainment and hospitality. If the lady of the house will not do what others do, if she refuses to conduct a kind of open bar in her home, in the presence of her children, a bar at which all visitors may drink, and many will drink to excess, she is considered fanatical. If she makes even a mild protest against her adolescent daughter's late hours, the frequentation of night clubs, and indiscriminate companionship, she is denounced by her own flesh and blood as tyrannical, or cuttingly called old fashioned. If she declines to go out night after night, or a dozen times a month to play cards, and again to drink strong drink, she acquires the reputation of being unsocial or anti-social. If—now I speak of conditions in oversized metropolitan cities like this one of New York—a mother suggests, however patiently and adroitly, that her boys and girls approaching manhood and womanhood should as a rule avoid places of public entertainment and make their own fun with their own friends in their own home, it will be well if the young people do not exchange significant glances with one another and perhaps make gestures behind her back to indicate that they think her “a hopeless poor dear.” Their argument against all such reasonable suggestions is that “nobody entertains at home; the old-fashioned sing-fest around the piano is ante-civil war stuff. It is not done, Mother: it simply isn't done! If we go in for that sort of entertainment we shall have no friends.”

A petty tyranny indeed, this last one, but very real, especially to the young. What they need is still another declaration of independence; a resolution to live life sanely and reasonably, to entertain themselves with a supreme disregard of the indecencies,

the shamelessness, the bawdiness, the vulgarity, and the banality of the night-club world.

We see in the newspapers that those who examine drafted men for physical fitness have been horrified to find so small a percentage of them in good condition. But I wonder what report we should have if national boards of examiners were to look into the question of the moral and spiritual fitness of young America. Do boys and girls follow the habits and customs of the world that envelops them? Do they accept perhaps at first with a mild disgust but later without protest the prevalent form and manner of relationship between the sexes? If the majority follows a certain pattern in that matter, must everybody submit to be made over according to the pattern? Do they permit themselves to be regimented and standardized, even though regimentation and standardization mean the surrender of their ideals, their personality, their spiritual independence? To put it in a phrase, are they afraid to call their souls their own?

I fear that if we—or the young folk themselves—answer these questions frankly, we shall have to confess that like their fathers and mothers, fathers in the business and professional world, mothers in the social world, they are victims of the mass mind. They do what they don't wish to do because all the world is doing it.

I repeat: The greatest tyrant in the world today is not a Duce or a Fuehrer in a foreign land. The tyrant here at home, the mass mind, the mob mind dominates us in a democracy as rigidly in some respects as the most despotic dictators elsewhere dominate their victims. It is time that we declared our independence of the tyranny of the majority.

There are not Four Freedoms only. There are Five, and the Fifth is more important than some of the others—Freedom from mass-thinking: freedom from mass-action in matters social and moral as well as political.

LOCAL OR UNIVERSAL: Patriotism or Internationalism?

Address delivered on November 23, 1941

I used to know a man who held that the greatest menace to civilization was patriotism. He was a good man and intelligent. He dearly loved to argue and he was profoundly sincere. He read a good deal, especially along the line of economics. In that subject he leaned towards radicalism. But he was orthodox in religion. He was a good father to his family and until sickness came upon him in his latter years he was successful in business. He was, I should say, what Theodore Roosevelt used to call a "Desirable Citizen." Indeed his concept of American citizenship was perhaps purer than that preached with such gusto by the Rough Rider president. Teddy's Americanism was aggressive, militant, imperialistic, whereas my friend used to wax wroth at war, conquest, and the infliction of one people's ideas of government upon another.

With that phrase I have given away the case. What my good man meant by "patriotism" was not a well-reasoned love of one's own country, its customs, its institutions, and its people, but a combative, truculent patriotism, which, pharisaically, trusts in itself and despises others; an illiberal, intolerant patriotism, the patriotism of the provincial who goes abroad and comes back home filled with contempt of foreigners; the patriotism of the traveller with a closed mind who, after one visit to another continent, forever after makes invidious contrasts between older civilizations and our own,

always to the advantage of our own; the patriotism of the ignoramus who visits a European art gallery, declares in a loud voice that the masterpieces are ridiculous, and who in a hotel lobby or at a sidewalk cafe tells the world that we do this or that better at home; the patriotism of the young fellow who saw in Rome, as he said, "nothing but ruins" and who considered the Yankee Stadium a greater marvel than the Coliseum; the patriotism of the vulgarian American who calls all other peoples by offensive nick-names; the patriotism of the old-fashioned Fourth of July orator who, red in the face and dripping perspiration, gesticulates and vociferates that we are the greatest people on earth and that we can lick all the rest of the world taken together; the patriotism in a word of that obnoxious type of Super-American who refers to our land as "God's Own Country" and to all other places as the land that God forgot.

That, I think, is what my late lamented good friend had in mind when he denounced "patriotism" as the greatest menace to peace and to the progress of mankind; and I think we can all agree with him. When Doctor Johnson made his famous definition of patriotism as "the last refuge of a scoundrel," he might have added "or if not a scoundrel, a fool," and it may be debated whether fools or scoundrels do more harm.

Patriotism in its purity is, after religion, perhaps the highest and noblest of virtues. But in accordance with the Latin axiom "*corruptio optimi pessima*," which we may perhaps venture to translate in the current idiom, "the higher they stand the harder they fall"—the harder and the lower—there is scarcely anything more deplorable than a per-

verted or corrupted patriotism. A true patriot sings of the land that God gave to his fathers, "I love thy rocks and rills, thy woods and templed hills"; and he adds what the poet omitted, "I love the people who climb thy hills and worship in thy temples. I love the earth on which I tread and I love the people who tread that same earth with me; I love not only the hills and the rocks but the farms and the fields, the city streets, and the men who till the soil of those farms and fields and who walk those streets; I love those with whom I touch elbows in the streets and in public conveyances; at work and at play; in times of sorrow and of joy; in days of national humiliation when my country has suffered some calamity, and in days of jubilation consequent upon a triumph of war or of peace; I feel these men to be my brethren, like those with whom I worship in God's House; almost like those who are my brothers according to the flesh, children from the womb of my mother; my heart is too big to be content with love of myself; it pours out its affection upon my family, my neighbors, acquaintances, fellow workers, fellow sufferers; all those whose eyes behold the same landscape as I, the same rivers and lakes and seas and mountains; who draw their sustenance, with me, from that same earth and those same waters. The soul within me is not dead. I do say 'This is my own, my native land'; it is a fact that my 'heart within me burns' when I return from wandering on some foreign strand. If I have for a time been, though still within the borders of this vast country, far away from father, mother, brother, sister, my heart leaps and there is a catch in my throat as I approach my home once again; but an emotion no less spontaneous and scarcely less

warm comes over me when I return from travel on some other continent than my own; and I feel an electric thrill pass through my frame when my foot touches once again my native soil."

