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vs.
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"Atheistic Communism vs. United Nations" reviews the "Divini Redemptoris" ("On Atheistic Communism") of the late Pope Pius XI (published March 19, 1937) with the intention of applying its message to United Nations.

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Atheistic Communism vs. United Nations

BY

REV. JAMES J. ROHAN, S.J.

ON this coming March 19 (1947), Feast of St. Joseph, *Divini Redemptoris*,¹ the encyclical of the late Pope Pius XI "against atheistic communism" will be ten years old.

Ordinarily, a tenth anniversary would invite a scholarly rereading of this great document as a natural academic and post-graduate effort. But these are no ordinary times and the "no peace in our time" threat urges us to a reviewing and a renewing of a papal prescription that not only diagnosed with superhuman accuracy the capital evil of the day but offered as well the solution and remedy of the atheistic communism that continues on as the root-ill of the complications laying low man's international life. Ten years later the original issue of "Atheistic Communism vs. All Nations" has become much more complicated and today the world is confronted with the worsening crisis of "Atheistic Communism vs. United Nations" . . . and that is the subject of this pamphlet.

¹ *Divini Redemptoris* are the first two Latin words of the actual text of the encyclical. Encyclicals are usually identified by their opening words, which in turn frequently sound the keynote of the subject matter.

INTRODUCTION (Three Preliminaries)

To avoid all misunderstanding may I here make three preliminary points.

1. This essay cannot be considered *controversial*, because when everything is said, it will be noted that the author has done nothing more than ask a question. Questions are not controversial. They tend to generate light. It is the variety of answers to the same question that generates the heat of controversy.

2. Nor may the pamphlet be construed as *political*. It is essentially religious. Politics deals with man-to-man questions. The matter of this pamphlet is a God-and-man subject. Its very title of "Atheistic Communism" bespeaks an essentially *religious* concern with a movement by which man would replace God. Therefore the accent is on *atheism*, alias communism.

3. Nor does this essay in any way presume to be a necessarily official expression of anything. The unfortunate supposition prevails in America that a priest has no mind of his own and that his every public word has been scrutinized by a religious censorship dedicated to killing practicality. Nothing could be further from the truth and no atheistic propaganda has been pumped out in greater quantities than the demand that the clergy confine its talk to heaven and hell and leave earth alone. Pope Pius XII has time and time again alerted the priesthood against this fallacy.

I am an American citizen, and by the grace of the same God, a Jesuit priest. As a Jesuit priest, I have, to be sure, renounced certain civil rights. But while rights are renunciable, obligations are not. And every man, priest or

layman, has certain obligations to Country that are almost as inescapable as his responsibilities to God.

Thus a priest when he finds his Country under the attack of an atheism on the march, of a militant antigodliness organizing itself for atheistic action, not only may . . . but he must . . . join, or if necessary lead, "the resistance," comprising as it does Catholic and non-Catholic, Jew and Gentile, black and white, East and West, rich and poor, emigrant and native, *Mayflower* and *Gripsholm*, literally everyone who accepts God and His moral law as the starting point of all true progress, all real democracy, all genuine liberalism. This cause of God and moral law is one in which all true Americans not only may but must enlist. By his very profession, however, a priest is committed to the sole use of spiritual weapons, prayer and good works, chief among which these days is pointing out to one's fellow Americans the wiles and tricks of atheistic communism.

So much by way of preliminaries.

FIRST PART (Review)

As for a text, if an essay may have a text, I choose the words Pope Pius XII addressed to the thirty-two new Cardinals at their recent elevation.

"Because without God or away from God, no true, solid and secure unity can exist among men."

Let us begin, paradoxically, at the very last sentence of *Divini Redemptoris*, reading, "Given at Rome, at St. Peter's on the feast of St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, the nineteenth day of March, 1937, the sixteenth of our Pontificate, Pius PP. XI."

In this closing sentence of *Divini Redemptoris*, we are given:

AUTHOR.....*Pope Pius XI*
DATE.....Feast of St. Joseph, 1937
PLACE.....St. Peter's at Rome:

which supply us three real leads for briefing the Encyclical itself.

Its *author* gives us a lead on the *context* of *Divini Redemptoris*:

Its *date* gives us a lead on the *text* of its chief thesis:

Its *place* gives us a lead on the *scope* of the Encyclical, enlightening us on both the full purpose and the timing of the author.

I

THE CONTEXT AND ESPECIALLY THE AUTHOR

First then about the context, especially the author.

No one of his day more than Pope Pius XI drew a clearer distinction between Russia which is good and atheistic communism which is bad.

