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Quizzes on war -
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QUIZZES
ON

WAR



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JOANNES GREGORIUS MURRAY,

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QUIZZES ON WAR A New Pamphlet on the Ethics
of War highly recommended for the boys
in armed service and their parents.

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ETHICS OF WAR

1. One understands that your Church used to teach that a war could be just only on one side.

That is still the teaching of the Church. As in all litigation, when two parties make opposite claims in the name of right and justice, if one party is right the other must be wrong. No country could have the right to engage in war, unless another country had violated its rights. And a country which has violated the rights of another would unjustly engage in war. Its duty is to cease violating justice, and to make reparation for any damage done, and thus to avert war altogether.

2. The Church now says that war can be justified on both sides simultaneously, theology having discovered later such a thing as "Invincible ignorance" in regard to such matters.

That "invincible ignorance" excuses from guilt is not a "later" discovery of theology. That principle has been familiar to Christians from the very origin of Christianity, when St. Paul urged the fact that his persecution of Christians was due to invincible ignorance.

3. For example, even if we assume that Austria was culpable in provoking the 1914-18 war, the Emperor could be excused on the grounds that he was invincibly ignorant that his country was in the wrong.

That is true.

4. Therefore, Austria could have embarked on a war inherently unjust against a nation which had undoubted justice in its cause, and both sides be theologically justified.

You have blundered badly here. In viewing the case from Austria's standpoint, you cannot

say that she was invincibly ignorant that her cause was wrong, and then assert that she was fighting against those who had an undoubtedly just cause. If the Austrians mistakenly thought their case to be just, in their eyes the enemy did not have undoubtedly justice on its side. "You" may think Austria's enemies had the "undoubted justice"; but on your own supposition the Austrians did not. And in measuring the guilt of Austria, you must cling to the Austrian viewpoint, not restrict one-half of your comparison to their subjective dispositions, and then jump to objective standards in the other half.

5. If the above is a correct statement, a war can be just on both sides simultaneously on theological principles.

You have not given a correct statement. And in no way can the theological doctrine of invincible ignorance show that a war can be just on both sides simultaneously. You must be sadly deficient in elementary common sense to need an explanation of this point. Can't you see that the moment one says that the Austrians are excused from guilt by "invincible ignorance," the supposition is that they are engaging in a guilty action from the moral evil of which they are subjectively excused only because they don't realize their mistake? You can't use the principle of "invincible ignorance" to excuse a man from doing a guilty thing without acknowledging that the thing is wrong in itself. Our principle, far from proving that a war can be simultaneously just on both sides, proves precisely the opposite.

6. When precisely would a war be just? And whose is the responsibility—that of the leaders of the nation, or of individual soldiers?

I will state the position for you as clearly as time will permit. Just as every man has a right

to defend himself against an unjust aggressor, so has the state or nation the right to defend itself against another state which wrongs it unjustly. War may be declared, however, by the supreme authority of a given nation, only with the right intention of safeguarding its own rights, and then only when very grave issues are at stake, and all efforts to secure a peaceful settlement have failed. Very grave issues must be at stake, for it could not be lawful for a mere trifle to endanger the lives of so many men, and bring upon people such fearful distress and misery.

For example, if France unjustly invaded Italy, laying waste its cities and exterminating its inhabitants, Italy could certainly mobilize its armies and fight back in defense. Grave injury does justify engaging in warfare.

But to declare war for commercial reasons in order to secure rich tracts of country or merely for expansion owing to overpopulation, would be unjust. If a nation declares war unjustly, the guilt rests primarily upon those in authority.

As far as individual soldiers are concerned, two possibilities arise.

If soldiers are compelled to fight under pain of being shot as traitors, they are morally free from guilt.

If they are not compelled by conscription, but volunteer, then they are morally guilty unless they have first satisfied their own conscience that the war is indeed undertaken in a just cause and for very grave reasons.

In all this, do not confuse the fact that war can be lawful with any idea that the Catholic Church advocates war. She does not. War is a dreadful thing. The Catholic Church prays regularly in her Litanies, "From disease, starvation, and war, deliver us, O Lord."

However grave the provocation, the Church says that it is far better to have recourse to some international tribunal than to have recourse to

arms; and that normally it is far better to suffer some injury from others than to inflict on others and self the frightful atrocities and consequences of war.

7. Considering modern weapons of warfare, and the immense damage and suffering they cause, can any possible gains justify so great a disaster?

It is clearly wrong to vindicate any cause, when the means to be taken will do far more harm than the injury already undergone. So, for example, if a man steals another's watch, he is not allowed to kill that man in order to recover the watch. The loss of his life is out of all proportion to the injured man's loss of the watch. In the same way, nations may not enter into a war where the disaster to both sides is out of all proportion to the gain on the one side, and the injustice of the other. Considering present weapons of destruction, I cannot see any cause on earth which has to do with material benefits which could possibly justify war. No man, therefore, who foresaw that political moves and aggression would lead to war, could be justified in making such political moves, and indulging in such aggression. But granted that such steps were taken, those pledged to a defense of violated rights are justified in honoring their pledge. However, as is clear, it is the duty of all to pray for peace, and for the leaders of the various governments to remove the causes of war, or to accept offers to do so. Any unnecessary prolongation of war would be equally a crime with the original decision to allow it to develop rather than abandon dangerous ambitions.