All this is natural, and what is natural is God-given. Next to my religion, indeed part of my religion, is my patriotism. It is a sentiment, a passion, part of my being; it comes to me as an endowment from God Who made me. Quite as much as life, liberty, and happiness, love of country is a divine gift and for that reason inalienable.

But the more noble and beautiful the sentiment, the more degraded and ignoble and ugly it becomes when perverted. Love, for example—love of man for woman and woman for man—is so sacred that Christ and the Church hold it a Sacrament. But when it is debased it becomes so loathsome that it is not to be mentioned among us. As with love of man for woman, so with love of man for God. There have been those in history and religion who, by some queer twist of mind, have thought that love of God involves hatred of man. Forgetting the exclamation of the beloved disciple, "For how can he who does not love his brother, whom he sees, love God, whom he does not see?" (I *St. John* 4:20), they have hated and persecuted their fellows; they have driven them out of the synagogue and of other houses of worship; and doing so, have thought they did a service to God. This is the wildest, craziest, most cruel of all hatreds, hatred in the name of God and religion. Not "religion" should it be called but fanaticism.

As with the love we have for another, as with the love we owe to God, so with the love we bear our country. It is in its pristine purity a beautiful

and admirable sentiment. But if a patriot thinks himself called upon because he loves his country to hate some one else's country, he is no patriot but a fanatic. A man's love for himself must overflow upon those around him, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; a man's love for brothers and sisters germane must overflow upon those whom we call metaphorically our "brethren," as Jesus did; and the love we bear our own land and its people must overflow upon the whole world and all peoples. Cynics and "realists" tell us that such a love for all mankind is impossible. It is indeed impossible unless in one's heart there be a great mysticism, a religion. But as long as it is considered impossible, so long will the world be scourged with war.

Wars do not arise, as the disciples of Karl Marx or any other philosophic fatalist tell us, from economic causes: we are not caught in "the fell clutch of circumstance"; we are neither dumb-driven cattle nor are we machines set in motion when some one at a distance throws a switch to turn on an irresistible current. A man in a power house may take hold of a handle, thrust it up or pull it down and with that motion set ten thousand machines in motion or stop them. But no man, and by the same token no imaginary god of the heathens, Zeus or Moloch or Mars or Wotan, can look down over the ramparts of heaven, like some Tony Sarg looking down from the flies above the stage, pull a string and make us mortals dance and play or thrust and stab and kill as puppets do.

There comes to mind that tremendous word of Jesus, "You have heard that it was said, 'thou shalt love thy neighbor, and shalt hate thy enemy.' But I

say to you, love your enemies" (*Matt. 5:44*). Tremendous doctrine! Revolutionary doctrine! "Impossible doctrine," says the cynic. But unless that sentence from the Sermon on the Mount is seen to be the basis of a genuine new order, this poor harrassed old world will never have lasting peace. Hitler's New Order is, of course, not new; it is as old as warfare, it is warfare. Christ's New Order was new when He spoke it and it is new to this day, brand new; the nations have never used it. People are always asking, "What's wrong with the world?" The answer is so simple that when we give it the diplomats say "Too simple." They love to complicate matters; it is to their interest to keep things complicated. If international relationships ceased to be complicated, the diplomats would be out of a job. So they cry in their favorite lingo, "*Trop simpliste,*" "Too simple," "too naive," "too unsophisticated," "too unrealistic," when we tell them that what's wrong with the world is that the world disagrees with God. But so long as they live by the outmoded maxim, "Love your friend, hate your enemy," they shall never have peace.

So far have we drifted from both the letter and the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount that men, professed Christians, tell us that the kingdom of God on earth must be defended with fire and sword; that religion banned and routed here and there must be reestablished with battleships and bombers, tanks, flame throwers and perhaps even by a systematic starvation blockade.

I beg you to note that if all this sounds like an argument against war it is only an argument against war as a civilizing instrument, war as a means for the propagation of the faith. There is and there can

be no valid argument against bona-fide self-defense. A nation unjustly attacked has a right before God and man to defend itself, but it does seem incongruous if not blasphemous to declare that we shall defend the Gospel and protect Christ, the Christ Who died on the Cross rather than call upon His legions of angels—to defend Him I say—with bloodshed. Jesus Christ doesn't want to be defended by the shedding of the blood of His enemies. It was not the blood of enemies but the blood of innocent victims martyrs spilled upon the earth that was the seed of Christians, in the beginning, is now, and always shall be. If we have faith, we shall fight indeed with the Sword of the Spirit, but the Sword of the Spirit is not the sword that is plunged to the hilt into the body of a man to come out dripping wet and red.

If the doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount is too highly mystical for us, if we give it lip service but inwardly disbelieve it, we can at least remember that less idealistic maxim of the apostle St. James, "The wrath of man does not work the justice of God" (*St. James* 1:20), and St. Paul's point-blank declaration that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," and the sublime saying of Pope Pius X quoted once before in this series, "We cannot build up the Church upon the ruins of charity." We cannot reconstruct religion upon the earth which we ourselves have devastated. If the enemy lays waste the kingdom of God we can build it up again; the Church has done so a dozen times before, after frightful sweeping calamity had come and gone. But if we go into battle with the Cross in one hand and the sword in the other, the peoples whom we conquer will deride

us as hypocrites when the battle is over. They did indeed do something like that in the days of the Crusades. But conditions were vastly different a thousand years ago. Much water has flowed under the bridge since then; much blood has been spilled; the Church, if not the world, has learned the lesson of bloodshed; and great developments have taken place in our comprehension of the spirit of the Gospel. Be that as it may, the Pope, Pius XII, has declared no crusade and I doubt that he would even if the Holy Land were again in danger. Neither the Holy Father himself, nor any bishop has advocated the use of arms to spread the Gospel, to avenge the persecuted, or to promote the cause of the Church.

And that brings us to the question that must have been suggested by my earlier remarks to the effect that patriotism must not be narrow, but must expand to take in the world. It is the spirit of the Gospel, and assuredly the spirit of the Church to favor a true sincere internationalism. The League of Nations might have been a splendid institution if it had not ruled out religion and deliberately ignored the claims of the religious bodies to be represented. Be it well understood—what the poet calls “the parliament of man, the federation of the world,” cannot be established or maintained by physical force. The medieval league of nations, which we call “United Christendom,” was possible—though to tell the truth the passions of men and the ambitions of kings hampered its activity—it was possible and feasible because Christendom recognized one head of the kingdom of God upon earth. But if you have for guarantee and sanction of the ruling of the League of Nations only a civil

court implemented with arms, it will never succeed. There is a kingdom of God here in our midst, but its bond is love. Love is to some a mystical, intangible, unsubstantial, unrealistic thing. It is ridiculed by those who advocate *Realpolitik*. But it is indispensable, as Adolf Hitler will learn to his cost, as in fact he is learning now. He cannot hold Norway and France and Belgium and Holland and Austria and Czecho-Slovakia and Greece and shall we say, presumably, Russia, by force of arms. Either those nations will love him and his rule or they will hate him; and you cannot long hold together a vast empire of heterogeneous peoples with hatred in their heart, either for one another or for the dominant power.