No one of his day loved the Russians more nor atheistic communism less. In fact, the Bolshevik atheism that with such diabolic ease found a local habitation in Moscow, and a name in communism, simply increased the fear of the Holy Father that Russia might be misunderstood by world opinion as being host to, rather than a victim of the anti-religious clique of Lenin.

For suddenly the homeless anarchy long at work in every nation found itself with a home office from which it might effectively and with front carry out its chief purpose of organizing the world against God.

Distinction Between Russians and Communists

Arts, modes, customs, etc., reveal the nature of a people; but ordinarily their government is the best expression of a people's will and the truest reflection of the national character. No one realized better than Pope Pius XI how *completely* atheistic communism misrepresented the Russian will and caricatured the Russian character.

Keenly did His Holiness realize that while the headquarters of this apocalyptic beast lay across Russia, its hind-quarters covered the New World . . . and everyone of its thousand legs was firmly planted in every section of the earth where merely two or three were gathered together to blaspheme the name of God.

Pius XI understood that atheistic communism better than its parent evils of Modernism and Materialism combined the *vices* of the eastern and western man, debasing the nature of both to an incredulity and infidelity level with the matter it boastfully worshiped. By establishing itself in Russia, crossroads of the East and West, atheism was at long last able to open "seminaries," so to speak, whose intellectual degenerates from every nation of the East and West could be trained in the atheology, or rather the anti-theology, of dialectic materialism.

In contrasting meditation, the Holy Father also appreciated that the real Russians (Russia is really a nation of many races) incorporated in their blended nature many of the *virtues* of eastern and western men, producing people of an oriental patience long enough to outlast the visitation of the most long lived tyranny . . . yet of a temper so fierce, that once aroused might well exceed the action of even the most western America.

A really great people the Russians, and no one of his day realized it more than Pope Pius XI. . . .

The concern of Pius XI became, as religious persecution of the Russians increased, a chief worry of his Fatherly heart . . . and deeds rather than words being the language of love, he addressed himself to action.

a. He instituted a Papal relief program that worked in close conjunction with our American program to relieve the food and clothing crisis into which World War I had thrown all Russia.

b. He commissioned Monsignor D'Herbigny, a Jesuit Bishop, to open at Rome the Institutum Russicum, a papal seminary, to provide priests . . . even from the West . . . for the oriental rites of the Church in Russia.

c. He rededicated the prayers after Mass to the return of Russia to its first love. . . .

d. He nominated the Little Flower to be the patron of all the Russias and designated St. Joseph as the heavenly leader of the battle against atheism.

Greatest of all single efforts for Russia was probably the *Divini Redemptoris* itself. Lest anyone be unable to understand his deeds by which he loved Russia and hated atheism, Pius XI sums up his attitude in this matter in the famous words of this Encyclical:

“In making these observations it is no part of Our intention to condemn *en masse* the peoples of the Soviet Union. For them We cherish the warmest paternal affection. We are well aware that not a few of them groan beneath the yoke imposed on them by men who in very large part are strangers to the real interests of the country. We recognize that many others were deceived by fallacious hopes. We blame only the system, with its authors and abettors who considered Russia the best-prepared field for experimenting with a plan elaborated decades ago, and who from there continue to spread it from one end of the world to the other.”

So much for the context of *Divini Redemptoris*, chief figure of which is its Author, Pope Pius XI himself.

II

THE TEXT AND ESPECIALLY THE THESIS

Now an equally brief word on its text, heart of which is its chief thesis.

This, to my mind, is enunciated in the following two sentences:

“See to it Venerable Brethren . . . that the faithful do not allow themselves to be deceived: Communism is intrinsically wrong and no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever.”

The date, 1937, translates us back to a pre-World War II world, when nazism, fascism and communism were competing for possession of the crazy world that godless men built on the ashes of World War I.

A *rhetorician* would find in these two sentences the clarity and emphasis of a noonday sun. Those words mean what they say: say what they mean . . . mean just what they say: say just what they mean.

A *philosopher* would find in these two sentences the inescapable conclusion of premises already elaborated in the Encyclical; a major premise that traced communism in its direct lineality to the materialism of Karl Marx; and a minor premise that to this dialectic materialism related such basic concepts as *universe, history, man* and *the purpose of man's being*, thus postulating:

- a. A *universe* bound north, south, east and west by matter and nothing else, by matter as a sole actuality, by a matter that was the alpha and omega of all reality:
- b. *History* as nothing more than an ever accelerating material energy:
- c. A *human being* as a cog in this energy generating machine.
- d. The *chief byproduct* of this material process to be a mankind being levelled into a perfectly classless society.²

The final end of all was to be the reign of matter in a universe of matter as a new god on a new throne; matter and its mystical body of a denaturalized mankind.

