

Dear Friend,

In mid the nineteenth century, Lord Acton one of the greatest Roman Catholic historians of described the Papacy as “the fiend skulking behind the Crucifix.”¹ Acton, famous for his saying, “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely,” clearly pinpointed Papal Rome as the academic and legal cause of the more than six hundred years of the Inquisition and other atrocities such as the St. Bartholomew’s Massacre, which began in Paris August 24 1572, and spread throughout France. Quiet, calculated, and premeditated legal agreements between Papal Rome made these horrors of history possible. In these dreadful centuries the Roman Catholic Church proclaimed that salvation was only by means of her sacramental system, and therefore of necessity, she needed a legally engineered force to silence the true Gospel. Her apostasy from the Gospel has not changed in the 193 years since the Inquisition as the Vatican Council II and the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994) clearly show.

The article below is intended to stimulate an interest in history so as not to repeat its misery and to inform believers of the calm deliberate and designed civil agreements taking place between the Vatican and most nations in our own day. *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”* (James 1:5)

Yours in the Lord’ grace and truth,
Richard Bennett

Vatican Prepares to Control Through Civil Law

“Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

By Richard Bennett

The Earth Charter and the United Religions Initiative are two instrumental pieces in the international networking of movements across the world that are leading to a one world religion. Because of the Vatican’s worldwide authority through civil law and the number of Roman Catholic priests, nuns, and influential persons engaged in these movements (official sources remaining aloof), Bible believers need an informed perspective on where events are leading.

The Earth Charter

After eight years of planning, which has involved more than 25 global leaders and 100,000 people in environment, business, politics, religion, and education in 51 countries, the Earth Charter was formalized on March 15, 2000.² It is a comprehensive document of global ethics and a political blueprint for world government. The Earth Charter process was initiated by a former Prime Minister of The Netherlands and was carried out under the direction of Mikhail Gorbachev and Maurice Strong, the Chairman of the Earth Council. The principles of the Earth Charter include built in global governance as defined by the United Nations (UN) Commission on Global Governance (1995) and other UN commissions. Something of the desire for legal power is seen in one of its statements, “In order to build a sustainable global community, the nations of the world must renew their commitment to the United Nations, fulfill their obligations under existing international agreements, and support the implementation of Earth Charter

¹ Acton, *Correspondence*, 55; as quoted in Himmelfarb, *Lord Acton*, p. 151

² The Earth Charter can be read on the Internet at <http://www.earthcharter.org/draft/charter.htm>

principles with an international legally binding instrument on environment and development.”³

United Religions Initiative. (URI)

The philosophy behind the Earth Charter is fully incorporated into the United Religions Initiative (URI).⁴ URI is designed to evolve into a United Nations for Religions, with the United Religions Charter being signed on June 26, 2000, three months after the Earth Charter. URI to date has held three summit conferences, with the June 2000 conference marking the birth of a truly global organization that stands as a mother ready to embrace into her bosom all the religions of the world. While the whole emphasis is “spiritual” it is quite interesting that the desire for the same legal power club is as evident in the documents of URI as it is in the Earth Charter. For example, according to the Preamble to the Charter, URI plans a Worldwide Movement “...to support freedom of religion and spiritual expression, and the rights of all individuals and peoples **as set forth in international law.**”

Power through Civil Law

Control of civil law and law among European nations is what the Catholic Church thrived on through the Dark and the Middle Ages. This control was the primary underpinning of her power during the six hundred years of the Inquisition and in the growth of her religious power system generally throughout the centuries. Her ability to grow in strength and numbers is always in proportion to her legal agreements with any nation. In the nations where she has legal concordats with the civil governments, she succeeds both in holding down the Gospel and in simultaneously furthering her position as keeper of the ubiquitous, highly sensuous, and most effective sacramental system known to modern man. The latent control mechanisms in international law that can be seen in The Earth Charter and in URI are of precisely the kind that enables Catholicism to thrive. In time past it was through legal agreements that Rome brought kings and princes to heel. Without the Gospel, Catholics through their fear of death were all their lifetime subject to her bondage, for RCC teaching both then and now is that there is no salvation outside the Church. Woe to the ruler who resisted the papal will! Subjects could be, were, and can still be released from their oaths of allegiance; whole states could be, and were placed under interdict. Since early in the 20th century under Pius XII, however, the legal strategy has become even more autocratic.