What Hitler cannot do, neither can any other do. A League of Nations cannot build itself up and maintain its authority with what unthinking people call glibly an International Police Force. Such a police force is an army. You cannot hold Europe, Asia, Africa, America together with an army, any more than you can hold half a continent or a whole continent together with a Gestapo or a Cheka. It is love or nothing. If you can persuade the people of one nation to love their own land and their own people first, and then expand that love until it embraces other nations and finally all nations, you will solve this problem of patriotism and superpatriotism, of nationalism and internationalism. But make no mistake about your method. You shall not bring that blessed Utopia to pass with arms. It will not spring up out of the earth when you have smashed a dictator or three dictators or a dozen. St. Gregory the Great in one of his homilies says in the laconic way of the early Romans, "*Contraria contrariis curan-*

tur”—contraries are cured by contraries, intemperance by temperance, hatred by love, anger by patience, lust by continence. Force will be cured by gentleness, national and international antipathies will be overcome by love. It sounds unreal and impracticable. But it is the Gospel; the Gospel is Christ; and Christ the Son of God makes no mistake. We shall save the world His way or we shall not save it at all.

TOTAL REFORM OR NONE: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, MORAL

Address delivered on November 30, 1941

The world today is bewildered—not to say bedevilled—with a multiplicity of problems, political, social, economic; class problems, race problems, local, national, international. Some say that because of modern inventions, which bring the ends of the earth closer together, all problems are world-wide. They tell us with some plausibility that we cannot solve the problems of the farmer who grows corn in the Mississippi Valley unless at the same time we solve the problem—or at least grapple with it—of the farmer who grows rice in the paddies alongside the great rivers of China. They say also that the housing problem in the slums of New York and Chicago is bound up with that of finding room for the overflowing populations of Belgium and Italy and Japan. Rather recently, when we were in the midst of a prolonged financial depression and a third of the people of our own country were underfed, badly housed, and poorly clothed, we were confronted with the economic theory that it was no use trying to take care of our people unless at the same time we planned for the welfare of all the peoples of the world. At the present time we are told repeatedly that we cannot maintain the four freedoms, or any one of them, for ourselves unless we secure them for all the inhabitants of the globe. Our problems therefore seem to be not only multitudinous and various but universal.

Furthermore, the present crisis has been caused by the fact that all those problems have

come to a head at one and the same time. It is an old adage that troubles never come singly; in a familiar line Shakespeare says, "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions." The classic instance of course is that of God's good servant Job. But who is there that has not experienced in his own life or observed in the life of some one else, the sudden onslaught of many woes all arriving together or in swift succession—ill health, loss of fortune, discharge from a job, betrayal by a trusted friend, ingratitude and even treason in one's own family, and who knows what other calamities, that fall upon one suddenly like an avalanche.

It happens to good people and to bad. When suffering comes upon a good man, he knows how to deal with it. He has his religion. When it comes upon a bad man, he is—to use the same words again—bewildered, and as he thinks, bedevilled. He had said, or at least thought, "Behold I have sinned and no evil has come upon me." But his sins catch up with him, and as likely as not they all catch up with him at the same moment. He has been extravagant and profligate, unfaithful in his domestic duties and to his obligations as a citizen. The crash occurs and all his sins come tumbling down upon his head. His creditors refuse him any more time of grace; his wife discovers his infidelity; his children are ashamed of him and perhaps disown him; his friends fall away; the government prosecutes him; those from whom he would seek help hide themselves from him; those to whom he looks for sympathy laugh at him. "One thing at a time," he cries. "I could stand one thing at a time." But life is not like that. The fates are merciless. Enemies,

those whom he calls enemies, swarm in on him from all sides. He has to fight and to suffer or commit suicide. If he commits suicide his real sufferings begin.

Our present civilization is like that man. It has been an extravagant civilization, a profligate civilization. Like the prodigal in the Gospel the world has squandered its substance, material substance, moral and spiritual substance. The world has been going along without reference to God and with little or no concern for God's Commandments. Popes, priests, preachers, moralists have cried alarm repeatedly. Look back, for example, upon the Encyclicals that have issued from Rome since 1878 when Pope Leo XIII came to the throne, and through all the twenty five years of his pontificate, and under his successors, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, and the present Holy Father Pius XII. Those encyclical letters make a generous document of prophetic literature. In them you can see not only a brief abstract and chronicle of the evils of the day, but such warnings of impending doom as might have come from Isaias or Jeremias or Daniel.

The world paid little attention, went its way reckless, profligate, heedless. "After all," said the worldly wise, "popes and priests are professional calamity howlers. We need pay no attention to them. All's well. We will right ourselves if things commence to go too badly. We have science, and education deeper and broader and better than any that existed before. Education will save us. We have a department of knowledge unknown to our ancestors, Sociology, which enables us to detect and diagnose disease in the social order, and to apply

the cure. The world may be wicked but it is resourceful. With the help of universal education, with the press and radio as well as the schools to disseminate knowledge we can reach great populations quickly and set them right if they are going wrong. We have passed out of the dark ages. We have light. We see our way. The priests tell us that we are 'a wicked and adulterous generation.' Perhaps we are, but we are shrewd. We know how far we can go. When the time comes, we will halt and if need be turn back. As for those moralizings and melancholy prophecies in the papal encyclicals, repeated from the pulpit, in the religious press, and over such radio programs as that of the Catholic Hour—we weary of them. The clergy should leave us alone. Shoemaker stick to your last, priest keep close to your sacristy. This world is too big, too complicated, too busy, too progressive to be comprehended by those who got their education in ecclesiastical seminaries. Let priests and preachers confine themselves to homilies on the Gospel. What right or claim or competence have popes or prelates or common clergy to speak to us of economics as Pope Leo did, or of Social Justice as Pope Pius XI used to do? Leave us alone. We can run this world.

Now that the world is face to face with calamity, these same wisecracks still spurn the assistance of moralists and theologians. They still imagine that the ways and means and methods that led them into the predicament will guide them out of it. They still pursue a form of education from which God is excluded; they still think they can construct a workable code of ethics with no assistance from religion; they still subscribe to the super-

stitution that you can set the world right when it has gone wrong by enacting laws, more laws, more mountains of laws. Perhaps I may take a slight liberty with the poet's lines,

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey
Where *laws* accumulate, and men decay."

They still place their reliance upon sociology and psychology: A sociology which spurns the assistance of theology; a psychology, the science of the soul, which denies the existence of the soul.

Of one thing they feel sure: When they have dealt with the menace of Nazism and destroyed it, and perhaps also the menace of Communism, all will be well for democracy and for our form of civilization. They are unfamiliar with the works of so profound a thinker as Christopher Dawson, perhaps the leading philosopher in England today, whose writings are richly studded with such provocative passages as these:

"Never before in the history of the world has a civilization been so completely secularized, so confident in its own powers and so sufficient to itself as is our own. The crude and aggressive atheism of the Soviet State is but the logical culmination of a tendency that has characterized the general development of European civilization for the last century and a half. Indeed we may well ask if the toleration which is still shown to Christianity by the States of Western Europe is not due to the fact that religion is regarded by them as something politically negligible, and consequently whether it is not really more insulting to Christianity than the open hostility of the Bolsheviks."