What a caricature of Christ and the mankind He supernaturalized! Is it any wonder Pius XI implied, "The finger of Satan is here."

A *lawyer* would be quick to notice in these two sentences that Pius' concern is not directly with political communism as opposed to democracy or monarchy, for instance; nor with economic communism as opposed to capitalism or socialism; but with communism as opposed to God and His moral law.

A *historian*, schooled to digging out the story behind the headlines, knows why Pius XI put such power and emphasis into these two sentences. Pope Pius is even more emphatic, if that were possible, about atheistic communism's evil than the great Leo XIII was in dealing with atheistic capitalism

² Cf. Commentary on *Divini Redemptoris* by Ulpianus Lopez, S.J., in Father Vermeersch's "*Periodica*," June 15, 1937.

in his *Rerum Novarum*. For Pius' intention was to make doubly sure that Catholics did not accept *la main tendue*, the hand which Communists, in France especially, had extended in phoney token of change of heart to Catholics dehumanized by an industrialism that admired machines but contemptuously treated its men as mere "hands" to be hired for their factories, "heads" for their offices, "feet" for their sales territories; buying and selling flesh and blood like iron and cotton, hiring and firing human beings like horses and oxen.

Communism saw a great opportunity to exploit the Papacy that protested in *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* the abuses of modern capitalism. Moscow propaganda ordered the opening of the clenched fist against God and extending its world-be-friendly palm to Catholics victimized by an atheistic capitalism.

To make doubly sure that Catholics would not shake a hand whose fist was clenched against God, Pope Pius XI wrote "See to it Venerable Brethren that the faithful do not allow themselves to be deceived."

That's the story behind the headline of communism being "intrinsically wrong."

A *theologian* would recognize in the two words "intrinsically wrong" a technicality of expression that covers a multitude of words. For to his trained ear, the words "intrinsically wrong" mean "evil from its very makeup," "*ex genere suo*" as the moralists say, implying that the thing adjudged "intrinsically wrong" is evil in its intrinsic causes.

Further, in the added qualification "and no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever," the Chief Justice of the Church Militant decides that not only in its makeup but in any and every conceivable circumstance communism was,

is and ever will be "evil *ex genere suo toto*" ("evil in its makeup, unalterably and everlastingly so) as the scholastic expression puts it.

Briefly, even the highest end cannot justify means which are "intrinsically wrong."

But as significant as the reading of these two sentences by rhetorician, philosopher, moralist, theologian and historian might be, only a *RELIGIOUS*, i. e., a member of a religious order, can fully appreciate the implications of this vivid condemnation of atheistic communism. For in his original dedication to what is so accurately called "common life," the *holy* communism of his institute, the religious hoped not merely to add his measure of devotion and service to others serving religion, but hoped also that in the investment of his temporal all in that ORGANIZED effort that is the heart and pump of all monastic life . . . to double, treble, to "multiply by God" so to speak the effects of his single effort for God's glory. "Ad *Majorem Dei Gloriam*" "To the *Greater* Glory of God" is the cry of every religious order. It is that he may make greater what is already great that the candidate enters religion.

The hope his "community" offers a religious, communism offers the atheist.

In complete contrast, as if to ridicule the very life of religious orders, the *religious* recognizes in atheistic communism the determination of the impious, of the anarchist, to double and treble their efforts by first of all organizing themselves into the antireligious order that is communism and in their new strength to reorganize and recreate mankind in the blaspheming image of themselves. "Ad *Majorem Nostri Gloriam*" "To *Our* Greater Glory" . . . or as the cry of some of the French youth of today translates it

“To the Greater Glory of Dialectic Materialism,” is the battlecry of Atheistic Communism.

Our Birth Obligation

Now, Fellow Americans, make no mistake about this . . . that while we, Catholic and non-Catholic, Jew and Gentile, Black and White, Rich and Poor, are by charity pledged to tolerate Communists, working and patiently praying for their return to reason, their conversion back to God and His Moral Law, the philosophy of dialectic materialism imposes no such compulsion of charity upon its members. And therefore by the same law by which we tolerate communists, it is God's will . . . as clear as the language of our Declaration of Independence and Constitution . . . that we Americans crusade to prevent and prohibit Communism from *organizing* into an antireligious, anti-American order. Our American birthright guarantees us freedom of conscience. The corresponding birth obligation demands we protect this right against its invasion by atheistic communism.

