

Overman

by Richard Moore

Mankind's intelligence is the earth's curse.
How did he get that out-sized, whopper brain,
who'd swung breezing through trees? Walking upright
did it, and running after animals.
Wearing them out, his brain got overheated,

synapses blew. He needed extra brain
to supply spare parts, keep from going gaga;
and now the damn things won't stop operating.
Look! They've dreamt up civilizations, arts
and sciences, gone blasting to the moon,

made mushroom clouds, generate greenhouse gasses,
and worst of all, write stupid poems about it.
Hateful big brains create a taste for grandeur.
The victim uses *words*, loosens from *things*,
cogitates, dreams up horrors for himself

and everyone. God, is there no escape?
Listen: in Africa, the home of all the
biodiversity that produced *him*,
there's been a new species developing,
men so intelligent, they give up thinking,

tuned to the lost harmonies of the world,
the things they touch, the dishes they are washing,
the feelings in their bones, tastes in their mouths,
the casual engagements of their fingers.
That way, *things* master *them*, discover them.

So more and more they'll thrive, dominate even.
Then what? Campaigns to weed them out? No doubt.
How can such weeding ever be complete?
What if the new men move among us now,
dying for life that blooms for us unnoticed?

by Philip Jenkins

FDR: The Moral Reckoning

Dear Editor:

Attached please find the proposal for my latest book, *Franklin Roosevelt: The Antichrist Unmasked*. While I know some people will dismiss my thesis as foolish (or even “crazy”), the wave of recent books published by major presses like yours gives me reason to hope that the truth can at last be told.

I am especially optimistic because of the books published in the last three or four years about the Roman Catholic Church and the holocaust, by such authors as John Cornwell, James Carroll, Garry Wills, and especially Daniel J. Goldhagen. As you are aware, these books argue that Pope Pius XII was a drooling antisemite and a more-or-less overt Nazi who never criticized Hitler and never did a thing to help his Jewish victims. Though each of these writers sometimes goes off the deep end, Dr. Goldhagen is in a category by himself, most visibly in his recent book, *A Moral Reckoning: The Role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and Its Unfulfilled Duty of Repair*. He asserts that only the “many sleights of hand” engaged in by “the defenders of the church” have prevented a full exposure of “the Catholic role in the slaughter of the Jews.” In the *New Republic* last year, Goldhagen even claimed that

Any evaluation of the Catholic Church as a moral institution must centrally take into account that in effect the Church was serving—because not to choose is to choose—the closest human analogue to the Antichrist. I mean Hitler; and that it tacitly and sometimes materially aided him in mass murder.

This passage finally gave me the courage to write my exposé. Based on far stronger arguments than Dr. Goldhagen employs to prove the Antichrist status of Pope Pius, I can make no less apocalyptic claims about Franklin D. Roosevelt.

This comparison is really irrefutable. For one thing, for all the recent best-sellers about Pope Pius, there actually is next to no evidence against him. Throughout the 1930's, Pius and the Vatican abused

Nazism publicly in terms that we more often associate with Winston Churchill. As Vatican secretary of state in 1937, Pius must have had a role in drafting the strongly anti-Hitler encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*. At enormous risk to individual Catholics, copies of this work were smuggled into Germany to be read in churches, to the fury of the Nazi regime. This was silence? For any historian accustomed to the mealy-mouthed attitudes of the Western democracies in the 1930's, Pius must emerge as a hero. During the war years, the Vatican saved hundreds of thousands of Jewish lives, a contribution repeatedly praised by highly placed Jewish and Israeli leaders. By 1943, the Nazis were planning to kidnap Pius, probably intending that he should be “shot while trying to escape.”

All of which brings me neatly to Franklin D. Roosevelt. One of the points made by all of Pius's critics is that, in 1933, he was chiefly responsible for organizing the Vatican's concordat with the new Nazi regime, a pact that James Carroll terms “Nazi-legitimizing.” As we have seen, though, this concordat did not prevent the Vatican from doing all it could to derail Nazi plans. Now contrast what happened when, in the same year, FDR established diplomatic relations with Stalin's Soviet Union, an event that supposedly proved “the desire of both countries for the peace and for the strengthening of the peaceful purpose of the civilized world.” Unlike Pius's disenchantment with Hitler, FDR never lost his affection for Stalin. Excellent U.S.-Soviet relations survived the terror-famines of the early 1930's as well as the purges of later years, which reached their height of paranoid insanity during 1937. And make no mistake: The U.S. government knew very well what was happening, though it said nothing at the time.

The contrasts with Pius's behavior are overwhelming. No American emissaries to Russia smuggled into the country Rooseveltian declarations asserting “burning concern” about the purges or their victims. American politicians did nothing to help political dissidents and ethnic or religious groups under threat of persecution or worse from the Soviet regime. No American officials raised a finger when



churches and synagogues were extirpated across most of the Soviet territory. American bigwigs trotted loyally through what were portrayed as typical Soviet prison camps but were, in fact, stage sets designed to hide the horrors of the *Gulag* system. During the decade after 1935, even the most blatant revelations of Soviet espionage and dirty tricks on American soil received from FDR nothing stronger than a mild remonstrance, using the tone of “boys will be boys.” The administration's romantic fawning on Uncle Joe reached unprecedented heights during the war years.

Putting these facts together, I think I can make the following statement without fear of contradiction: Any evaluation of the U.S. government as a moral institution must centrally take into account that, in effect, the United States was serving—because not to choose is to choose—the closest human analogue to the Antichrist (I mean Stalin) and that it tacitly, and sometimes materially, aided him in mass murder. Put more simply, Franklin D. Roosevelt was the servant of Satan, and the time has come for the United States to confront its unfulfilled duty of repair (QED).

Now, I realize that most Americans will regard this conclusion as hysterical nonsense, a defamation of a great national leader. But if the heroic Pius XII is subject to such constant vilification, simple consistency demands that equal or greater calumny be heaped on his American contemporaries, who were far more morally compromised in the face of totalitarianism and genocide.

Please send contract and substantial advance by return mail.

Yours very sincerely,

Philip Jenkins · c