And this: "The old individualist ideal of the State as a policeman whose business it is to clear the field for individual initiative is a thing of the past. The State of the future will be . . . an earthly providence, an all-powerful, omnipotent human god—and a very jealous god at that. We see one form of this ideal in Russia and another in Germany. It may be that we shall see yet a third in England and America."

And this: "European culture had already ceased to be Christian in the eighteenth century, but it still retained the inherited moral standards and values of a Christian civilization. And so it attempted to erect these standards into an independent system by providing a rational philosophic justification for them. This was the Liberal idealism that was the faith of the nineteenth century—not a religious faith, but a quasi-religious substitute for one. But as Liberalism did not create these moral ideals, so, too, it cannot preserve them. It lives on the spiritual capital that it has inherited from Christian civilization, and as this is exhausted something else must come to take its place. Once society is launched on the path of secularization it cannot stop in the half-way house of Liberalism; it must go on to the bitter end, whether that end be Communism or some alternative type of 'totalitarian' secularism."

There you have it in a phrase—"totalitarian secularism." With totalitarian Fascism and Nazism and Communism, the world is familiar. But have we any statesmen in Congress, or for that matter any nationally known writers in the press or speakers on the radio—outside of professedly religious persons—who warn us constantly and vigorously of

the danger of "totalitarian secularism"? Have we any one in America to tell us as Dawson tells his fellow-Englishmen (if I may quote him once more):

"We can already discern the beginnings of this paternal-democratic regime in England and can see how all the apparatus of the social services—universal secondary education, birth-control clinics, antenatal clinics, welfare centres and the rest—may become instruments of a collective despotism which destroys human liberty and spiritual initiative as effectively as any Communist or Nazi terrorism."

Is any one saying those things to the American people, any one except clergymen whose warnings are disregarded or discounted because it is thought that they have an ecclesiastical axe to grind?

This is the fifth talk in the present series on "What is Wrong and How to Set It Right." In the preceding four addresses as in this I have said the same thing in varying forms. The world has destroyed itself with worldly wisdom. It cannot resurrect itself with worldly wisdom. You may find that simple truth not only in the Gospels but in Mother Goose. When Humpty Dumpty falls off the wall, not all the king's horses and all the king's men can put him together again. When civilization topples and falls not all the politicians nor all the professors can lift civilization up again. When the world is shattered no one can put the pieces together again except the One Who put them together in the first place. The One Who called the world into order out of Chaos can again make Cosmos to succeed Chaos. But the world must cry to Him to do it. When you leave out God—out of education, out of

scientific progress, out of government and the affairs of nations, out of private and public life, all goes to wrack and ruin. If you will but call God back again, He will come and recreate the world.

We who preach this truth have said it so often without visible result that I suspect we should be more specific. Perhaps we have left these things too high in the sky of abstraction. Let us bring them down to earth.

I have time for only one concrete illustration.

In that same science of Sociology to which I have made passing reference, you have the theory of the solidarity of society. That's what I had in mind when I mentioned the unity of interest between the grain-growers on our American prairies and the rice-growers in China; between the crowded slums of our metropolitan cities and the over-crowded countries of Europe. But how are you to persuade the American that he must share his competence and his comfort with the European or the Asiatic? Can it be done with science? Can it be done with sociological or psychological reasoning? Can it be done by compacts, treaties, political instruments? Can it be done by war? It is the Christian doctrine that such a stupendous result cannot be achieved except by religion. The brotherhood of man means nothing without the Fatherhood of God. If there be no God; if He be not the Father of all mankind; if we are not His offspring; if we are not all one race and all one family because He has created us all, there will be no effective realization of the unity of mankind.

In St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians there are two texts in close sequence which seem at first blush to contradict each other. The apostle says, "Bear

ye one another's burdens" and "let every man bear his own burden." It isn't a contradiction; it isn't even a paradox. It is a truth so rich in meaning that it cannot be comprised in one sentence. If every man bears his own burden he will help every other man to bear his burden. We are all members one of another, so closely unified that the welfare of one is impossible without the welfare of all.

There—as all Catholics and many others will see—we come close to the doctrine of the Mystical Body. It is a beautiful doctrine and consoling. But it is at the same time a difficult doctrine. "Am I my brother's keeper?" If you are not "your brother's keeper" you are your brother's enemy. You may even be, like Cain, your brother's murderer. No man liveth to himself; no man dieth to himself. If I kill another man I kill something within myself. I slay that man's body but I bring death to my own soul.

What is true between man and man is true between race and race. The white man who is guilty of injustice to the black man harms himself more than he harms the black man. If the black man retaliates and wreaks revenge, he does himself more harm than the white man has done to him. But more than that, much more than that: They both sin against God Who has made them both. Likewise, if the Gentile hates the Jew and the Jew the Gentile; if the Gentile persecutes the Jew and the Jew takes revenge upon the Gentile, they both sin against the same God in Whom they both believe.

As between race and race, so between nation and nation. Whatever war-mongers and propagandists of hate may say, the English must not hate the Germans, nor the Germans the English. The Irish

cannot be good Catholics and hate those who have wronged them, and (now here enters a curious psychological fact) those who have harmed the Irish must not hate the Irish.

Recently there has been discussion here in America as to our attitude towards Russia and the Russians. We may hate and loathe the atheistic Communism that is official in Moscow, but we must not hate or loathe the Russian people. As a matter of fact we must not hate even the leaders of the Russian people. So too of Germany and the Germans. We may and indeed we must abominate Nazism, but if we permit so much as a spark of hatred to remain in our soul for the German people or for their leaders we disobey Christ and we dishonor His religion.

We need not pursue the thought or multiply the examples. Here is one rule to which there is no exception. We must love all men and hate none.

But there, as any honest person can see, you are clean out of the atmosphere of worldly wisdom, of science, and of secular education. You cannot teach men that sublime truth of the Mystical Body without reference to religion. You cannot persuade men to believe it unless upon the authority of God Himself. "This is a hard saying and who can hear it," said some of the Galileans when Our Lord first presented the truth of the Blessed Eucharist. "This is a hard saying," say those whose education and mentality are purely secular, "and who can live up to it." No one unless his life is charged and surcharged with Divine Grace. No one whose conduct is guided by merely natural reason. For this you need the supernatural. The supernatural means religion and God. Seventy million Americans pro-

fess no religion. If seventy millions never speak to God in prayer and other millions pray but seldom, you cannot expect them to believe in and act upon the doctrine that here in this land all peoples and races must love one another. If some hundreds of millions of men on the other continents live and think and move and act in a purely natural atmosphere with no mysticism, no religion, no God, they will never learn to compose their differences or to cease fighting one another. With God all things are possible. Without God nothing is possible, least of all Universal Peace.