For Communism is more than un-American: it is anti-American and as such simply cannot be tolerated without suiciding America.

III

THE SCOPE OF THE ENCYCLICAL

Thus far we have seen the Author of *Divini Redemptoris* drawing a clear distinction between Real Russia and Atheistic Communism and having separated the two, comforting the former and condemning the latter as something “intrinsicly wrong.”

And now a brief word on the scope of the Encyclical.

Let us recall the "*urbi et orbi*" note, implicit in its "St. Peter's at Rome" origin. It is a communication "for the world *via* Rome."

Was it merely to denounce atheistic communism or did it have a more positive purpose?

The scope of *Divini Redemptoris*, like the scope of other encyclicals, comprehends the Gospel and its application to some important possibility, if not question, of the hour. A chief characteristic of encyclicals is their timeliness.

Further, the scope of *Divini Redemptoris*, like the scope of the encyclicals of Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV and especially those of our gloriously reigning Pius XII, a group even secular statesmen recognize as outstanding peacemakers of our time, comprehends the Pauline Doctrine of the Mystical Christ and its application to the militant atheism, the atheistic communism that is the measure and symbol of today's power of darkness.

Encyclical after encyclical in their positive phases are, so to speak, articles in the Church's encyclopedia on the total Christ, Christ and His Mystical Body.

One World

Now, believe it or not, the Papacy and Atheistic Communism, long before the statesmen of World War II saw this earth contracted by science and especially the science of war into ONE WORLD . . . I say the Papacy and the New Atheism saw not only this ONE WORLD, but ONE WORLD of literally millions of homeless souls, spirits displaced by heresy, starved by schism, disemployed by an abusive capitalism, jilted by election-day politicians . . ."

ready to join any or every cause that would guarantee them security and freedom.

To a modern statesman ONE WORLD is a dream of ONE HOME, ONE FAMILY, ONE PEACE. . . . A new vision for a worldling but an old dogma for a Catholic.

To Atheistic Communism ONE WORLD portends ONE BATTLEFIELD, ONE WAR, ONE CHAOS. Come chaos, matter's triumph is at hand.

To the Papacy ONE WORLD points not only to ONE PEACE but beyond to ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, that is the ambition of the apostolic heart.

In this Atheistic and Papal contrast it can be seen:

1. How the *objective* of militant atheism was to win these unclaimed souls to its cause: how the objective of the Church Militant was to claim them for Christ.

2. How the *strategy* of militant atheism came to call itself communism, by pretending a universal social service that would unite the abused of the world: how the strategy of the Church Militant insisted upon the spiritual and corporal works of mercy as obligations of membership in the mystical Christ.

3. How the *tactics* of militant atheism ordered atheistic action, i.e., urging even the least and lowest communist member to get out and get new members: how the tactics of the Church Militant ordered Catholic Action, the participation of the entire laity, the least being the least excepted, in the apostolate of the hierarchy.

Poles apart as are the respective objective, strategy and tactics of Militant Atheism and the Church Militant, it is noteworthy that both put a hope on the common man, so

called, the forgotten man, the man in the street . . . call this everyday average individual what you will . . . for a chief part in the execution of their two objectives.

Both atheistic and Catholic Action realize the influence the butcher has on fellow butcher, the baker on his fellow baker, the rich on rich, the poor on poor.

Scope of This "One World" Comprehends Every Man

From this approach it becomes abundantly clear that the scope of *Divini Redemptoris* comprehends not merely the negative purpose of denouncing another anti-Catholic "ism" but is rather a final briefing and summing up of genuine Catholic Action. It reminds all Catholics, rich man, poor man, converted thief, doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief, that no matter how expendable they are in the world's eyes they are each blessed one of them indispensable in converting the homeless souls of this one world. It encourages them to co-operate with all men of good will working with God and His natural law to bring about one peace . . . and reminds them that above and beyond the one peace for which this one world hopes is the One Lord, one faith, one baptism that Christ came down to earth to secure with, in and by the help of His Mystical Body of which even the worldly least Christian was a full-blooded member. It exhorts them in the name of Catholic Action to uphold the praying arms of their priests and bishop and to support the hierarchy in their application of the Gospel to the social problems of the day.

It warns all, priest and layman, that should Catholic Action fail, atheistic action will claim what belittling Communism calls "the masses," what the pitying Christ described as "the multitude."

Listen to the Encyclical itself speak out on this point. Would to God this occasion were blessed with indelibly marking its every word on the minds of every one of us.