Power Refined in Concordats

A “concordat” is an international contract, which legally binds the nation involved, and the Vatican. It guarantees the Roman Catholic Church and Catholics the right of freedom of religion and worship. A concordat also secures rights such as that of defining doctrine, establishing Roman Catholic education, negotiating laws regarding property, appointing bishops, and recognizing Roman Catholic law regarding marriage and annulment. Such legal issues are agreed on in civil law between the “Holy See” (as she in her position as a sovereign state is legally called) and the other nation.

Prior to 1989, the Holy See signed international agreements primarily with European and Latin American countries. Vatican control can be seen very clearly in those nations where concordats have long been established as, for example, in Germany under the extant concordat

³ Bolding in any quotation indicates emphasis added in this report.

⁴ URI website is: <http://www.united-religions.org>

worked out between under Pius XII and Hitler. The Vatican's desire to maintain civil relations with other nations is now greater than ever. From 1950 to 1999, 128 concordats were signed between Rome and various states. In the course of nine years, 43 concordats were signed between the Holy See and other nations. Even nations of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa are entering juridical agreements with Rome. Moreover, the Church of Rome has much influence in national and international laws, particularly in the nations in which she has papal nuncios as ambassadors. At present she maintains diplomatic relations with 172 countries at embassy level. According to the *Catholic Almanac*, papal representatives "receive from the Roman Pontiff the charge of representing him in a fixed way in the various nations or regions of the world." "An apostolic nuncio has the diplomatic rank of ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary. Traditionally, because the diplomatic service of the Holy See has the longest uninterrupted history in the world, a nuncio has precedence among diplomats in the country to which he is accredited and serves as dean of the diplomatic corps on state occasions."⁵

The Vatican, desiring to maintain official diplomatic intercourse with all nations, woos Libya, all the while maintaining relations with Israel. She has had uninterrupted relations with Cuba while having great difficulties with China, Korea, and Vietnam. Some Islamic countries have failed as yet to sign agreements with the Holy See, although some of their reluctance now may be swept aside with the successful outreach to Islam through the Pope's latest Damascus trip during which he donned white cloth slippers to enter a Muslim sanctuary. Through her many Roman Catholic representatives in government, her own direct influence as a civil power, and in particular through her concordats, Rome is now able to influence substantially civil rulers and civil policy in many nations.⁶ Should she gain control of the international criminal court, she would be again fulfilling the Scripture, "*And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*"⁷

Effective legal structures

To establish legal structures effective to her purposes is the goal of Rome. Understanding this, the remarks of Archbishop Martino, Rome's permanent observer to the United Nations, bear all the more weight, "As Pope John Paul has stated, 'Within the international community the Holy See supports every effort to establish effective juridical structures....'"⁸ It can be argued that the Roman system has no official position in URI and other like organizations. This is true, but the Church of Rome has always worked in such a way so as technically to keep her hands clean while having her laws and mindset implemented by others, particularly civil power. This is how she operated in the Dark and Middle Ages, particularly during the Inquisition when the civil powers in the name of civil law prosecuted millions under her murderous church law. The structure of the Roman system makes her capable not only of gaining a predominant position but also capable of maintaining the upper hand so that in fact "Holy Mother" takes all into herself. For example, "Holy Mother Church" is only one of 154 sovereign states participating in the International Criminal Court; yet she is much more. Her

⁵ *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Almanac*, 2001, p. 277.

⁶ See *Ecclesiastical Megalomania: The Economic and Political Thought of the Roman Catholic Church* by John W. Robbins (USA: The Trinity Foundation, 1999) for in depth study. <http://www.trinityfoundation.org>

⁷ Revelation 17:18.