There you have but one example of the need of God and Religion. One out of hundreds. The greatest calamity to this world is not this or that particular philosophical system, this or that totalitarian tyranny. What has caused the present crisis is Godlessness.

POLITICS IN RELIGION? RELIGION IN POLITICS

Address delivered on December 7, 1941

In almost every platform lecture, radio address, and after-dinner speech nowadays; in the more serious kind of magazine article and in a multitude of books, occurs the statement, or its equivalent, "We live in a world of confusion." True. So obviously true that it seems silly to say it. But there are various kinds of confusion, and the most fundamental kind is seldom so much as mentioned. I mean mental confusion, confusion in the realm of reasoning. The prevalent political confusion and moral confusion would clear away promptly if men would only think straight. Of course there are passionate persons who don't want to think. They seem to say, "Don't ask me to think. Don't let me think." But most men would like to think if they could. The heart of man is generally in the right place but his thinking apparatus is often—as the Russians say—"kapoot," "out of order." Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler made, years ago, a significant speech on "Thinking as a Lost Art." Alexander Pope three hundred years earlier had put it in one of his unforgettable rhymed couplets:

"How few think justly of the thinking few.
How many never think who think they do."

Not three hundred but three thousand years earlier, the prophet Jeremias said what the professor and the poet were to say, and said it more eloquently: "With desolation is all the world made desolate because no man thinketh."

Enough of that. It is a tempting theme but it is not now my purpose to develop it. What I had in mind today is the fact that one evidence of lame and impotent thinking by most men is their instantaneous reaction to the title of this talk, "Religion in Politics? Politics in Religion." "Keep those things apart," they say. "Separate them as day is separated from night. No, not that, for after all there is a twilight in which night and day meet and mingle; separate them as the divisions of the hold of a battleship are separated, with a bulkhead of steel; separate Religion and Politics with the impassable abyss which, as our father Abraham told Dives, separates Heaven from hell." Which of the two, Religion or Politics, corresponds to Heaven and which to Hell, seems to be a matter of debate. In Russia they say that religion is hell; in America we profess to believe that politics is more likely to be of the pit. But oddly enough, both in the U.S.S.R. and in the U.S.A., there is wide agreement that religion and politics must be kept as far apart as heaven and hell. Indeed a great many Americans will tell you that the principle of the separation of Church and State, involving dissociation of religion and politics, is a fundamental postulate of our form of government.

But from the beginning of the world until now there has never been a kingdom, an empire, a state, a city, or any form of political society from which religion was excluded. It has never been done because it cannot be done. It has been attempted; it has been momentarily and partially accomplished. But you can no more take religion out of a State and keep it out than you can take hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen out of the air and keep them out.

You can indeed make a vacuum—a small vacuum, in a laboratory—but when you produce a vacuum, Nature summons all her force to destroy it. Nature abhors a vacuum. So, you can take religion out of a State, but Nature—human nature—will put it back again. The maddest and wildest of all psychological blunders is to imagine that religion is something unnatural imposed upon man by priestcraft, and that therefore it must be kept out of the more important affairs of men. Nonsense! If some atheistic tyrant were bold enough and strong enough to kill all priests and lay all temples of religion flat to the ground with not a stone upon a stone, religion would sprout anew from the earth, as the grass and the grains and the flowers grow again on a battlefield that has been made a desert by shot and shell and poison gas. Religion comes down from above but also it comes out of the soil, out of the blood and bone of man, out of his heart and mind and soul. To take religion out of human life would have the same effect as taking the elements of the atmosphere out of the atmosphere. From time to time certain fanatics, scientific fanatics or religious fanatics (one kind is as bad as the other), tell us that on a certain date a comet, on its way to earth, will burn out the atmosphere that envelops the globe. The catastrophe is always *going* to happen. It never does happen. God doesn't let it happen. But if the atmosphere of chemical elements in which the body of man lives were suddenly burned away it would not be so great a calamity as if the religious atmosphere necessary for the life of his soul were to explode and vanish.

Another mistake of the opponents of religion is that they recognize no distinction between good and

bad, true and false religion. Atheists in general reject all religion because some religion is vile. It is like rejecting all food because some food is poison; or like the logic of the man who, reading that thousands of persons are killed by stepping on a cake of soap in a bath tub, resolved never again to use soap and never to get into a tub; or of the man who argues that because the vast majority of people die in bed, one had better not go to bed. Silly? Of course, but no sillier than a great deal of what passes for thinking in these irrational times. Have you not met persons who don't go to Church because some who go to Church are hypocrites? "I don't make my Easter duty," said one man to me (a big man in the business world), "because the last time I went to Holy Communion I saw at the altar rail people who owe me money and don't pay." The logic is that of the Chinaman who commits suicide on the door step of the one who has done him a wrong. I have also met college students who gave up religion because they had read in H. G. Wells or Grant Allen or in James G. Frazer that savages believe in a savage god. Does any Church ask a civilized man to believe in a savage god? Is there not a civilized God for civilized people? If they don't like the god of Mumbo Jumbo, or for that matter the top-hat god, the roll-top desk, swivel chair god in "Green Pastures," what about the God of Thomas Aquinas or of St. Augustine? What about the God of Jesus Christ? The silliest reasoning, the craziest logic seems to suffice the man who doesn't want to go to Church, as it does the man who doesn't want to take a bath or go to bed.

In getting rid of God the atheists, especially the Soviet atheists of Moscow, make a god of the

people or as they say, the proletariat. But the people can be as cruel as any fabulous god. "The people, Sir, is a great beast," said Alexander Hamilton. Great beast indeed, great monster, like the people in the courtyard of the Pretorium of Pilate who howled like maniacs for the release of a murderer and the crucifixion of Christ. But shall we therefore say that the people, all the people, all the time, is a great beast? Where will such wild logic lead us?

Now I am no professional apologist for politics and still less for politicians. But I think it only fair to say that the science and the art of politics have been the victims of crooked thinking in the same way, if not to the same degree, as religion. Some men—shall I say most men—when they say "politics" have in mind degraded politics, debased, corrupted politics. I have in this series of talks used the word in that sense, but only after explaining that I spoke of Machiavellian politics.

But what is politics? Let's have a definition. Not a sarcastic definition, a cynical or a jocose definition, but, venom aside and jesting aside, what is politics? Politics, says the dictionary, is "the science which treats of the principles of civil government and the conduct of state affairs in the interest of peace, prosperity, and safety." And again: Politics is "that branch of ethics which deals with the relation and duties of States or social organizations." Evidently there is nothing ignoble or debased or shameful about that kind of politics. Of course you may also find in the dictionaries secondary definitions of politics, "partisanship," "factional rivalries" "intrigues," "wire-pulling," "trickery." But it is a mistake in logic and an unfair procedure

to lump good politics with bad and condemn all politics. In the national hymn of Great Britain, "God Save the King," occur the lines, addressed to God, "Confound their politics: frustrate their knavish tricks." "Politics"—some one else's politics—seems not only to rhyme but to be identified with *tricks*. There again you have the fallacy of confusing good with bad, pure with corrupt.