“The militant leaders of Catholic Action, thus properly prepared and armed, will be the first and immediate apostles of their fellow workmen. They will be an invaluable aid to the priests in carrying the torch of truth, and in relieving grave spiritual and material suffering, in many sectors where inveterate anti-clerical prejudice or deplorable religious indifference has proved a constant obstacle to the pastoral activity of God’s ministers. In this way they will collaborate, under the direction of especially qualified priests in that work of spiritual aid to the laboring classes on which We set so much store, because it is the means best calculated to save these, Our beloved children, from the snares of Communism.”

And “by the snares of Communism” is suggested not so much a time-bomb planted by atheism against this nation or that race as a booby-trap against all innocent and God-fearing peoples.

This all too brief treatment concludes our study of the Encyclical itself. I feel sure that while my description of the context, text and scope of *Divini Redemptoris* has not done justice to this great document, it has done no real injustice to its thesis.

SECOND PART (Application)

Souvenir or Summons?

However, right here . . . before going any further . . . a reader has the right to wonder (and fortunately it is the very wonder this final portion of this essay is meant to promote): "Well, all you say is very true, but there is nothing you've said that could not have been said ten years ago."

What has *Divini Redemptoris*, published March 19, 1937, to offer us ten years later? Is it not true that the last decade has so reshuffled world problems that many of the vital questions of yesterday have since gone the way of all flesh? Has *Divini Redemptoris* any practical meaning today . . . has it not rather been refiled by history in the "Interesting but No Longer Important" docket? Is not this encyclical "against atheistic communism" only a noble relic, "dated"? Or is *Divini Redemptoris* still a living document and not a dead letter whose spirit has departed into the past?

Briefly, is *Divini Redemptoris* as of today, a souvenir or a summons?

IV

DIVINI REDEMPTORIS . . . YESTERDAY . . . TODAY . . . TOMORROW

That Pope Pius XI's Encyclical against Atheistic Communism is even more timely today than it was ten years ago is the contention of the balance of this pamphlet, and the very thesis of this essay.

To prove that *Divini Redemptoris* has been growing and growing in importance until it today is a double-edged scalpel in the hands of every American interested in Catholic Action, I shall have to proceed by

1. Pointing out what I consider a *dominant* characteristic of the ordinary American.

2. Pointing out what I consider a *dominant* fact of the last decade, indicating its most significant phase.

3. Asking what I consider the *dominant* question of the hour.

In this sequence, I believe the context, text and scope of *Divini Redemptoris* can light, certainly for us Americans, our way in what is otherwise hopeless fog. Less figuratively I believe that Pope Pius XI's Encyclical against Atheistic Communism enables American Catholics to formulate, and please God, ultimately answer, the very problem of our times.

V

A DOMINANT AMERICAN CHARACTERISTIC

Let me first then point out what I consider a dominant American characteristic. I refer to the instinct Americans have of asking themselves impulsive questions and giving themselves equally impulsive answers. Suddenly confronted with a problem they simply "must do something about," Americans all too frequently attack its appearance rather than its substance, impetuously rather than reasonably asking themselves "What to do?" rather than "What is it all about?" When to an impulsive question (instead of studying the question and reframing it with the precision of full evidence) they give an equally impulsive answer . . . the

results are pretty sad. In such cases Americans are pitied the world over for their foolish answers to stupid questions.

On the other hand, when they put native impulse aside and address themselves to framing the question, exactly and with intellectual precision, they come up with an answer whose exactness . . . whose pinpoint bombing of the difficulty . . . amazes the world.

Stupid Answers

Let me first give some examples of our impulsively answering impulsive questions. We impulsively asked ourselves at the increasing sight of drinking abuses, "How can we get rid of liquor?" And we impulsively legislated the stupid answer that is prohibition. Had we originally asked the more exact question, "How may we cut down on the abuses that ever increase in a laissez-faire liquor set-up?" we might have come up with an answer that, given the money we put into prohibition, might have really curbed a national evil.

We impulsively ask ourselves, "How can we keep religion out of school?" and we impulsively legislate a public school system that tends to close the door on religion and open it to atheism. Had we originally asked the more exact question "How can we *best educate* our children to the responsibilities of citizenship?" we might have come up with a solution that could never have generated the increasing scandals of outlawing religion in our "public school" answer.

We impulsively ask ourselves "How can we cut down the number of people on relief?" And some Americans impulsively answer "Birth Control," another very foolish answer to a really stupid question. Had we originally asked ourselves the more exact question of "How can we reorder

our economic system so as to protect our asset Number 1, a growing family?" we would undoubtedly come up with an answer that would have enabled the father to rely more upon his real earning power than upon the drug store for an answer.

