

**SHAUN
WILLCOCK**

JESUIT



HOLLYWOOD

How the Papacy and its Jesuits controlled Hollywood for decades – and have continued to influence it ever since

HOLLYWOOD

A photograph of the Hollywood sign on a hillside. The sign is white and stands out against the green and brown vegetation of the hill. In the background, there are several communication towers and antennas on the ridge. The foreground shows some residential buildings and trees.

First published in 2015 for Bible Based Ministries
by New Voices Publishing
Cape Town, South Africa
www.newvoices.co.za

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ISBN-PRINT: 987-0-620-66718-0
ISBN-EBOOK: 978-0-620-66719-7



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INTRODUCTION

This is a book about the influence of the Roman Catholic institution over Hollywood during its so-called “Golden Age”, then the waning of that influence, and the frequently open hostility towards Roman Catholicism, in the post-“Golden Age” period. The purpose of this book is to provide evidence of the way in which the Roman Catholic institution pursues its never-ending objective of conquering the world, in particular what could be called the “Protestant world”, by seeking to harness and make use of the most powerful entertainment medium the world has ever known: the movie industry.

This is a battlefield which almost no one recognises as such. The Papacy works through politics; through religion; through international finance; and many other channels to achieve its objective. But Hollywood? Moviegoers have no idea, as they sit munching their popcorn and viewing the films they love so much, that they are being deliberately *indoctrinated*, subtly, slowly, via the very movies they naively think they are watching solely for entertainment. And this indoctrination is virtually as old as Hollywood itself. Their beliefs, morals, worldviews, are all being shifted, changed, altered; and this is being done gradually, film by film, year by year, decade by decade, without them being aware of it. The morality and religious thought of the western world is nothing like it was prior to the advent of the movies. The harm that has been done, and is being done continuously, by the movie industry can never be fully calculated. But it is beyond all doubt that the movies have played one of the greatest roles of all in the destruction of the morals of the West, and the destruction of the Protestantism of the West as well.

This book provides evidence of how the world’s most powerful religio-political institution, falsely calling itself a “church”, has used Hollywood to promote its diabolical agenda.

During what is (wrongly so, from a moral perspective) known as the “Golden Age” of Hollywood, the American film industry was

extremely pro-Roman Catholic, and indeed under Jesuit domination. Rome desired to use the immense influence of movies to promote Roman Catholicism among the masses. And it was very successful at it. It is correct to say, as one researcher did, that the Roman Catholic institution was “the most successful pressure group in the history of the movies”.¹

But there was another sinister influence in Hollywood as well: Communism. And in the process of time this influence increased and began to displace the Roman Catholic influence in Hollywood, turning the giant movie industry into far more of a pro-Communist, and often vehemently anti-Roman Catholic force.

But it would be a mistake to assume that the mighty Roman Catholic institution just gave up! Throughout the centuries, Rome has advanced, retreated, advanced again. It suffers setbacks from time to time, but never for too long. It always bounces back. It nibbles away, unseen, at its enemies’ vitals, and step by step it works to regain any ground it lost. In Hollywood, the Jesuits deliberately changed tactics and changed sides, and began to support what they had once fought against, much to the consternation and confusion of those Roman Catholics who were of the anti-Communist generation of an earlier period in Roman Catholicism. It can be confusing to anyone trying to follow the subtle, diabolically cunning Jesuit tactics; but unless one grasps what was going on, one can never understand the massive shift that occurred in Hollywood, and also within the “Church” of Rome’s attitude to it.

The situation today is that there are two immensely powerful, competing forces vying for dominance over Hollywood: Communism, often dominated by Jewish Communists, presently ascendant, and Roman Catholicism, once the more powerful of the two in Hollywood but presently in a somewhat weaker position. How long this state of affairs will continue is impossible to say. But we can be certain the Vatican is doing all in its power to once again triumph in Hollywood.