8. Do you approve of munition factories in England working 24 hours a day, and 7 days in a week?

I approve neither of war, nor of the making of munitions for war. I do approve of the doc-

trine that a nation has the right to take such measures as are necessary for self-defense if there are grave reasons to fear that it may become involved in a war not of its own seeking.

9. Do you approve of English munitions being shipped to Germany by private firms under sealed orders, the munitions to be used by Germans to slaughter the very men who made them?

Certainly it would not be lawful for a man to make bullets expressly for another to use against him. That would only be a form of suicide, which is quite unlawful. But, if an English munition factory did send arms to Germany, you can be quite sure that it would not do so with the express intention of enabling Germany to blow up England. But take this viewpoint. If Germany considers that certain military measures are absolutely necessary for its self-preservation in the light of present circumstances in Europe, it is lawful for Germany to secure sufficient arms and ammunition either by making them, or buying them. And if Germany is justified in buying them, then manufacturers are justified in selling to Germany the goods required. And it does not make an essential difference whether the manufacturing firm be Dutch, American, English, Italian, or French. "If" Russia invaded Germany, the munitions would be used against the Russians. "If" England and Germany were to be involved in war, the munitions would be used against England, including some of the very people who made the munitions. But this is outside the intentions of those who made the munitions. They simply made them for a present just price in order to supply the needs of a nation which was justified in providing for its self-protection against future possible disasters from whatever source they might come. You see that it is all a very tangled business, and not so easily disposed of in a superficial way.

10. All this is in the interests of "sound finance," creating interest-bearing debts for both buyers and sellers.

If that were all that is in it, the whole business would be quite unjust and evil. But whatever financial methods are adopted for the transaction of business, the grim fact remains that each nation is justified in making military provision for its self-preservation against the eventuality of war. Either all disarm, and veto war by mutual agreement, or each has the right to arm in view of the fact that others are doing so. We must be logical and admit correct principles, however much we hate war and all its evil consequences. I can only assure you that you do not abominate the deluge of misery it must mean for so many human beings more than I do. But that goes beyond my purpose. It is sufficient to have dealt with the principles involved.

11. Should people be called rebels who rise against an unjust government?

All would depend upon the degree of the injustice. Armed aggression by any section of citizens against a duly established government for small grievances would be sinful rebellion. But when there is a just cause for insurrection both in the nature of the grievance and all attendant circumstances, citizens are not guilty rebels if they rise in an insurrection. Such insurrection, of course, must be an urgent necessity and a last resource for the good of the country. The following conditions are required before the extreme measure of insurrection may lawfully be adopted. (1) The government ostensibly in power is quite unable to govern; or goes to the other extreme of tyranny, pursuing a selfish object to the manifest detriment of its subjects. (2) All legal and pacific means of securing must first

have been tried without success. (3) The judgment of the government's violation of duty must not be a private or party one, but that of the majority of the people. (4) There must be a reasonable prospect of success, so that the action does not involve greater evils to the country than those it seeks to avoid.

12. Can a true Christian take up arms and go to fight for things temporal, thereby entangling himself with the affairs of this life?

Interest in things temporal and the entangling of oneself with the affairs of this life are not forbidden to a true Christian, provided he does not engage in sinful pursuits, and does not get so entangled with lawful ones as to neglect his spiritual duties.

Your question would be better put by asking whether any true Christian could take up arms and engage in war, with the consequent slaughter of so much human life. The answer to that is "yes," unless he perceives that the cause he supports is manifestly unjust. Then he may not do so, voluntarily at least. If compelled by the authorities, he will have no option, unless he is prepared to be gaoled or shot. He would be justified in joining the army rather than endure that. If the cause be just, and sufficiently grave reasons render the war lawful, he could volunteer.

13. Will you prove from the New Testament that it is lawful for a Christian to engage in war?

Nowhere in the New Testament does it say that it is not lawful to do so. Christ certainly never forbade war as such, though He forbade all injustice. When St. John the Baptist came preaching repentance, some soldiers asked him, saying, "What shall we do?" St. John the Bap-

tist did not tell them to abandon their military profession. He forbade them to do violence to private individuals or to speak evil of them. For the rest, he told them "to be content with their pay." He could not have given that advice were their profession evil of its very nature. When Christ cured the son of the Centurion, He praised that Centurion's faith, but said not a word against his military occupation.

14. I am a Christian in my own way.

It would be better to be a Christian in Christ's way, and that means in the Catholic way. However, if you do not see that, I can only advise you to be true to your conscience, and to live as well as you can.

15. I am determined to fight the influence of Satan wherever I find it.

That is excellent. I am heart and soul with you in such an ambition. But I must utter a warning. We must make sure before we begin the fight that what we suspect to be Satan's influence is really Satan's influence. Many people ascribe to Satan's influence whatever they themselves do not happen to like. Thus the Witnesses of Jehovah see Satan's influence in all civil and ecclesiastical organizations. Again, even when Satan most probably has got a "finger in the pie," many people concentrate their attention upon the wrong bits of the pie, instead of confining their attack to the portion desecrated by the satanic digit.

16. I read the other day that "there have been no finer Christian heroes than soldiers." Was not that dictated by Satan himself?