Wise Answers

On the other hand when we sit down to re-examine the question before we set out to answer it, we come up with a really intelligent question to which we usually give an equally intelligent answer.

For example, politically, when we decided to break away from the Mother Country in '76 we put all emotion aside and asked ourselves in whose name are we declaring ourselves an independent nation. A very precise question to which we gave the equally precise answer . . . "In the name of God Who created us free, we declare our independence."

Having become an independent state, we decided to have an equally independent government. We then asked ourselves "What shall be the spirit of the letters of our Constitution?" A very precise question to which we gave the equally precise answer. "Our Constitution shall live and move and have its being from God's natural law." Another great answer.

Nor is our genius for giving the exact answer, if our original question is precise, limited to the political field.

Economically we asked ourselves "How can we put at the use of the most people the resources of our land and its people?" A very precise, unimpulsive question to which we answered with equal precision "mass production," an answer that has literally amazed the world with its truth.

And so on . . .

Therefore, as Americans, it is very, very important that we pause after we impulsively ask ourselves a question and reframe it to the exact measurements of evidence, and not prejudice, before we go on to answering it.

We shall return to this dominant characteristic of Americans.

VI

A DOMINANT FACT OF THE LAST DECADE IN ITS MOST SIGNIFICANT PHASE

In the meantime let us pass on to what I consider the dominant fact of the last ten years . . . especially in what I consider its most significant phase.

Fact Number One

The more one thinks of the veritable mountain of facts, figures, names, dates, etc., of the last decade, the more inescapable is his conclusion that, in importance, Fact Number One of the last ten years is United Nations . . . and that the most significant phase of this Number One Fact is membership in United Nations of a Country³ that has never publicly renounced the atheism in which it was conceived and to which it was dedicated.

Let me repeat this lest anyone accept the fact and forget

³ By "Country," of course, is not meant Russia but the Communism that still holds the true Russians it has not liquidated in its atheistic bondage . . . the original distinction of Pope Pius XI which every first-class mind studying Communism and every first-hand observer studying Russia underlines and endorses. In this distinction, the "government" of Russia knows the seeds of its own destruction are contained and its total propaganda is directed at distracting mankind's attention from its point and smearing beyond recognition those who describe the perfect tyranny the politburo in the Kremlin practices on the "governed."

its significance. I repeat "the most significant phase of United Nations is membership in it of a Country that has never publicly renounced the atheism in which it was conceived and to which it was dedicated."

That is the forgotten truth of our day.

Our United States began with God and His Moral Law.

The U. S. S. R. began with atheism and dialectic materialism.

Lenin would do more than admit this. He would boast of it.

And his successors while not openly boasting are gloating over their having maneuvered United Nations into excluding from its official company the God Whom Lenin swore to outlaw.

Nazism, Fascism, Communism

Now to justify my judgment of the top-fact value of United Nations "as is," it is necessary to review some of the relatively minor facts of the last decade whose substance is responsible for U. N.; it is necessary to bring the three western totalitarianisms of our day into a single view and pass a summary, but by no means superficial, comparative judgment on their respective ambitions.

As totalitarianisms the three, *nazism*, *fascism* and *communism* had this in common: they represented attempts by States to devour and absorb the Church. Total absorption of Church by State was the very essence of their common but by no means identical ambitions.

For while each of the three eyed the Church as its first prey, they were different from one another in the medium upon which each State, the fascistic, the nazi and the communistic relied to devour and absorb the Church.

Fascism relied upon *nationality* . . . a perverse theory of Country.

Nazism relied upon *race* . . . a perverse theory of blood.

Communism relies upon *human nature* . . . a perverse theory of matter.

In Fascism, the Italians were told their *nation* was destined, like the Augustan Rome, to rule the world.

In Nazism, the Germans were told their *blood* would absorb all other blood, swelling Germany into the veritable dimensions of the mythological heroes of German opera.

Communism intends to "elevate" all human nature out of the "spiritual" sleep with which religion has drugged it . . . elevate it today to the animality . . . that dialectic materialism will sublimate tomorrow into the materiality that is the ideal and term of all reality.

Three Fatal Isms

First, it is obvious that these three theories of State and Government are capable of positively inhuman and not improbably satanic viciousness.