⁸ *Catholic International* August, 1998, Vol. 9, No. 8, p. 350.

citizenry, whose allegiance is first to the Roman Catholic Church⁹, dwells within each of these nations. Many of her citizens have access to positions in the ruling structure of that nation where, as Roman Catholics, they are enjoined by the Roman Catholic Church to use their influence and position to bring that nation into line with papal desires on any issue. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) is very clear on the issue,

#899 The initiative of lay Christians is necessary especially when the matter involves discovering or inventing the means for permeating social, political, and economic realities with the demands of Christian [i.e., Roman Catholic] doctrine and life. This initiative is a normal element of the life of the Church: Lay believers are in the front line of Church life; for them the Church is the animating principle of human society. Therefore, they in particular ought to have an ever clearer consciousness not only of belonging to the Church, but of being the Church, that is to say, the community of the faithful on earth **under the leadership of the Pope**....

Due to the totalitarian nature of the Roman Catholic Church, however, none of the non Catholic citizens of other nations have positions of power within her ruling structure. Thus, although the Holy See has formal diplomatic ties with the various states, Catholic power can be brought to bear covertly against that nation which refuses to defer to her views, particularly those regarding matters of faith and morals. So it is that such power over individuals, held in place by concordats that legally guarantee the teaching, for example, of Can. 752, 333, and #882 of the *Catechism* (see Footnote 8), eventually can hinder the freedom of religion and worship of those the Holy See deems to be false churches.

“Absolute power corrupts absolutely”

The Emperor Justinian in the sixth century was the main architect who established the foundation for Rome’s ability to impose external unity.¹⁰ Moreover, “During the ninth century, there was a concerted effort to renew society and centralize Western civilization. It is usually called the Carolingian Reform after its initiator, Charlemagne, who was crowned Roman Emperor by the pope on the feast day of Christmas in the year 800. Its intention was to stabilize the structures of Christendom, and one of its chief tools was reliance on church law.”¹¹ The famous Hildebrand Pope Gregory VII nailed down the legal power base of papal canon law so that it became incorporated into Western civilization in the legal system of nations in the eleventh century. All this made possible the Inquisition from 1203 A.D. (in person of Pope Innocent III) until its dissolution in Spain and Portugal in 1808. The Vatican’s persecution of believers they deemed

⁹ Can. 752 “Although not an assent of faith, a religious submission of the intellect and will must be given to a doctrine which the Supreme Pontiff or the college of bishops declares concerning faith or morals when they exercise the authentic magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim it by definitive act; therefore, the Christian faithful are to take care to avoid those things which do not agree with it.” Can. 333, Sec. 3 “No appeal or recourse is permitted against a sentence or decree of the Roman Pontiff.” *Code of Canon Law*, Latin Eng. ed., New English Tr. (Wash. DC 20064: Canon Law Society of America, 1988) #882 “...the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1994). Also, #937 and elsewhere.

¹⁰ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Hagerstown, MD 21740: Review and Herald, 1950) Vol. I, pp. 505, 506.

¹¹*The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green, Donald E. Heintschel, eds. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) p. 2.

heretics, was done by legal civil means. It involved incarceration, confiscation of property, torture, internment without trial, and death. The present Pope, by means of the decree on infallibility of Vatican Council I, the 1917 adoption of the *Code of Canon Law*, and the revision of the *Code* under his authority in 1983, is able to work no less autocratically than Pope Pius XII¹². Although kept in bounds presently by other forces, papal power now has become so consolidated that it is able to surpass what Hildebrand Pope Gregory VII did in his day. Then the known world was much smaller and the only international system was Rome herself and the Holy Roman Empire. Now the stage is set for a one world government. Perplexingly, many Christians simply want to escape. While some Christians are well informed and aware of the seriousness of the present move to a world religion, nonetheless, most of what is published falls in within the norms of political correctness in which Roman Catholicism is not mentioned. Many present day Evangelicals seem totally ignorant of the laws still standing in the Roman Catholic dogma. For example the statement, “The Church is to be separated from the state, and the state from the Church.” was condemned as an error by “His Holiness, our Lord Pope Pius XI” and still is.¹³ The extent to which Rome claims a right to judge and impose chastening has not changed since the days of the Inquisition. In present day canon law she states, Canon 1405 (Sect.1) “It is the right of the Roman Pontiff himself alone to judge in cases mentioned in Can. 1401: 1. those who hold the highest civil office in a state....” Not for nothing, then, is the interest with which the Church of Rome involves herself in promoting the International Criminal Court and like measures.