It will become clear to the reader of this book that we do not support Roman Catholic censorship of the movies, even though for a long time this censorship made most of the movies more “moral” than they would otherwise have been. But let it be also clearly understood: just because

we do not support Roman Catholic censorship of movies being forced upon everyone in society, this does *not* mean we support immoral movies! We do not condone any movies that portray sin in a favourable light. We merely refer to these movies by way of illustrating what has occurred in Hollywood through the decades.

There is no excuse for any true Christian to watch sinful movies. Apart from those immoral films which he saw before his conversion, the author did not view the films mentioned in this book. He simply conducted extensive research into them. There is a belief abroad in modern times which goes something like this: “How can you criticise what you have not seen?” But this is false. One does not have to go to a brothel to understand what goes on there, and likewise one does not have to actually view an immoral movie in order to know that it is so, for it is a relatively simple matter to obtain all the necessary information about it from those who made the movie, acted in it, etc. There is something fundamentally wrong with professing Christians becoming film reviewers, going to see every kind of immoral movie so that they can tell other professing Christians not to do so! “I have watched it carefully, and I am here to tell you that it is not a movie which Christians should be watching.” This is hypocritical in the extreme. If a film is immoral, and should be shunned by Christians, then it should be shunned by “Christian reviewers” as well.² They do not have special grace to resist the temptations they claim to be protecting others from! They do not occupy some special plane above other men. The Bible is clear: “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away” (Prov. 4:14,15).



CHAPTER ONE

THE JESUIT USE OF THE DRAMATIC ARTS

To properly understand the Jesuit use of the dramatic arts, one must also understand the Jesuits themselves: who they are, and what their purpose is. Although this is a huge subject in itself, one of this author's previous books is entitled, *The Jesuits: the Secret Army of the Papacy*,³ which is a concise study of these very issues; and what follows at the beginning of this chapter is taken from that book, to provide the reader with some vital information about the Jesuits and their goals. This information is then followed by the study of their use of the dramatic arts.

The Origin of the Jesuits

The Jesuit Order originated with Ignatius de Loyola, born in 1491, a Spanish basque who became a fanatical Romanist after living a debauched life as a soldier, claiming to have had visions of God and of Mary. He eventually wrote *The Spiritual Exercises*, which was to become the Jesuits' textbook.

He founded the so-called "Society of Jesus" in 1534, with a small band of friends. The Roman pope, Paul III, issued a bull approving (and thus *officially* "founding") the Jesuits as a religious order of the Roman Catholic "Church". But here a most important fact must be carefully noted, for it throws such light on the real nature of the Society: Loyola established the Society *before* it received papal approval! The little band of men who made up the Society at its inception in 1534 vowed to obey *Loyola*, as the general of the organisation, before they ever went to the pope! It was not Loyola's original intention to submit his Society to the pope, but only to himself as its general. He had ambitions of his own. Only if he found it absolutely necessary did Loyola intend to seek papal approval for the Society.

Ever since its founding, then, the Society has been totally dedicated, first and foremost, *not* to the pope, but to the Jesuit General. The

Jesuits are a law unto themselves. While outwardly acknowledging the authority of the pope of Rome, their real allegiance is to the Jesuit general. All orders come from the general; even the pope's instructions are only passed on if the general sees fit. It is not surprising that the Jesuit general came to be known as the "black pope".⁴

Naturally enough, when Loyola approached Paul III, the latter had strong reservations. It was not difficult to discern that men swearing absolute obedience to their general would be independent of the Papacy and thus dangerous to it, even though they professed to be submissive to it. Loyola cunningly suggested that the Jesuits also take a vow of obedience to the pope, to go wherever he should send them; and Paul III agreed to this, and sanctioned the Society.⁵ Yet, in practice, the Jesuits have never taken any notice of this vow. The pope is only obeyed when it suits them.

Their Purpose

What is the purpose of the Jesuit Order? Why does it exist?