No. For whilst Satan might inspire soldiers to engage in some unjust war, he would never sug-

gest that they should try to be Christians, and that in an heroic degree. The statement, as you give it, is of course exaggerated. Surely we must rank amongst Christians the very Founder of the Christian religion, Jesus Christ Himself. And He did not embrace a military career. And, apart from Christ personally, there have been multitudes of finer Christian heroes than soldiers. At most one is justified in saying that many soldiers have been fine Christian heroes.

17. The writer attacked those who said that it was against the Christian religion to engage in war for any reason whatsoever.

In doing that, he has my full sympathy. The extreme pacifist can be as guilty of wild statements and of unscrupulous propaganda as any one else. And it is a falsification of the teachings of Christ to say that it is against the Christian religion to fight "for anything." It is also a disloyalty to one's country to spread that false idea far and wide amongst the people. All lawful means should be taken to avert the calamity of war. But we are not justified in falsifying the doctrines of Christ or in denying the duty of citizens to support their country in moments of grave need in order to escape the catastrophe. As a matter of fact, if other nations forced war upon us, such means would not enable us to escape the catastrophe, but would merely contribute towards our greater distress.

18. Can we kill a human being in war with the Church's consent, and without breaking the commandment. "Thou shalt not kill"?

Yes, provided one is engaged in a war in which his country's cause is not manifestly unjust to his knowledge, and provided the person killed is an active combatant who has not surrendered and been taken prisoner.

19. What does the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," mean?

It commands us to preserve our own lives and the lives of those entrusted to our care. So a man would be obliged to preserve the life of his mother against a would-be murderer, even if he had to kill the murderer in order to do so. It forbids all unjust killing of innocent people. Neither the state, nor any individual, would be justified in putting an innocent citizen to death. Unfortunately in a war due to national or international injustice, individual soldiers as individuals are innocent, and have had no say in the making of the war. But in such a case they are viewed not as individuals but as integral parts of the nation to which they belong; and the war can only be viewed as one national group of peoples opposed to another national group. That the commandment "Thou shalt not kill," does not forbid war in a legitimate cause, even though innocent individuals suffer, is evident from the fact that God, who gave that commandment, also sanctioned wars on behalf of just principles. We see that again and again in the Old Testament. And God, who gave the law, "Thou shalt not kill," should surely know how far He intended it to extend.

20. Is not a soldier merely a licensed murdering "robot" at large?

He is not necessarily a "licensed murderer." He could be, were the authorities employing him engaged in an unjust war, and he, knowing this, voluntarily enlisted in the cause. In no sense is he a "robot." If he were that, he could not be morally responsible for anything, and your talk about his being responsible would be absurd. A soldier is a human being, whose responsibility in war is conditioned by a host of circumstances either beyond or within his control.

21. Is a soldier responsible for the death of perhaps hundreds of God's own children a "fine Christian hero," and almost a "saint"?

Firstly, the ordinary soldier who fights at the bidding of others, is not responsible for the death of those belonging to opposing forces. Secondly, not all who fall in war are "God's own children." All may be God's creatures, but many could easily be atheists, unbelievers, and bitter enemies of God.

Thirdly, not all soldiers, whether they actually kill numbers of the enemy or not, are "Christian" heroes, or "saints." A few may be "saints"; many may be "Christian" heroes; still more may be just "heroes"; and far more still neither "Christians," nor heroes." Heroism depends upon a man's innate courage and fortitude. Christian character depends upon the blending of God's grace and one's own dispositions of soul towards God.

Neither heroism nor Christianity has any necessary connection with one's being a soldier; nor has one's being a soldier any necessary connection with heroism and Christianity. In burning questions like that of war, where sentiment is ever likely to cloud reason, we must be doubly careful to keep a balanced judgment and avoid extravagant statements.

22. "Thou shalt not kill" is definite, and as the stadium announcer puts it, "You can't get out of that."

You would find it difficult to get out of the fact that, whilst your commandment is given in Exodus XX., the very next chapter says, in verses 15 and 16, "He that striketh his father or mother shall be put to death. He that shall steal a man and sell him, being convicted of the guilt, shall

be put to death." The very God who gave the law, "Thou shalt not kill," sanctions the death penalty inflicted by men upon a fellow human being in certain circumstances. Your absolute interpretation of the words is obviously wrong.

23. As a clever lawyer would convince the average person against his will that black is white, you—in effect—pardon "just" murder.

I do not. Murder is unauthorized and malicious killing. That can never be just. I say clearly that a soldier who, in good faith and in what he believes to be a just cause, engages in war, is not guilty of murder.

24. Could an individual soldier on active service be guilty of murder?

It depends upon why he wants to kill that particular foe. A soldier is morally justified in killing enemies in war time only provided his intention be the safety of his own nation and the defeat of the enemy as a nation. If he aims at a particular individual intending the death of that individual as a **unit** of the opposing nation, he is not guilty of murder. But, if he selects an individual he hates personally and shoots, intending now, **not** the defense of his country, but the satisfaction of a personal revenge, and selecting that individual, but as an **individual**, then he is guilty of murder, making the war merely an occasion for his personal crime. The morality of every action is measured by the rightness or wrongness of one's interior intention, as far as a given person is concerned.

25. I am amazed by what seems to be your inconsistency.

There is no inconsistency in my replies.

26. You hold strictly to the Christian view in opposing divorce, but in dealing with the soldier killing the innocent in battle, you offer extenuating circumstances, completely ignoring the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill."