Politics is not only a branch of life. It is an indispensable requisite for the welfare of the human race. Were there no politics there would be anarchy. American Communists when confronted with the cruelties of the Soviet State sometimes explain that these cruelties are temporary and that the time will come when the State can afford to dispense with cruelty and that indeed the ultimate aim of Communism is the abolition of the State. Oddly enough, the same objective was visualized by Friedrich Nietzsche, forerunner of Nazism. He held that all States and all governments are tyrants and must finally be done away with. When there is no State there will be no politics and no politicians, but when there is no State there will also be anarchy.

Putting aside fallacious and unreasonable notions of politics and of religion, it becomes plain that the greatest boon to the human race at any time, and especially in the present crisis, would be the cooperation of pure politics and right religion. What ails the world is the elimination of religion from politics. Strange that well disposed men and women cannot see that fact. If a preacher in the pulpit says to the congregation, "When you leave the Church take your religion with you. Don't leave it in the pew. Take it into your home, into the kit-

chen, into the bedroom, into all your family life and social life. Take religion with you when you go to work. You will need it in the office, in the factory, in the mine and the mill, more than you need it in Church. Take religion with you when you go to a place of entertainment. If there is an incongruity between your religion and your entertainment, seek some other entertainment in which your religion, your conscience, the welfare of your soul, will be safeguarded." And so on. And so on. A sermon like that will be praised as "Practical" and "Sensible."

But shall we then say to a man whose vocation is politics: "Leave your religion in Church or at home when you go to the council chamber or the caucus, to parliament or to congress"? It is done indeed. There are Sabbath Day saints who are week day villians. But the cure for that condition is not to separate religion and politics but to combine them. It is not too much to say that the present sad condition of the world has come to pass because of the secularization of politics. Politicians of the baser type, especially since the French Revolution, have insisted that God be kept out of all affairs of State. "Let us settle our problems," they say, "make our plans and direct our government without reference to God."

Those who say such things are not aware of the implication of what they say. If you leave out God, you leave out justice and right and truth. It cannot be repeated too often—though the more we repeat it the less some people seem to understand—*God is Justice, God is Right and Truth*. If you leave God out of politics, out of government, out of treaties and covenants and all political pacts, you leave

out Truth and Righteousness and Mercy; you have remaining only expediency, selfish interest, international rivalries. If you leave out God you leave out all chance for lasting peace. There is no hope for peace in the midst of natural antipathies unless you turn to the supernatural. The Ultimate Absolute Supernatural is God.

Those may seem to be, and they are, profound metaphysical statements and perhaps for that reason politicians have not grasped them. But politicians worthy to be called statesmen have not ignored them. George Washington declared, "Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles." Thomas Jefferson did not leave God out of the Declaration of Independence. All men, he says, have been endowed by their Creator with certain rights. These rights were begotten not of flesh and blood, not of the will of man, but of God. If the rights of man are from man, man can take them away. If they are the gift of the State, the State can withhold the gift or demand it back. But if the rights of man are of God, no man and no State can alienate them.

Peace, then, must be negotiated and ratified in the name of God. In earlier days all great covenants commenced with the phrase, "*In Nomine Domini: Amen.*" "In the Name of the Lord: So be it." I will venture further. War must be declared and waged, if at all, in the Name of God. If men do not dare to call God to witness the justice of a war, it is no just war for them. To leave God out of war is to admit the Godlessness of war. St. Thomas Aquinas lays down as one of the requisites of a just war that it must be conducted in the spirit of

justice and love. He justifies war only on condition that it be an instrument in the hand of man to do the will of God. Today, that high and holy doctrine is considered by some ridiculous or impossible. But it remains true that if a war cannot be justified in the eyes of God it is not just. To declare war or to participate in a war without reference to God is as sacrilegious as to attempt to conduct any political function without the sanction and the help of religion. Rudyard Kipling is not usually considered a religious minded poet, but he did have a glimpse of the truth that war without God is a wicked war. He sings:

“For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!”

In peace, in war, in all the relationships of man with man, nation with nation, we must remain under the aegis of God, or we shall perish.

FROM CHRIST AND TO CHRIST

Address delivered on December 14, 1941

Seldom if ever in all the addresses I have delivered over the Catholic Hour for the last twelve years have I permitted myself to indulge in personal recollections. But today, closing this series, I ask permission to make an exception to my self-imposed rule. After choosing the title of today's talk "Away from Christ; Back to Christ," I happened to remember that such was the topic of my first formal sermon after ordination a good many years ago. I had indeed preached brief homilies on the Sunday Gospels in parish churches; I had preached a good many times in a jail and a penitentiary while still a deacon (ignoring the Federal Constitution which declares that "cruel and unusual punishments" are not to be inflicted upon prisoners); I had given spiritual conferences to long-suffering nuns in convent chapels. But my first sermon on an important occasion was in the great Church of St. Paul here in New York on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, and on that red letter day in my career I attempted in a boyish way (I was only twenty-five) to expound to the people the majestic encyclical of Pope Leo XIII entitled "Christ our Redeemer." That papal document had stirred my mind and inflamed my heart, while I was yet a student. Now after all these years, looking at it in the light of long experience, I still think it superlatively eloquent and true and wise.

If the letter and the spirit of that letter addressed to all the world had been observed, the world would not be in its present sorry plight.

My temptation at the moment is to borrow from it copiously; indeed to fill up this entire period of radio time with quotations from that superb definition of a Christian civilization. But I shall ask my hearers to listen to only two paragraphs from Leo XIII and then proceed as best I may on my own. Omitting reluctantly many a noble and beautiful passage, let us come to words which are the theme of today's discourse. Listen, but remember that the translation, excellent though it be, does injustice to the majestic Ciceronian Latin of the original.

The Pope, speaking of individual persons, had said, "Never to have known Jesus Christ in any way is the greatest of misfortunes, but it involves no perversity or ingratitude. But having known Him, to reject or forget Him is so great a crime as to be scarcely credible."

He continues: "The case of governments is much the same as that of the individual; they also must run into fatal issues, if they depart from *the way*. The Creator and Redeemer of human nature, the Son of God, is King and Lord of the world, and holds absolute sovereignty over men, both as individuals and as members of society. God His Father hath given to Him power and honor and dominion; and all peoples, tribes, and languages shall serve Him. . . . Therefore, the law of Christ ought to hold sway in human society, and in communities so far as to be the teacher and guide of public no less than private life. . . . It fares ill with any commonwealth in which Christian institutions are not allowed their proper place. Let Jesus be excluded, and human reason is left without its greatest protection and illumination; the very notion is easily lost of the end for which God created human society, to wit:

that by help of their civil union the citizens should attain their natural good, but nevertheless in a way not to conflict with that highest and most perfect and enduring good which is above nature."