The power structure behind globalization

The structure of the Roman Catholic Church is a totalitarian hierarchy. It must never be forgotten that the Roman Papacy is an absolute, unlimited, tyrannical monarchy, a worldly, secular government. It has its territorial dominions; it had its court, ambassadors, detective force, legislature, jurisprudence, advocates, prison, taxes, bank, concordats, ambitious plans and policy, is more widely spread than any secular nation and entrenched in many countries. Nonetheless, the Roman Catholic Church is also very different from other secular powers. Her spiritual commerce goes hand in hand with her civil power, claiming infallibility and international recognition.¹⁴ Ignaz von Dollinger, a leading Roman Catholic historian in Germany, warned the world in his own day regarding the tremendous power of the Roman Pontiff,

“The Pope’s authority is unlimited, incalculable; it can strike, as Innocent III says, wherever sin is; it can punish every one; it allows no appeal and is itself Sovereign Caprice; for the Pope carries, according to the expression of Boniface VIII, all rights in the Shrine of his breast. As he has now become infallible, he can by the use of the little word, “orbi,” (which means that he turns himself round to the whole Church) **make every rule, every doctrine, every demand, into a certain and incontestable article of Faith.** No right can stand against him, no personal or corporate liberty; or as the [Roman Catholic] Canonists put it —“The tribunal of God and of the pope is one and the same.”¹⁵

¹² John Cornwell, *Hitler’s Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (NY 10014: Viking, 1999) pp. 348, 361, 371.

¹³ *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, Tr. By Roy J. Deferrari from the Thirtieth Edition of Henry Denzinger’s *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, revised by Karl Rahner, S. J., published in 1954 by Herder & Co, Frieburg (St. Louis 2, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1957) # 1755 title “His Holiness, our Lord Pope Pius XI”, p. 435.

¹⁴ Revelation 18:3.

Wisdom from God needed (James 1:5)

The true believer must look to the Written Word of the Infinite All Holy, Unchangeable, All-Powerful, All Knowing, and All Wise God. The finger of God that clearly gives the Ten Commandments also gives a clear picture of the Bride of the Lamb, the true church, and a clear picture of the apostate church. Consistently in the words of Christ Jesus and of the Apostles Paul and Peter, the contrast between the true church and the apostate church is that those of the true church are few in number, those of the apostate church many. The true church is described in Scripture as the *“a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars”*¹⁶ For those who know the history of the true church, Revelation 12: 6 is an apt summary, *“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.”* The apostate church is the woman who is seated upon the beast reigning “over” peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. The Scripture meticulously portrays the little flock, overcome, worn out, yet ever faithful while of the woman seated on the beast it says, *“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls.”*¹⁷ Many of those who are the Bride of the Lamb have been slain by the woman drunken by the blood of the saints as the history of the Inquisition shows. The blood of the martyred saints overcame the secular Roman Empire. In contrast, Papal Rome overcame the saints, as Scripture had foretold. Likewise as stated she was to become *“drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”*¹⁸ No other kingdom or power has drunken so deeply of this blood as has “The Holy See”. Thus, as streams may be traced to the fountain, and rays of light to the sun, so may these prophecies be traced to the Papacy, and applied to it alone. *“And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.”*¹⁹ Is the Lord warning His flock to be prepared as were the Vaudois, Waldenses, Lollards, Bohemians and the faithful believers throughout the long Inquisition and Counter Reformation? The Lord’s true and righteous judgment of the Great Whore will finally come as He foretold.²⁰ In the meantime, His power is seen as His Gospel is boldly proclaim, every individual who is saved *“being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”*²¹ The Lord calls His flock to be wise, understanding both history and the times in which they live. *“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*²² ♦

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¹⁵ Ignaz von Dollinger, “A Letter Addressed to the Archbishop of Munich” 1871; as quoted in MacDougall, *The Acton Newman Relations* (Fordham University Press) pp. 119,120.

¹⁶ Revelation 12:1.

¹⁷ Revelation 17: 4.

¹⁸ Revelation 17:6.

¹⁹ Revelation 17:9.

²⁰ Revelation 19:2.

²¹ Romans 3:24.

²² Matthew 10:28.