I do not ignore any obligations imposed by that commandment. That commandment forbids all forms of unjustified killing which can rightly be termed murder. But it does not forbid lawful participation in a war for which sufficiently grave and just reasons exist. If it did, you would have to accuse God of not knowing what He meant by His own commandment, for He ordered many wars to be undertaken on behalf of justice, as you will discover by reading the Old Testament. Also you would have to blame Christ for not condemning war in every shape or form in His mission to condemn abuses and teach the perfect law of God.

27. Surely the commandment means that, no matter what the provocation, one is not justified in taking human life.

It does not mean that. Public authority has the right to take human life when the common good demands the death of criminals. So. St. Paul wrote to the Romans, "Princes are not a terror to the good, but to the evil. The ruler is God's minister to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear; for he beareth not the sword in vain." Rom. XIII, 3-4. Again, one is justified in preserving his own life against an unjust aggressor even should it be necessary to kill the aggressor. And the same principle applies to national defense as to individual defense.

28. "Revenge is mine, saith the Lord."

Correct. But vindication of one's own rights

is not necessarily prompted by revenge. There is a difference between trying to safeguard one's own rights, and trying to hurt one's neighbor for the sake of hurting him and satisfying one's own hatred and anger. Thus St. Paul says, "Revenge not yourselves, but lay aside your anger, for it is written, 'Revenge is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay.'"

29. We are told to turn the other cheek, and resist not evil, the latter surely meaning that we must give satanic majesty a free go.

It surely does not mean that. St. James says quite clearly, "Be subject therefore to God, but resist the devil." To understand our Lord's words, you must get the setting. He was correcting the false interpretation given to the law of retaliation by the Pharisees, who allowed to private individuals a vindication which the law really allowed only after the sentence of a judge. Jesus forbids such retaliation, and then goes farther, proposing the full extent of Christian ideals. But sometimes the application of those ideals is of precept; sometimes merely of counsel; sometimes just expedient.

It is of precept always to seek no satisfaction from motives of private anger and vengeance. It is of counsel to refrain from seeking satisfaction, from spiritual motives. You must remember that Jesus Himself did not offer His other cheek when struck by the servant of the high priest. When St. Paul was struck on the mouth in the court of Ananias, he did not put up with it gently, but replied, "God shall strike thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and contrary to the law commandest me to be struck?" Again, the patient endurance of evils and reproaches could serve at times to embitter and inflame evil aggressors still more, or even encourage malefactors to think they could go on with their iniquities with impunity. In such a

case it would be wrong to permit this. It is a mistake to divorce a text from its context, and give it a sweeping interpretation which makes no allowance for the mind of Christ on the subject as manifested elsewhere.

30. Why is the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," subject to amendment, whilst "Thou shalt not commit adultery," is not?

The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is not subject to amendment. It is always and everywhere valid within those limits to which God intended it to extend. God Himself has manifested the right of competent human authorities to take life, if it be necessary for the defense of the public good. But adultery can never be necessary for such defense. Even in the case of an individual destroying the life of an unjust aggressor in order to preserve his own, there is no reasonable man who would suggest that the lawfulness of this could imply the lawfulness of adultery. For adultery is not the defense of one's rights; it is the loss of virtue and moral integrity, and the unjust violation of other people's rights.

31. Why not amend the adultery commandment, making adultery lawful under certain circumstances?

We cannot amend any of God's commandments. You are working on the wrong idea that the correct interpretation of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is an amendment of that commandment because it does not fit in with your wrong interpretation of it.

32. Is it not the duty of all churches to seek out the cause for war, and stamp it out?

I cannot speak on behalf of "all churches." I can speak only on behalf of the Catholic Church,

That Church knows that it is her duty to denounce the cause of war, and to ask men to avoid such causes, and to stamp them out. The Church herself cannot stamp out such causes for the simple reason that her influence upon men is only in that degree in which men allow themselves to be influenced by her. If all professing Christians were Catholics, and all lived up to Catholic principles, you would never see Christians engaged in the sorry business of exterminating one another.

33. It is the duty of the Church to guide its flock concerning the cause of war.

The Church does so. She says that no war can arise without injustice on some one's part; and that it is never lawful to declare war except as a result of an exceedingly grave and unjust provocation. But apart from the causes of war, when it comes to a question of morality, the Church says that violent repression of violent injustice is not wrong; and that soldiers engaged in such lawful repression of injustice are not guilty of murder if the aggressive nation exposes its own soldiers to danger of death.

34. I go further and say definitely that it is the duty of the Church to denounce these blood baths, and cut out the "bunk" about "just" wars.

A moment ago you said that it was the duty of the Church to guide its flock. Now you think it your duty to guide the Church. It would be safer for you to ask the Church what should be your attitude on this subject. The very fascination these "blood baths" seem to have for you show that your imagination is at work rather than your reason. And that you think it "bunk" that it can ever be lawful to take part in a war is a sure sign that your reason has abdicated for the moment. The Church denounces war as a

shocking evil and calamity, and says that it can scarcely be justified. But if it be forced on a nation by others, that nation may certainly fight for its very existence. If you deny that, you talk folly. If you admit it, you admit that it is not "bunk" that a nation may justly engage in war.