It is quite simple: the Jesuits seek to convert the world to Roman Catholicism.⁶ And in order to achieve this goal, they have not hesitated to use every means, both fair and foul – especially foul. They have not hesitated to lie, cheat, commit murder, or use revolution, if need be, to further their aims. At the very top of their priorities has always been the destruction of Protestantism. For the *spiritual* conflict must be discerned in all this: Satan's ages-long war on the Church of the living God. For centuries, Rome has been the centre of Satan's assault on the saints of God (Rev. 13:7; 17:1-6; 18:24; Dan. 7:25). Through the Inquisition and other means, the devil sought to wipe out the Church of Christ. Then, with the formation of the Jesuit Order in the sixteenth century, a new and deadly weapon was created to be used against biblical Christianity.

Their Indoctrination

The Spiritual Exercises, and the "Constitutions" of the Order, are used in the preparation of Jesuit recruits for their task.

The *Spiritual Exercises* work on the imagination of the candidate. Various biblical scenes are "relived" in front of him, beautiful ones alternating with frightening ones. His sighs, inhalings, breathing, and

periods of silence are all noted down. After a number of weeks of this, he is ready for indoctrination.⁷

Obedience is absolutely vital to the Jesuit Order. Every Jesuit must be in total obedience to his superior, obeying him without question. In the Constitutions of the Order, it is repeated some 500 times that the Jesuit must see in the general, not a fallible man, but Christ himself! This was said by a professor of Roman Catholic theology.⁸ In the words of Ignatius: “We must see black as white, if the Church says so.”

The Jesuit probationer is required by the Constitutions to be as a corpse, able to be moved in any direction; striving to acquire perfect resignation and denial of his own will and judgment.⁹ According to the Constitutions the Jesuit may even *sin*, if the superior commands it – for sin will not be sin in such a case!¹⁰ In the “Society of Jesus”, there is a greater authority than the pope, and a greater authority (as far as the Jesuits are concerned) than God Himself – and that is the general. For what God has declared to be sin, the general can declare to be no sin. The Jesuits readily dispense with the laws of God, if it suits them. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (Isa. 5:20).

It is precisely this type of abominable doctrine that has enabled the Jesuits to commit murders, depose kings, destroy governments, without any fear of divine punishment. “The end justifies the means”, is a fundamental, albeit unwritten, rule of the Jesuit Order.¹¹

Never has a more fanatical and powerful Society existed upon the earth.

The Jesuits wasted no time, after the pope had approved of the Order, in involving themselves in *everything*: the education of the young, hearing of confessions, foreign missions, preaching. They went about their work with fanatical zeal.

Through education, they aimed to control the future leaders of society. They particularly sought to gain control of the education of the children of political leaders and other influential people in the upper classes. Through their leniency in the confessional they slithered into the affections of the wealthy and powerful. Through foreign missions, they sought to convert the world to Roman Catholicism.

Through preaching, they championed papal authority and other Roman Catholic doctrines, thereby strengthening the Papacy at a time when it was reeling from the devastating effects of the Reformation. This was known as the Counter-Reformation. The Council of Trent, in the 1540s, was Rome's answer to the Reformation – and it was dominated by the Jesuits.

And – there was their use of the dramatic arts.

Jesuit Use of Theatre in Europe to Promote Roman Catholicism

Almost from the inception of the Jesuit Order in the sixteenth century, Jesuits were deeply involved in the theatre; and then once it was invented centuries later, in the movie industry as well. They knew that they could use “entertainment” to influence minds and change society itself – and they did. In fact, “The Jesuit stage played an important part in the evolution of the theatre, owing especially to the great prominence given to stage management and production.”¹² And by the mid-twentieth century it could be said, truthfully: “we meet obvious traces of Jesuit influence in our present-day culture.... many traces of Jesuitic influence also remain in the theatre”.¹³ These traces must be brought to light.