Secondly, it is obvious that one or other will be worse "here and now" depending upon circumstances. One might for the point compare fascism to malnutrition; communism to cancer intending to metastasize to every vital nation of earth, and nazism to a viper-bite. The three are equally fatal diseases, but the one demands more immediate attention in the case of here and now.

Thirdly, it is obvious that of the three in the last ten years nazism presented a more pressing and immediate emergency. Civilization had to gouge out of its tissue the entire snake-bite of nazism, if it were to survive. At least

this is a common opinion of statesmen with which I would be happy to cast a lay vote.

Communism Worst

But in the every-day order, i.e., in the order in which these three totalitarianisms are taken out of the here and now . . . isolated from circumstances and studied in their essence, I believe there is equally common opinion among responsible minds that communism is the worst of the three totalitarianisms for two reasons.

1. In the wider appeal of its degenerate philosophy which seeks converts not of any particular race or nation but from all races and all nations; and 2. in its more Satanic attitude to God. For Fascism *belittled* the Church it hoped to control: Nazism *substituted* a State-God for the Church's God: but Communism *ridicules* God and scoffs at His moral law.

So much in brief for the three totalitarianisms of our day, two of which have been disorganized and defeated and are now being exposed to the decay they so richly deserve.

The third? Atheistic Communism?

Not only has Communism survived its competitor totalitarianisms but by smearing its unwounded body with the blood of Real Russia (defending its very life in just battle) now poses as a very saviour. Instead of the disorganization that overtook nazism and fascism, communism has been able to reorganize with a new strength; instead of decay, atheism has been transfused with a new hope and continues with a new energy to

1. Drive no longer obliquely but head-on with its undemocratic principles:

2. Apply increasing pressures against the unwritten laws of all genuine society:

3. Capitalize on the confusion in the modern states which have abandoned the God of their fathers:

4. Work around the clock in a new program that would demoralize America by setting State against Church and corrupt world opinion against the Catholic Church by smearing its every preachment "political"; its every reference to fact "a distortion."

Briefly, nazism and fascism are in decline; communism is still growing.

Such are the origins in which, if not from which, United Nations was born.

It is a situation that sets off all kinds of impulsive questions in American minds.

U. N., like every other war baby, arouses our wonder about its parentage, its constitution, its destiny.

Impulsive Questions

Was U. N. born of the anti-fascism and anti-nazism that went to war and slew these two totalitarianisms?

Is U. N. destined to do no more than prevent the resurgence of race worship and nation worship, or is it marked by God to continue on to the destruction of all totalitarianisms, living and yet unborn?

Is U. N. a mere parliament of nations self-described as peace-loving, but not God-fearing?

Is its constitution an invitation to the brotherhood of man in the fatherhood of God?

Does U. N. hope to prevent World War III or simply to reshuffle its belligerents?

What provision does it make to prevent its supposed brotherhood from suddenly becoming . . . a great suckerhood (you must pardon the word, any lesser word would be short) for a surprise atomic attack about which former Supreme Court Justice Roberts spoke out in such ominous suggestion?

All these are impulsive questions . . . suggesting equally impulsive answers depending upon our prides and prejudices, our hopes and fears.

In the light of our sad American experience that follows our asking ourselves impulsive questions and giving them equally impulsive answers, we should withhold judgment until we have cast out all pride and prejudice, damped our hopes and fears and restudied the question in the light of evidence and evidence alone.

And here . . . the context, text and scope of *Divini Redemptoris* throws a light upon the situation "as is" that enables us to put aside wonder and suspicion and get down to evidence in formulating a very, very exact and accurate question. Pius XI's Encyclical against Atheistic Communism readies our mind to the precise problem that we must absolutely understand before we can attempt an answer.

The context of *Divini Redemptoris* points the Finger of God at Atheistic Communism . . . yesterday in Russia's government seat . . . today presumptuously sitting in the Councils of U. N.

Its text rewarns us that Atheistic Communism is just as "intrinsically wrong" today as it was ten years ago.

And its scope lays upon us all the serious obligation of asking (every American Catholic, it seems to me, has an

especially serious obligation in this regard) the U. N. set-up "as it," a question founded not on prejudice but upon the evidence and experience of the last ten years.

VII

THE DOMINANT QUESTION OF OUR DAY

The question . . . the dominant question of our day and possibly a predominant question of history . . . is this:

"WHAT PRINCIPLE OF UNITY UNITES UNITED NATIONS?"

More specifically, taking a hint from *Divini Redemptoris*, "Is it God and His Moral Law, stamping *all* totalitarianisms *including* atheistic communism as intrinsically wrong?"

"Is U. N. created in the image of the moral law whose Author is God?"