35. You say that if everybody observed the Catholic principles, there would be no war.

That is so. You see, Catholic moral principles teach that it is never lawful to declare war unless grave injustice has been done. They also forbid all injustice. Therefore if all men lived according to Catholic principles, that would be the end of war.

36. This entirely neglects the fact that there were wars when Europe was Catholic, and that even Popes connived at war.

My statement does not neglect that fact. Your assertion that wars did occur is, of course, true. But that merely shows that not everybody was putting into practice the Catholic principles I have given.

37. Presumably they were bad Popes, and the Catholics were bad Catholics.

Not necessarily. Sometimes the Popes encouraged wars, as in the just defense of Europe against the invading Turks, or for the sake of repressing violent injustice. At other times, European kings declared war without consulting the Pope at all. But even that does not justify the sweeping assertion that "Catholics were bad." The average Catholic could be quite good, despite the ambition of princes. I merely want to steady up your exaggerations. I am quite prepared to admit that there have been bad and ambitious Popes, and also that many Catholics have not always acted up to Catholic principles.

38. Then have we any guarantee that, if the world re-embraced Catholicism, there would not still be bad Popes and bad Catholics; and things would be much as they were before?

You may safely abandon all fear of future bad Popes. The legislation of the Church concerning the qualifications and the method of electing Popes have been so strictly framed, and are of such binding force, that it would be morally impossible for one to be elected who has not proved himself to be a man of the highest ability, integrity, and devotedness to the principles of Christ and of the Catholic Church.

But, as such tests could not be applied to every Catholic, I must admit that there would be no guarantee, even if the whole world did embrace the Catholic religion, that there would be no bad Catholics; or that the injustice of some might not lead to war. If all were Catholics, there would, of course, be less risk of such calamities; for all would at least hold the same principles, and the influence of the Pope for peace would be immeasurably greater than it is. But, whilst men are human, things will go wrong in the best regulated families—and states. Our Lord was under no delusions on this point. He said, "It must needs be that scandals will come, but woe to him by whom they come." He expected them amongst nations saying, "There will be wars and rumors of war."

39. Never, in the past three centuries, has any Christian Church ever denounced any war upon which its adherents were about to embark.

You are very emphatic.

40. Tell me, if you can, of any case of this sort where the Church has spoken.

After asserting emphatically that a thing has never happened, it is a little late to ask humbly for information as to whether it did or not. Your

questions, too, are again inconsequent. The judgment that warfare is incompatible with the mind of Christ does not logically demand a judgment that this or that particular war has no justifying reasons on one side or the other, or from the viewpoint of individual combatants. If you ask me the general question as to whether it is right to cut off a man's leg, I will say no. To cut the legs off people is incompatible with the mind of Christ. If, however, you give a particular case where it is necessary to tolerate the evil of losing a leg in order to save one's life, I say that is quite a different matter, not included in your first question. It is loose thinking to jump from universals to particulars. Having thus shown the inconsequence of your questions, has the Church, which declares warfare to be incompatible with the mind of Christ, ever condemned any particular war? The Church certainly did do so in the ages when the nations acknowledged her authority in temporal affairs. But you limit the question to the last three centuries during which the nations have refused to acknowledge her authority in such matters, and have refused to submit cases for her adjudication. No wise man utters a definitive judgement unless both parties to a dispute submit to him all the facts that they believe to tell in their favor. As far as the Pope is concerned, this has not been done in recent times.

Within the last 300 years, however, we have the Peace of Westphalia under Pope Innocent X., in 1648—a peace which was effective for nearly 140 years, and which Lord Acton describes as “one of the glories of the Papacy.” In 1885, at the request of Bismarck, Pope Leo XIII. arbitrated between Germany and Spain in the dispute about the Caroline Islands, and his influence resulted in a peaceful settlement.

In 1914 Pope Pius X. condemned the World War from its very inception and in 1915 Pope Benedict XV. re-condemned it as a crime of im-

mense magnitude. Pope Benedict was thereupon accused by Germany of being pro-Ally; and by the Allies of being pro-German. And France, Russia and England drew up the London Pact of 1915 by which they agreed that no attention must be paid to any efforts of the Vatican to terminate the war.

In 1935 Pope Pius XI. declared that any invasion of Abyssinia by Italy which went beyond the needs of just defense, and was based upon ideas of expansion and aggressive conquest would be quite unjust. But the world has decided that its court should be the League of Nations, and not the Holy See. Evidence was submitted to Geneva, not to Rome; and the Pope was not called upon to utter a definitive judgment on a particular case which was sub judice at Geneva. He could do no more than condemn the war mind and the spirit of aggression as anti-Christian, and declare that, if Italy's campaign was dictated by such motives, it would be unjust.

41. If the Pope were true to his principles, he would have excommunicated every Roman Catholic soldier who served with Mussolini in the Italian war against Abyssinia.

Fidelity to his own principles and to the very principles of Christian justice would forbid such action by the Pope. Your conviction is due to a misconception of the moral principles governing this matter, and also of the duties of the Pope. A basic principle concerning excommunication is that no Catholic may be excommunicated save for a serious crime of whose guilt the delinquent is quite well aware. A second principle is that the Pope is never obliged to inflict this maximum penalty on any delinquent Catholic unless he thinks fit to do so. Even did a Catholic deserve it, the Pope would not violate any principle by refusing to employ the severest measures. But letting that point go, could the Pope justly have

excommunicated Catholic soldiers engaged in the Abyssinian war? He could not have done so. For the war would first have to be proved seriously unjust; and each soldier excommunicated would have to be aware of its guilt. Neither of these two things was possible.