As early as 1565 – that is, less than three decades after their founding – Jesuits were writing and producing plays to help their students with their diction, gestures, and carriage.¹⁴ In the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Order, much use was made of drama, so as to impress upon the Jesuit the truths which Ignatius was seeking to convey to all his followers. He desired for the imagination to be as much under his control as all other faculties of the student Jesuit, and he knew that drama could be powerfully utilised for this purpose.¹⁵

The Jesuits saw the theatre as having a very great purpose in their schemes: to promote Jesuit religious propaganda to the masses! For in sixteenth-century Europe the theatre had begun to break free, to some extent, from what it had been up until then: a tool of the Roman Catholic religion. Roman Catholic religious passion plays and similar-themed theatrical productions were all that the masses had known. But things were changing, especially as stage actors from England began to arrive

in Roman Catholic Europe to perform the plays of Shakespeare, and as the crude performances of German strolling players exposed Roman Catholics to the idea that theatrical performances could be used for purposes other than the religion of Rome. In addition, Martin Luther had started to use theatre to promote Lutheranism, and a decidedly anti-Papist drama school was developing in Lutheran Germany. The stage was therefore being increasingly used for both secular and Lutheran purposes. These developments were very dangerous for Rome, which the newly-formed Jesuit Order vowed to fight with all its might. What was needed, they believed, was a “theatrical Counter-Reformation”.¹⁶ They had to establish Roman Catholic stage drama which would counter the anti-Papist effects of the theatre. They believed what was needed was to give the people quality stage productions that would outshine anything produced by the Protestants or the profane. And so, “From the very beginning, the Jesuits sought to fascinate the public with brilliant settings, scenic effects and complicated technical apparatus, and by these means to entice them from the wandering troupes of actors and the Protestant school theatres”.¹⁷

Most especially, they knew, such stage productions had to appeal to the higher, ruling classes: the king, the nobility, the leading families of each nation. Accordingly they lost no time in establishing what they needed. And indeed, their dramas were noted for their special effects and set designs, which, for that time, were cutting-edge and very intricate. They made much use of dance as well, with ballet masters going from one Jesuit school to another. It was a deliberate strategy to make their own theatre and ballet productions more extravagant than the secular ones, so as to influence people of rank.¹⁸

And it worked! It worked spectacularly. “Everywhere, large audiences attended the Jesuits’ performances. In Vienna, the number of spectators amounted to as many as three thousand, while, in 1737 at Hildesheim, the city police had to be called in to keep back the public. The effect of the plays which were staged was sometimes remarkable. In Munich once, fourteen important members of the Bavarian court withdrew from public life in order to practice devotional exercises, so strongly were they impressed by the Jesuit play, *Cenodoxus*.”¹⁹ This was precisely what the Jesuits wanted; and they continued to want it right down into modern times, with the invention of film.

By the mid-seventeenth century, there were 300 Jesuit colleges in Europe, putting out quality dramas for the purpose of promoting Roman Catholicism!²⁰

Jesuit Use of Theatre in Their Mission Work

The Jesuits were not content with making use of their theatre productions in Roman Catholic Europe. They were zealous, indeed fanatical missionaries, spanning out across the earth to work tirelessly for the great goal of converting the whole world to Roman Catholicism. And they swiftly realised the immense advantages of using plays to attract audiences and impress them with the teachings and practices of Romanism on the mission fields. The power of a visual presentation of Romanism to peoples who had no prior knowledge of it was truly great. Thus at the same time as they were establishing theatres throughout Europe, they were doing the same in such places as India, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Paraguay. The heads of Jesuit missions in these widely-divergent cultures knew that it was essential for them to become competent producers, dramatists and theatre managers, and for their pupils in the mission schools to be taught how to be good actors, so as to be used to promote Roman Catholicism via theatrical productions in their societies and cultures.

They were very smart, those Jesuit missionaries. They followed the methods which Roman Catholicism has always used, and which the Jesuits perfected to a greater degree than any others: they would graft their Romanism onto the traditions and cultures of the people they were seeking to Romanize.²¹ If, for example, the people they were seeking to reach already had their own traditional religious plays, the Jesuits would simply “baptize” these, keeping the structure of the play but “Romanizing” it as far as possible. This has always been Rome’s way: it took the heathen festival of the birth of the sun god and “Romanized” it as “Christmas”;²² it took the heathen beliefs in a goddess-mother and her child, baptismal regeneration, a purgatory and prayers for the dead, idols, relic-worship, and so much more, changed the names and slightly altered the ceremonies, and in this manner “Romanized” heathenism as a false form of “christianity”, as far removed from true, biblical Christianity as it was possible to get.²³