"The law of Christ must hold sway," says the Pope. Jesus our Savior must not be excluded from human society. He must hold *absolute sovereignty* over men and nations. But is He not in fact excluded from the conduct of national and international affairs? Is He consulted in the making of war? Even in the making of peace is He invited to take part? He or His representatives?

We call ours a "Christian Civilization." Why? Is Christ the Cornerstone of the Structure of that Civilization? Is He the foundation, the frame-work, the captstone? Is the name of Christ carved upon every stone of the edifice, written with a torch of fire upon the steel of its beams and girders? Is His Name inscribed or His Image sculptured over the doors of great buildings dedicated to commerce or art or law or medicine? True, here and there in our cities we see the sign of the Cross—the Sign of Christ—over certain Churches and other buildings consecrated to religion. But if ours is a Christian civilization, why should the distinguishing mark of Christianity be the exclusive possession of religion? Constantine beheld the Sign of the Cross above his banners on the battlefield; in that Sign he conquered and from that day forth he placed the Cross upon the banners of the Empire to indicate that Roman civilization had ceased to be pagan and was henceforth to be Christian. If ours is a Christian civilization, why has the custom of Constantine been dropped? In the courts of Europe for a

thousand years hung the crucifix where both officers of the law and criminals under the law could see it. Why was it removed?

Looking upon any great architectural structure, the educated observer may say instantaneously, "Gothic," or "Norman," or "Moorish," or "Egyptian," or "Mayan," or "Chaldean" or what-not. Looking upon the political and ethical structure of our civilization, can one say confidently and without hesitation, "Christian"? Is our jurisprudence Christian? Is the American educational system Christian? Is our cultural life, art—the art not of France or of Spain or Italy four hundred years ago, but the art of America today—is it Christian? And music—not the classical music of the great concert halls, not the music still perpetuated by frequent, though perhaps less and less frequent, renditions by Philharmonic societies and Symphony orchestras, but the music of the masses and of the moment—is it Christian? Is the operatic music played and sung at the Metropolitan in New York, the Grand Opera in Paris, La Scala at Milan, the Colon at Buenos Aires, or Rio Janeiro—is operatic music Christian?

Is our politics Christian? Both the science and the art, the theory and the practice, of politics? Is our literature—periodical literature and book literature—Christian? Is the theatre Christian? And radio, especially radio entertainment? And the motion picture industry—call it art or call it business—is it Christian? I refer not to personnel either of actors or of producers, but to the content, the tone, the spirit of the pictures. Are the great and powerful newspapers of the country, newspapers of incredibly vast circulation and of nation-wide in-

fluence upon the mind and the morals of the public—are the newspapers edited in the light of Christian ethics?

As for the Labor Question, the subject of dispute between employers and employees, or for that matter between one huge organization of workers and another organization, or between the labor leaders and the government—is that subject debated and decided on the basis of the social principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Was our total entrance into the war settled by a direct reference to the mind and the doctrine of Jesus Christ? Do our statesmen study that Mind and that doctrine? Do they inquire of those who have made such study a life-work? Have you, for example, heard any of our leaders quote Stratmann or Gigon, or Saurez or Bellarmine or Aquinas, or, as an authority upon the subject in the first World War, Pope Benedict XV? If these names are strange to radio audiences, if they are not heard in public forums, is it because public men are not at all concerned about interpretation of the Gospel in the matter of war and peace? Do they care what the theologians say? Do they care what Christ said?

If the answer to these questions is a plain and simple "No!" spoken either reluctantly or contemptuously, why do we call our civilization Christian? If the answer is "Yes, the statesmen are indeed eager to have the Mind of Christ," would the optimist who gives that answer care to make it good with analysis and demonstration? If the answer is neither "Yes" nor "No," but "partly Yes" and "partly No," what curious and repulsive hybrid can this be, which is part Christian and part pagan,

which takes its inspiration partly from the Gospel and partly from a heterogeneous jumble of Freud and Haeckel and Nietzsche and Spengler and Sorel and Lord Byron and Omar Khayyam and Machiavelli? Have we pieced together a civilization from elements left over and handed down from Nineveh and Tyre and Babylon and Sodom and Gomorrah and Ephesus and Corinth, wherein flourished the vices that were hateful to God and that had become repulsive even to man? Have we inherited or borrowed Mohammedan filth from Port Said and Algiers; is there in our Western civilization a dash, and more than a dash of heathenish immorality? Do we think that all these survivals or revivals of a culture that was so rotten that it fell to the ground and festered, are consistent with a Christian civilization? Can that civilization be an amalgam of truth and error, of vice and virtue? "If then I be a father, where is my honour?" (*Mal.* 1:6) said God to His people of old. If I am the founder of your civilization and its Lord and Master, says the Son of God, what do ye with all these abominations? "What harmony is there between Christ and Belial?" (*2 Cor.* 6:15).

There, I think, we have uncovered the sore that is wasting away this world of ours. We are half heathen, half Christian. If *we* personally are not, our civilization is. We have not the courage of our Christian convictions. We speak the Name of God in certain official documents and certain governmental proclamations. But having spoken His Name we usher Him out. We make a bow in the direction of Jesus Christ but when we have performed the gesture we think it sufficient. "This people," He says, "draw near me with their mouth, and with

their lips glorify me, but their heart is far from me" (*Isaias* 29:13).

To give but one specific instance out of a thousand: When the first World War had come to its close, and the delegates to the peace conference were gathering at Paris, some of us clergymen and Catholic journalists—doubtless also religious-minded persons of other creeds—suggested that in the conference hall and later in Geneva at the sessions of the League of Nations, a statue of Christ, even perhaps a crucifix, be set up, and that from time to time the debates and discussions be halted and that some one read from the Gospels such texts as these: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another" (*John* 13:34), "You have heard that it was said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and shalt hate thy enemy,' But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" (*Matt.* 5:43), "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (*Romans* 12:21), "Come to terms with thy opponent quickly" (*Matt.* 5:25)—or that the whole parable of The Good Samaritan be read aloud. Or the discourse of Christ on His last night upon the earth. Or His cry from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (*Luke* 23:34).

Needless to say, these suggestions were ignored by the peace-makers, the peace-makers who putting an end to one war prepared the way for another. They considered all such proposals pietistic, idealistic, fantastic, mildly insane. They said they knew what they were to do and how to do it. They didn't need prompting from priests and preachers and popes. As for Christ, they declared they revered Him, but in their heart they considered Him a poet,

a mystic, a dreamer, and no more. His Gospel, they thought, makes pretty reading, but you couldn't apply it to the business of governing a world.

In a recent book written by a "hard-boiled" journalist who had managed in succession three tabloid newspapers, there is the report of a conversation between himself and his publisher. (I omit names because the one against whom the anecdote tells is dead and there were no witnesses to the episode.)