In the first place, it would be a violation of principle for the Pope to declare either side guilty in the Abyssinian war, considering that neither side appealed to his decision nor submitted evidence on its behalf. It is a fundamental principle of justice that no party to a quarrel may be condemned as guilty until he is proved guilty. And a judicial decision cannot be given until both sides have been heard in the court to which appeal is made. Since no appeal was made to the Pope, the Pope would not have been justified in pronouncing an extra-judicial sentence.

Secondly, even if the Italian government was in the wrong, the individual soldier would not be in a position to know that, and on the information given him would believe his country to be justified, and take up arms in perfectly good faith. He personally would not be conscious of guilt, and could not be excommunicated for an action he honestly believed to be justified. Thus, neither from the viewpoint of the war itself, nor from that of the individual soldier, would the Pope be true to his principles if he excommunicated every participant. Your difficulty arises from the fact that, because you think the Italian invasion of Abyssinia wrong, that invasion must have been wrong, every soldier taking part in it must have believed it to be wrong, and the Pope should have condemned it as wrong, excommunicating all who took part in it. But are your ideas on the subject right? And must all others necessarily have adopted those ideas? And even if your ideas are right, should the Pope have acted in the way you think just because you think he should have done so, despite the fact that neither belligerent appealed to him, and that

neither side officially submitted evidence to him? If you ask yourself all these questions, I do not think you will be so sure of your conviction that the Pope would have excommunicated every individual soldier on principles you choose to ascribe to him.

42. What would happen if the Pope told his millions of Catholics not to raise a finger to assist in the next war, which is a little closer than most people imagine?

Conjectures as to the nearness of the next war are outside the scope of my comments. And I am afraid that I myself cannot offer you a conjecture as to the effect of a world-wide prohibition addressed to Catholics by the Pope forbidding participation in the next war, whenever or wherever it occurs. Such a conjecture on my part would be without value, for in any case the Pope would not issue such a prohibition. Firstly, if two or more nations are involved in war, individuals will have no option in the matter, but will be justified in fulfilling military duties under compulsory legislation. And the Pope will not order them to do what will be morally impossible. Again, whilst you might think that the Pope "ought" to issue such a prohibition, in reality he has no obligation to do so. The Pope is not above his Master, Jesus Christ. There was plenty of political and social injustice in our Lord's time, but He steadfastly refrained from denouncing it. The Jews wanted Christ to attack the unjust Roman oppression, but He kept silent despite their efforts to get from Him some kind of "pronouncement" against the Romans. Nor did a word come from our Lord's lips against the cruel injustices of slavery then afflicting so many human beings. He deliberately refused to deal with the special quarrels of individuals and nations. In St. Luke XII., 13, one of the multitude came to Him and said, "Master, speak to my

brother that he divide the inheritance with me." But Jesus said, "Man, who hath appointed Me judge or divider over you?" He would not interfere in a quarrel over earthly goods. He came for the eternal interests of the soul, and the establishing of a Kingdom of grace. That earthly and temporal things were too small an interest for Him is evident from His immediate addition, "A man's life doth not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth." In other words, He said, "You and your brother are quarrelling about things that don't really matter." Then, instead of settling the quarrel, He told them to rise above merely early interests and seek rather their eternal and spiritual welfare. The Pope imitates Christ. His business is the salvation of the souls of men. He will preach peace, and charity, and justice; but he is not here to settle who is right and who is wrong if nations are so foolish as to go to war. And, in any case, the political leaders of the nations would attach little value to his verdict. Even the nations which secured the favorable verdict would not respect him. They would use his utterance for political expediency, and disregard him as soon as he was of no more use to them, even as both Jews and Romans adopted that same attitude towards Christ.

43. So Catholics are free to enlist, and shoot fellow Catholics whom they have never seen, and have no grievance against!

They do not take up arms for the purpose of shooting fellow Catholics whom they have never seen, and against whom they have no grievance. Their motive is the legitimate defense of their own country against a nation or nations whom they believe to be violating their rights, and who refuse to desist unless compelled by force to do so.

If their purpose was to shoot Catholics whom

they had never seen, and against whom they had no grievance, they would have gone a very different way about their campaign. They would have had to interrogate each adversary. "Tell me, are you a non-Catholic? Have I seen you before? Ought I to bear you a grudge? If you are a non-Catholic, and I have never seen you before, or I have a grievance against you personally, I can't shoot you. I have come merely to shoot Catholics whom I have never seen, and who have done me no harm!"

Surely you can see how absurd is your suggestion.

44. In every country you clerics are doing your best to keep alive the old spirit of national pride, thus helping to create national hate, and to keep the people war-minded.