Hindu India, in particular, took to the Jesuit theatre productions with

enthusiasm, because drama in India had long been a highly developed art form. Jesuit missionaries were able to report that their plays attracted the poetry-loving Indians more than anything else. In Goa, for example, a stage was set up in the front of the “church” building, and there the pupils of the Jesuits acted out scenes from the life of the Jesuit missionary to India and so-called “saint”, Francis Xavier.

Another country which took to the Jesuit theatre productions was Japan, and again for the same reason – that the dramatic arts were highly developed there, and had been for centuries. The Japanese dramas centred around their gods and heroes, and the Jesuits simply kept the traditional structures of these plays, but replaced the myths with biblical stories. In various Jesuit colleges in Japan, permanent theatrical schools were established.

Likewise in Mexico and Peru, the Aztecs and Incas had made use of much drama in their culture; and once again the Jesuits were able to make much use of drama to teach the doctrines of Romanism. And they were not even averse, in their plays, to portraying the European Roman Catholic conquerors in a poor light! This appealed greatly to the natives. The end always justifies the means, is the Jesuit principle.

Lowering Morals: Changing Tactics to Keep Audiences Coming

The Jesuits realised that there had to be a difference between the plays they produced in Europe and those they produced on their mission fields. In Asia and America, the natives were perfectly content to see the same plays over and over again, and for their content to be lacking in variety. They generally saw no need for improvements to be made. But in Europe, the Jesuits knew that the only way they could retain their influence over the people via their stage productions was to ensure that these constantly improved, *and* also began to appeal to the worldly tastes of the people.

Originally, they limited their stage productions to religious themes: events taken from the Bible or from Roman Catholic legends. Even when the play was about some historical event, it always contained an allusion to something in the Bible or in Roman Catholicism. And in presenting their version of morality, they would not, for example, mention anything to do with sexual matters, nor would women be permitted to act in the plays, nor would female characters be permitted

even if played by male actors. Furthermore, Latin, the language of the Romish “Church”, was always used.

But then the Jesuits came to realise that unless they changed their tactics, they would lose their audiences. So they started to make changes: female characters began to make their appearance in the plays, although still portrayed by male actors; Latin was no longer solely used, with short plays in the national language being permitted; and even in their serious dramas they began to permit a touch of humour for the entertainment of the audience. It was soon found that comedies were far more popular with the people than the classic tragedies. With this in mind, a German Jesuit priest, Johann Baptista Adolph, began around 1700 to write many comedies for school theatres, which were so popular that the Munich Jesuit college in its report to the Jesuit headquarters in Rome stated that there is “no better means of winning over the Germans [to Romanism], of making friends of heretics [Protestants] and other enemies of the Church, and of filling the schools”, than those farcical productions.²⁴

In France, also, tragedies began to lose ground to comedies, and the three most important Jesuit authors at the time – priests Porée, Le Jay and Ducerceau – concentrated on writing comedies, even though they referred to them as “dramas” or “fables”. And in time the kinds of comedies preferred by actors and people were (very naturally given the fallen nature of men) those with coarse jokes and extempores. How very modern-sounding!

The Jesuits had seen the need to introduce all these elements into their plays; and now, as wandering troupes of actors continued to lower the moral standards and grow in popularity, the priests of Loyola “began more and more frequently to introduce into their pieces secular matters and love tangles; finally, the stereotyped character of the nurse was taken over from the English drama to the Jesuit theatre, and here, as in Shakespeare, she plays unmistakably the part of a shameless match-maker.”²⁵ Jesuit leaders at times issued warnings to their underlings producing such plays to be very careful, because of their use of such things as inappropriate love scenes, vulgar jesting, etc. But the Jesuits on the ground well knew the power of them, and the bar was constantly being lowered.