Cast in any other image, U. N. is the worst hypocrisy organized governments ever foisted on common men, on you and me and upon our children. It is cursed worse than Babel.

It will be far more useless than the League of Nations and a thousand times more costly.

Let us ever remember that God Who is the Author and Cause of all true Peace cannot be outlawed from a so-called Peace Table without drawing down upon its participant nations the same failure that has collapsed the building efforts of all men who thought they did not need God—from Babel to Versailles.

For, from now till Doomsday, there can be no complete and satisfactory meeting of minds whose ideologies have been clashing from eternity.

Nor can there be any real unity of "peacemakers" unless there is sincere unanimity among them on the necessity and meaning of the moral law.

United Nations is no exception. Its "peace-loving" protestations and its rounds of toasts to "one world" fool no one, except the fools who say in their hearts, "there is no God." It, too, unless it choose God and reject Atheistic Communism, will bury itself under its high-sounding rubble.

One needs no gift of prophecy to foresee this.

Ah, but U. N. is fashioned in the moral law, obedience to which we know alone guarantees individual, national, international peace. Then if it is . . . we are the proud witnesses of the greatest human achievement yet wrought, the *perfection* of that parliament of men we so proudly call these United States. No longer need we prate about eternal vigilance being the price of liberty . . . at last have nations pledged themselves to the moral law that *guarantees* the peace we won at war against totalitarianism. Mankind has at last arrived at the earthly millenium. ONE WORLD has at last found its ONE PEACE. So fashioned, U. N. would be indeed God-blessed!

"But wait" . . . cries a rereading of *Divine Redemptoris* ten years later.

Why? Why? Why?

Certain equally unimpulsive, equally exact, equally real questions are suggested by the evidence and experiences of the last ten years.

If U. N. is united by the moral law, and accepts God as the source of its international jurisdiction . . . then by what superior law does it presume to exempt itself from the basic prescription of its nations openly and jointly professing their belief in God?

Why is its Constitution in its studied and deliberate omission of the Divine Name patterned more closely on the Soviet Constitution than that of our United States?

By what moral authority does it presume to begin and continue and conclude its deliberations without prayer?

Why is its seal bare of any reference to His Providence?

Why is its oath not administered in the Name of His Justice?

Why is its money not to be stamped with Symbol of His Might?

Why will its flag be devoid of reference to His Guidance?

Why will its anthem be drained of all divine overtones?

Why will its service be "purged" of all token of His Charity?

Why must United Nations by its omission of God's Name and refusal to acknowledge His Moral Law as the Supreme Law of humanity and the Final Code for all international relationships enter into a so-called alliance for peace that amounts to a conspiracy of silence against moral law and spiritual order?

Why does it imitate in weak and unholy appeasement the Communistic rejection of God and His moral law by its deleting any reference to His necessary intervention if we are to have one peace in this one world?

Why does United Nations choose to isolate itself from Reality? ⁴

Is it because U. N. fears more the displeasure of Leninites than the anger of God?

⁴ The inspired Psalmist says it all very, very plainly. "*Much peace have they that love thy law, and to them there is no stumbling-block,*" Ps. 118, v. 165. It is law-loving peoples who enjoy peace. Not every government that says "Peace, Peace" constitutes thereby a peace-loving nation. To have fought *against* nazism, etc., is not enough. A country must be ready to live *for* God and His Moral Law to qualify as a "peace-loving" nation.

CONCLUSION (No God . . . No Peace)

Peace on earth, be it personal, or national, or international is essentially a *product* of man's co-operating with God. God will not impose it any more than man can create it. The key and formula for real peace is obedience to God's law. Real peace therefore is simply impossible without God and that is precisely why communism can never bring peace; why there just is no such thing as a peaceful communist; why Communist Russia as a "peace-loving" nation is a contradiction in terms and why there can never be international peace as long as communism remains at large. Unless U. N. sincerely believes in the moral law as the very heart of international justice, it were better it never were born.

Divini Redemptoris . . . ten years old . . . stands in the temple housing United Nations and ask its doctors . . . "What think ye of the Moral Law? Do you, not as individuals, but as representatives of 'peace-loving' nations think that the God of the Moral Law can be compromised?" "Yes or No."

Divini Redemptoris in this challenge to atheistic communism answers a most deliberate and final "No, God and His Moral Law can never be compromised."

Or in the complementary answer of Pope Pius XI's successor:

"Because without God or away from God, no true, solid, and secure unity can exist among men."

And the answer of United Nations to the question of "What principle of unity unites United Nations?"

No man living knows!