If there is one thing the Catholic Church does not do, it is to pander to exaggerated nationalism. On Saturday, May 18, a cable told us of a fierce attack on the Catholic Church in Germany on the score that that Church was the greatest of enemies to German nationalism. Fanatics cried out, "Hang Archbishop Faulhaber! Down with Christianity!" Those fanatics would certainly not agree that the Catholic Church tends to keep alive the old spirit of national pride. Protestantism is almost by second nature national in its outlook, in whatever country it may be. It began with the principle, "Cujus regio, ejus religio"—the religion of the people must be the religion of the ruling prince. But the Catholic Church has never accepted such a principle. She says that Christ died for all men, independently of their national allegiance; and that the same religion is for all nations. It is in the Catholic Church that exaggerated nationalism finds its true enemy. Your charge of keeping alive national hatreds certainly does not apply to the Catholic Church, which is hated precisely because she does not do so.

During the last war, flag-waving fanatics denounced the Catholic Church for not being sufficiently war-minded. Fanatics now say that she is war-minded. If war breaks out again, from which may God preserve this poor world, the old charge will return that she is not war-minded; or even that she is positively disloyal because she doesn't display the enthusiasm for war exhibited by so many who denounce it now.

45. If war is declared, the Church is always to the fore, urging men to kill one another for king and country.

The teaching of the Catholic Church on war is eminently sane and reasonable. The Catholic Church says that war is a very great evil, and one to be averted by all possible means. But she says that it is not always unlawful for a nation to take up arms. That is lawful in just defense against an unjust aggressor. The unjust aggressor sins, and very gravely, in employing military force in his unjust cause. And such a nation should be restrained by pressure of public opinion and international influence. But if some nation defies these things and begins to slaughter another nation, that nation, in its hapless plight, certainly has the right to take up arms in self-defense. If no nation declared war, all would be well. And any efforts to prevent the declaration of war are quite in accordance with Catholic teaching. War, as such, is an evil thing, and a blight upon the human race.

In 1914 Pope Pius X., noticing that war was imminent, circularized all the powers concerned, imploring them not to let things go so far, urging all the consequent miseries, and pleading for peace. But they took no notice. His successor, Benedict XV., continued pleading for a cessation of hostilities, only to be accused by the Allies of

being pro-German; and by the Germans of being pro-Ally.

But now, granting that all efforts to prevent war have failed, and our country, for example, is compelled to fight for its very existence, the Church certainly teaches that we have a duty towards the country to which we belong. The duty is not to participate in the murder of others. The duty is to defend our own nation's welfare against the enemy aggressor. If the aggressor desists, all is well. If not, he deliberately risks his own life, and if he be killed, the defender is not guilty of murder.

46. Should the Churches separate the belligerents, or incite both sides to finer "Christian" efforts when the fight is on?

Any church which would be true to Christian principles in this matter would have the obligation to use all its influence in trying to bring about peace in accordance with the demands of justice and charity. Never could it be lawful to urge both sides to continue the war. For in all disputes, whether between individuals or nations, there is either a real grievance, or there is not. If not, both sides should stop the war they should never have commenced. If there is a real grievance, the party which has caused the grievance has no right to do so, has less right to allow it to provoke a war, and has still less right to continue the war. The guilty party has the obligation to make reparation of the injury for which it has been responsible. The Church, therefore, could never urge "both" sides to continue a war. But she could say, and would have to say, that whilst one guilty party must cease at once, the other innocent party would be justified in fighting on, provided the injustice inflicted upon it were exceedingly serious, and the offending party refused to make reparation or cease hostilities.

47. In a statement to the press recently Archbishop Kelly justified capital punishment.

He justified the right of lawful state authorities to inflict the death penalty for certain serious crimes.

48. That may have been the Jewish law, but it is not in accordance with Christianity.

It is certainly not opposed to Christianity. The right of lawful civil authority to inflict capital punishment granted by God in the Jewish law was not withdrawn by the advent of Christianity. In writing to the Romans concerning secular authority St. Paul says, "Rulers are not a terror to the good, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same. For (the ruler) is God's minister to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, fear: for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is God's minister: an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil." Rom. XIII., 3-4. You could scarcely have a clearer justification of capital punishment according to the Christian law than these words of St. Paul.

49. What is Christianity, if it be not the law of forgiveness?

Forgiveness is not incompatible with the punishment of a crime. Nathan the prophet said to David in the name of God, "Because thou has repented, thy sin is forgiven thee; nevertheless, because thou hast done this thing thy son shall die, and shall not live." The Christian law demands that we all personally forgive from our hearts all who have injured us in any way. But that duty of charity does not forbid the vindication of justice. For example, if a man robbed you of \$1,000, you are forbidden to harbor ill will

towards him. You are forbidden to take him to court from motives of hatred and revenge, and merely to humiliate him. But, provided you put aside all such motives, you are certainly allowed to take him to court in order to recover what is rightly yours, and secure justice. State authorities, too, may inflict capital punishment, if they deem it necessary for the common good. And since the administrators of the law have not been personally injured no one could reasonably suggest that they are inspired by hatred and ill will, or that they are violating the Christian law obliging us to forgive those who have injured us.

50. Capital punishment is not Christianity.

It is no way opposed to Christianity, but is in full accordance with its principles.

51. Catholicism has never taught it.

You have an inadequate knowledge of Catholicism.

52. Did St. Augustine condemn capital punishment at the hands of persons in authority? If so, in what century, and on what grounds?