When we examine the Jesuit involvement in Hollywood, it will

become clear that the lessons learned centuries ago when producing the Jesuit theatrical plays were applied to the movie industry: the lowering of the perceived moral standards, the introduction of things perceived as borderline morality at the time, etc. *Anything* in order to maintain control over the industry and to keep the masses coming. This was all the Jesuits were interested in then, and it is all they are interested in today.

Jesuit Use of Other Dramatic Arts

Other dramatic arts attracted Jesuit interest as well, and were incorporated into their use of the theatre to exercise influence over the people.

Opera was one of these. As Jesuit stage productions began to use lyrics and choruses more and more, so the operatic treatment of the chorale was slowly developed, in the forefront of which were the Jesuits of Munich. It was not long before their theatrical dramas became regular oratorios.

In Würzburg in Germany, in 1617, a *Musical Comedy of the Liberation of Ignatius Loyola, Founder of the Society of Jesus*, was produced. A few decades later, in Munich, they produced a religious musical drama entitled *Philothea, or the Wonderful Love of God for the Soul of Man, Drawn from Holy Scriptures and Set to Delightful Melody*. This opera was very popular.

Most of the composers of the Jesuit operas were directors of cathedral choirs, and music teachers at Jesuit schools, although sometimes the Jesuits made use of other musicians, including no less than Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. In 1767, when he was only eleven years old, Mozart was commissioned to compose a Latin opera, to be produced at the Jesuit college in Salzburg. It was called *Apollo et Hyacinthus seu Hyacinthi Metamorphosis*.

As competition from Italian opera, in particular, increased, putting great pressure on the Jesuits to equal, if not excel, the Italian productions, their stage effects and scenes became ever more elaborate, to hold the interest of the audience. The actors' costumes were expensive and extravagant. The technical skill they used was truly astonishing for the time. The decorations on stage were extremely elaborate and authentic. Trap-doors were used on stage so as to make ghostly apparitions

appear. “Ghosts” rose into the air, “gods” appeared in clouds, machines produced the noise of thunder and wind. The magic lantern was used to good effect to make it appear as if visions and dreams were actually taking shape on the stage. Huge crowd scenes were sometimes used too: battles, marches, processions, angel choirs – all were enacted on the stage, with sometimes up to a thousand extras acting their parts.

Ballet was another art used by the Jesuits. As dance became increasingly popular in the higher ranks of society in the seventeenth century, the Jesuits became increasingly interested in using it in their theatrical productions. For to them, in Roman Catholic countries, the education of the young had always been entrusted. Thus if they were to retain control over the young, they had to interest them in the art of dancing, once it began to become popular among the people; otherwise their influence over the young would wane. And so, dance was introduced into their stage plays, with the French Jesuit priest, Jouvancy, writing: “Place should certainly be found for dancing; it is a worthy entertainment for well-bred men, and a useful exercise for young people.”²⁶ Ballet soon became a major part of the Jesuit plays, with the era’s most famous dancing masters overseeing the rehearsals and even participating in the Jesuit ballets. This all increased the stature and influence of the Jesuit Order, particularly because dance masters enjoyed a stature and popularity with the people that was the equivalent, in their day, of that enjoyed by movie actors and rock “stars” of today.

Conclusion

Although little realised today, the Jesuit theatre played an important part in the development of theatre as a whole. A number of the most famous dramatists in Europe were educated in Jesuit colleges, and first performed in Jesuit theatres. These were the “stars” of their day. Voltaire was just one who was tutored by a Jesuit who became his friend in later years, the priest Porée.

And this deep Jesuit influence in the theatre is felt to this day! “More often than a superficial examination will reveal, we meet obvious traces of Jesuit influence in our present-day culture... many traces of Jesuitic influence... remain in the theatre”.²⁷

And thus, with their deep involvement in the dramatic arts almost

from their inception, the Jesuits were well set for involving themselves in the twentieth century's most popular and powerful dramatic art form: the movies.