"Who, in your opinion was the greatest man that ever lived?" asked the publisher. 'Jesus Christ,' I replied. 'That's where we disagree,' he said. 'The greatest man that ever lived was Nero. He had the courage of his convictions and used the ignorant rabble to achieve his own ends. He had a criminal mind and he trampled under foot all respect for natural law and human obligations, but who hasn't (done so) in this world, to accomplish anything to make him dominate in history? Where would this world be if we had all followed Christ's teachings to the letter? "Sell what thou hast, and give to the poor" (*Matt. 19:21*), for instance. You will find out, if you want to make any money, that it is not always wise to be disturbed by what we call evil. Without using some of it some of our great people would never have gotten ahead. That's why I think Nero was a misunderstood man.

"And as for Christ, let me tell you something about Him. I don't profess to know what it is like to believe in something to the point of being prepared to be killed for it. That must be quite an experience. Such martyrs as He are the trouble makers of this world."

The man who is quoted as saying those words

always wrote at Christmas time a laudatory editorial on Jesus Christ. His writings were syndicated and read by some thirty millions of Americans. He received a salary of more than \$260,000. a year upon which, with shrewd investments, he became a multimillionaire. He was reputed the most successful and most influential writer, editor, publisher of his day. He spoke beautifully of Jesus Christ, but in his heart he preferred Nero. If for Nero we substitute Richelieu or Machiavelli or Disraeli, or Metternich or Bismarck or Clemenceau or perhaps even Lenin or Stalin, we shall have the mind of many who give lip-service on occasion to Christ and who refer to ours as a Christian civilization, but who in their thoughts and actions prefer some ruthless and irreligious "man of affairs" to the Jesus of the Gospels. And that's what is wrong with our world. We call Christ Master but we don't follow His precepts or His spirit in matters of national and international importance.

Now therefore, let us return to the document with which we started, let us have the remedy suggested by Pope Leo XIII: "The security of the State," he says, "demands that we should be brought back to Him from Whom we ought never to have departed; to Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, not as individuals merely, but as human society through all its extent. Christ our Lord must be reinstated as the Ruler of human society. It belongs to Him, as do all its members. All the elements of the commonwealth; legal commands and prohibitions, popular institutions, schools, marriage, home-life, the workshop, and the palace, all must be made to come to that fountain and imbibe the life that comes from Him. No one should fail to see

that on this largely depends the civilization of nations.”

Is that doctrine or that admonition unrealistic, fantastic? That doctrine is hard common sense, and that admonition, if heeded, would save the world. Put Christ back into every phase of human life, or have the courage, the Devil's courage, to throw Him out altogether. “Religion's all or nothing,” says Robert Browning, and Sidney Lanier has written of our times and of our world, “O age that half believest that thou half believest; half doubttest the substance of thine own half doubt.” There is our weakness. We are at odds with ourselves because we have not had the courage and the consistency to make ours a Christian civilization. If it were all heathen it would be stronger than as it is, half Christian, half heathen. The chief reason why we appear so weak in the face of a devastating Nazism is that the Nazis believe what they believe. They have rejected Christ and His Gospel and have turned to their ancient heathen deities Wotan and Thor. They have reverted to heathenism with a terrific enthusiasm. If we cannot turn to our God and His Gospel with a greater and purer enthusiasm; if we do not know in Whom or in What we believe, our form of civilization will be swept away and its place will be taken by a civilization that though wicked and perverse is sure of itself and consistent with itself.

I will venture further. I make bold to declare—I hope it will not sound blasphemous—that a totally atheistic civilization, if such be possible, would be better than a civilization which half believes in God and half disbelieves. If that sounds outrageous, remember the prophet Elias, who under divine in-

spiration said to those who called themselves, and who were, the people of God: "How long do you halt between two sides? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him" (*III Kings* 18:21). Baal in fact was one of those of whom the psalmist says, The gods of the Gentiles are demons. So the prophet was challenging the People of God to make a choice. God or the Devil. Serve one; don't attempt to serve both.

Let us then come back to Christ—as individuals and as a nation. In the days of Savonarola the city of Florence dedicated itself, and its affairs, to Jesus Christ. But the fickle people and the crafty leaders of the people burned Savonarola at the stake and put the affairs of the city back into the hands of tyrants. It seems to be ever thus. The Athenians executed Socrates, the wisest man in their State; and they exiled Aristides because he was too good. The Florentines killed their prophet Savonarola and banished from their border Dante, the greatest glory of a city that produced more genius than all the rest of Europe for a thousand years. The Bostonians who might have had the credit of abolishing slavery rode William Lloyd Garrison on a rail, tarred and feathered him and all but killed him because he favored the abolition of slavery. At the very moment when Abraham Lincoln was most necessary to the Republic, he was assassinated, with what seems to have been connivance or the carelessness of certain high officials of the Republic. Mad world! Stupid world! But the worst of its crimes and of its misfortunes was that when the Liberator not of one group of slaves but of all mankind appeared in the world, "the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (*John* 1:11).

That was the stupidest blunder in history, as well as the most appalling crime. It is a crime so great, says Pope Leo XIII, as to be incredible. Still we know Him not. Still we receive Him not. Still we permit Him to be deposed from the position of Absolute Sovereignty that is His. But it is not too late. It is never too late to rectify a wrong. Restore Jesus Christ. Make ours in truth and in deed a Christian civilization, and then we need fear no evil. He has said, "They shall fight against thee, and shall not prevail: for I am with thee, saith the Lord your God" (*Jer.* 1:19).

CARDINAL HAYES STATES PURPOSE OF CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from his address at the inaugural program in the studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930.)

Our congratulations and our gratitude are extended to the National Council of Catholic Men and its officials, and to all who, by their financial support, have made it possible to use this offer of the National Broadcasting Company. The heavy expense of managing and financing a weekly program, its musical numbers, its speakers, the subsequent answering of inquiries, must be met. . . .

This radio hour is for all the people of the United States. To our fellow-citizens, in this word of dedication, we wish to express a cordial greeting and, indeed, congratulations. For this radio hour is one of service to America, which certainly will listen in interestedly, and even sympathetically, I am sure, to the voice of the ancient Church with its historic background of all the centuries of the Christian era, and with its own notable contribution to the discovery, exploration, foundation and growth of our glorious country. . . .

Thus to voice before a vast public the Catholic Church is no light task. Our prayers will be with those who have that task in hand. We feel certain that it will have both the good will and the good wishes of the great majority of our countrymen. Surely, there is no true lover of our Country who does not eagerly hope for a less worldly, a less material, and a more spiritual standard among our people.

With good will, with kindness and with Christ-like sympathy for all, this work is inaugurated. So may it continue. So may it be fulfilled. This word of dedication voices, therefore, the hope that this radio hour may serve to make known, to explain with the charity of Christ, our faith, which we love even as we love Christ Himself. May it serve to make better understood that faith as it really is—a light revealing the pathway to heaven: a strength, and a power divine through Christ; pardoning our sins, elevating, consecrating our common every-day duties and joys, bringing not only justice but gladness and peace to our searching and questioning hearts.

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