The wording of your question seems to imply that St. Augustine did condemn capital punishment by civil authority. But he did not do so. I will give you two brief quotations from his works. He lived towards the close of the fourth century, and is the outstanding genius amongst the early Christian writers. Now in the first chapter of his book, "The City of God," he says, "He who without any public official duty kills a criminal is to be regarded as a murderer; for he has usurped a power not granted by God." Again, in his treatise on "Free Will," Book I., c. 4, he writes, "Homicide is the killing of a man, but this can sometimes occur without sin, as **when a**

soldier kills an enemy in battle, or a judge and a state official put a criminal to death."

From these quotations it is evident that St. Augustine cannot be cited as condemning capital punishment.

53. What is the attitude of the Church on this question today, and has such attitude changed during the centuries?

The attitude of the Church has not changed during the centuries. The Catholic Church still teaches that the state has the right to safeguard the common good by putting to death those guilty of serious crimes. Yet, though the state has that right, it is not, of course, obliged to use that right. Writing in the thirteenth century, St. Thomas Aquinas says that the reform of an evil man is better than the exercising of vindictive justice. But he adds that when one is guilty of extreme malice, shows no sign of emendation, and will probably prove a menace to yet others, then both Divine and human laws sanction the death penalty. A few modern theologians have raised the question as to whether the state has the right to inflict capital punishment when the common good can be safeguarded by other means, such as life imprisonment. They admit the right of the state to put criminals to death if it be strictly necessary, but have expressed doubts as to whether it could be strictly necessary in a modern state. But they are the few who raise this secondary aspect; they do so only tentatively; and the majority of theologians are by no means greatly impressed. All Catholic theologians agree that the state has the radical right to put criminals to death if competent authorities think it necessary for the common good. There is no obligation to use that right, and state authorities may, if they wish, adopt other measures.

54. Is there a Catholic Action organization in this country, inspired by Rome?

There is. And this movement is inspired by the Catholic Church. But the movement is not political. The Pope issued a special Encyclical Letter on Catholic Action, and in it he wrote, "We have repeatedly affirmed that Catholic Action by its very nature and our definite instructions, is outside and above all party politics."

What, then, is Catholic Action? It is an effort to arouse in Catholics the spirit of the early Christians, each of whom was an apostle bent on disseminating the principles of the Gospel. The Pope wants all Catholics of today to exercise an intense Catholic activity both by living right up to the faith themselves, and by applying Christian principles of justice, charity, and zeal in all their personal and social undertakings. In that way only will Catholics be a leaven in society to counteract the growing influence of dreary irreligion and materialism.

55. Many people attribute a lot of the trouble in this world to the political interference of the Pope.

That is because they wish to do so. There is not a scrap of evidence to support them. The Catholic Church is not a political institution, and does not want political responsibilities. But she is entitled to protest when politicians go beyond their rights, and seek to destroy religion. Pope Pius XI., said to the International Congress of Catholic Youth: "We must safeguard ourselves against a confusion that might easily arise. There are moments when we may seem to be occupied with politics. But actually we are concerned only with religion, with the defense of religion and of religious interests, when we fight for religious liberty, for the sanctity of the family and the school, for the keeping holy of days consecrated

to God. That is not going in for politics. We do not, and never will believe that it is. It is politics that have touched religion and laid hands on the altar. It is our duty to defend religion, the consciences of the people, and the sanctity of the sacraments."

56. Pope Pius XI. virtually declared war against the racial purity campaign in Italy.

He uttered a strong protest against exaggerated nationalism which makes the mistake of thinking that love for one's own race demands hatred of others.

57. He declared that, because Catholicism means universality, it is "not racial, not nationalistic, and not separatist."

The aim of the Catholic religion must be to unite all men as children of the one God. The Catholic Church does not object to nationalism within reasonable limits. In fact, she declares that national frontiers are sacred, and that every man has a duty to love and serve his own country in a spirit of true patriotism. But, just as all individual human beings should be brothers, united in fraternal charity, so the different nations, though foreign to each other, are obliged to regard each other as neighbors and collective brothers. If politicians, who say that nations are "sovereign," mean that each nation is walled up by itself, and depends only on itself, and has no real duties to any other nations, then the Church must tell Catholics that they may not adopt such views.

58. He urged the students of the College of Propaganda to go forth into the world with open minds, and to combat exaggerated nationalism in all its manifestations, including racialism.

When addressing students of Propaganda Col-

lege, the Pope was speaking to representatives of very many different nations. Despite each one's love for his own country, the Pope warned all not to let their minds be poisoned by prejudices against other countries, and to do their best to break down racial hatreds. And never was such advice more necessary. It is a thesis of barbarism that each individual human being, or each individual nation, has its own welfare as its only law of action. On that principle, man becomes a wolf to man. The Catholic Church utterly repudiates that principle. Even international relations cannot be divorced from the moral law, and the Church has the right to state the Christian ideal. And in her Liturgy she prays, "O God, who hast given Thy children the earth for their cultivation, grant that they may have but one heart and one soul, even as they have but one dwelling place." All that the Pope urged the students of Propaganda to do was to work for that ideal in their future priestly lives.

59. Does not that indicate a desire to control the nations?

No. It indicates a desire to see the nations controlling themselves in accordance with the moral law. And every man who becomes a Catholic, and who tries to live up to Catholic teachings, will not only make the more sure of the salvation of his own soul. He will contribute as he could do in no other way, to the glory of God and peace amongst men of good will throughout all the countries and peoples of this world. For he will blend his energies with the one force able to bring these blessings to men—the Catholic Church.

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