CHAPTER TWO

THE JEWS CREATE HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood Created by Jews from Eastern Europe

Before we can turn our attention to the massive involvement of the Roman Catholic institution in the Hollywood movie industry, and ultimately its stranglehold upon the movies that were made, we have to look at the very creation of Hollywood itself. And when we do so, it becomes immediately evident that Hollywood was the creation of Jews from eastern Europe. It was *their* industry: “the American film industry, which Will Hays, president of the original Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, called ‘the quintessence of what we mean by “America,”’ was founded and for more than thirty years operated by Eastern European Jews who themselves seemed to be anything *but* the quintessence of America. The much-vaunted ‘studio system,’ which provided a prodigious supply of films during the movies’ heyday, was supervised by a second generation of Jews, many of whom also regarded themselves as marginal men trying to punch into the American mainstream. The storefront theaters of the late teens were transformed into the movie palaces of the twenties by Jewish exhibitors. And when sound movies commandeered the industry, Hollywood was invaded by a battalion of Jewish writers, mostly from the East. The most powerful talent agencies were run by Jews. Jewish lawyers transacted most of the industry’s business and Jewish doctors ministered to the industry’s sick. Above all, Jews produced the movies. ‘Of 85 names engaged in production,’ a 1936 study noted, ‘53 are Jews. And the Jewish advantage holds in prestige as well as numbers.’”²⁸

When one looks at the major empire-builders of the great Hollywood studios, there is no denying it: the evidence is as plain as day. Universal Pictures was founded by Carl Laemmle, a German Jewish immigrant to America. Paramount Pictures was built by Adolph Zukor, a Hungarian

Jewish immigrant. The Fox Film Corporation was the work of William Fox, also a Hungarian Jewish immigrant. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the greatest of all the studios, was headed by Louis B. Mayer, a Russian Jewish immigrant. And Warner Brothers was the work of the brothers Harry, Sam, Albert and Jack Warner, sons of a Polish Jewish immigrant.

When these Jews arrived in America, virtually penniless, they turned their backs on their Eastern European roots, and embraced America wholeheartedly. They rejected their languages, their customs, and for the most part, their Jewish religion. They were Jews in ancestry only, and they wanted to be assimilated into America, as Americans. This was not easy, for at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, to be a Jew from Eastern Europe was to be an undesirable addition to the American melting pot, in the eyes of many Americans. Jews simply were not wanted, and were made to feel unwelcome. No matter how they tried, they were unable to fully assimilate into mainstream America. But they found that there was one business they could easily enter, and excel in: moviemaking.

At that time, the movie industry was new, and also somewhat disreputable; and these two factors made it possible for Jews to make their mark in the industry, for there were very few barriers to them entering into it and rising up within it. “If the Jews were proscribed from entering the real corridors of gentility and status in America, the movies offered an ingenious option. Within the studios and on the screen, the Jews could simply create a new country – an empire of their own, so to speak – one where they would not only be admitted, but would govern as well. They would fabricate their empire in the image of America.... They would create its values and myths, its traditions and archetypes.... This was *their* America, and its invention may be their most enduring legacy.”²⁹

Yes: using what became their vast power over the masses through their movies, these Jews sought to literally *mould* America into their image. As we shall see, they were restrained from doing so as much as they would have liked by the domination of their Hollywood by Roman Catholic censorship throughout its “Golden Age”; but even so they did their best to portray an America on the big screens of the world that was not, often, the *real* America, but rather an America *they* visualised.

In aiming to fashion this America of their own making, they worked hard to *re-create American values, traditions, etc., in their image*. And although, as we shall see, throughout Hollywood's "Golden Age" it was the *Roman Catholic* image of America that predominated, the Hollywood Jews nevertheless did succeed – in uneasy alliance with American Romanism, and then with more freedom once Roman Catholic domination ceased – to move America along a particular path. Today, the values and traditions of America are far, far removed from that of their great-grandparents' generation; and America is infinitely the worse for it. Morally, America has collapsed; and ideologically, it has swung to the extreme left. And this, to a massive extent, is the result of what Hollywood succeeded in doing: changing the very values, outlooks, ideologies, traditions and morality of the American people. And of the world.

In a very real sense, "they colonized the American imagination." "Ultimately, American values came to be *defined* largely by the movies the Jews made. Ultimately, by creating their idealized America on the screen, the Jews reinvented the country in the image of their fiction."³⁰ For one thing is absolutely true: "The people who peered at the flickering shadows in the peep shows and nickelodeons at the beginning of the twentieth century didn't realize that they were participants in an experiment that would revolutionize the way Americans spent their leisure time."³¹ And not just Americans, but the whole world. Who could have imagined that those silent, black and white, grainy early picture shows would become the dominant entertainment-idol of the world within a few decades? Perhaps the early Hollywood Jews could not see that far into the future, but they certainly discerned that they were onto something. Something big. Something bigger, perhaps, than anything that had gone before.

Those early Hollywood Jews, also, used their power over the lucrative Hollywood empire to establish themselves as a Jewish aristocracy, with palatial homes and all the trappings of American Capitalism. They always sought to have the best of everything. Their wealth was their way of forsaking their poor Eastern European Jewish roots and being accepted into high-class American Gentile society. They even embraced the Republican Party, viewed as the party of conservatives

and Capitalists. And yet they were accused of being Communists. What, then, is the truth?

The truth, as we shall see, is that although that first generation of Hollywood Jews were more often than not Capitalists rather than Communists, they themselves were for the most part very immoral in their lives (despite having their own warped sense of “morality”), and the movies they made were used for the purpose of lowering the morals of America, which played into the hands of the Communist movement; and thus Hollywood *did* promote certain Communist goals even when it was under the control of the first-generation Jews, for although their political ideology was Capitalistic their morals were far from conservative or in accordance with Protestant America. And then also, as time went by the *later* generations of Hollywood Jews were, certainly, all too often outright Communists or Communist sympathisers, causing Hollywood to take a far more radicalised turn to the left. All this will become clear as we proceed.

Paramount Pictures

Adolph Zukor, who would build Paramount Pictures, was never interested in the Jewish religion, even as a boy being raised by an uncle who was a Judaic scholar, although he was fascinated by the story and the characters of the Old Testament Scriptures. When he came to America he deliberately did everything he could to show that he had no ties to the religion of Judaism at all. He wanted to fully assimilate into Gentile America, and because anything Jewish would mark him as different, he dropped it all.

When he got into the infant movie industry, Zukor’s desire was to make quality feature films, artistic films, because he believed this was his ticket to acceptability in higher-class, genteel America. Politically he was a Republican, and wanted to aim his films not at the working classes, but at the higher classes of American society. He knew that films were generally considered only as suitable entertainment for the working classes and he wanted to change that image of them. And to a large extent he succeeded, doing very well for himself in the process.

In 1910 he bought the rights to exhibit a film on the “Passion Play” in New York and New Jersey, even though he was told it was a very foolish business venture. He knew that a film depicting Christ might,

at that time, anger the high authorities of the Roman Catholic “Church” in America, so he proceeded cautiously; but the film did very well financially. Zukor became a real power in the industry, and he enjoyed it. He was ruthless, and once he had his sights set on acquiring control of Paramount Pictures, it was only a matter of time before he did.

Paramount films in the 1920s and 1930s were sophisticated. Zukor was so convinced of the importance of intellectual upliftment and the part that movies could play in this, that he even set up a school at Paramount for the purpose of teaching young would-be actors decorum, including literature, sociology and sobriety classes. Said a Paramount executive, Walter Wanger: “We were always trying to lift public taste a little bit. Zukor and Lasky were dedicated men who would produce pictures that they thought should be done, even though they weren’t going to be profitable.”³² But let it not be thought that this meant Paramount movies were moral. “Paramount pictures... didn’t ennoble the audience; they whisked them away to a world of sheen and sex where people spoke in innuendo, acted with abandon, and doubted the rewards of virtue. Paramount’s was a universe of Marlene Dietrich’s smoky come-ons, of Chevalier’s eyebrows arched in the boulevardier’s worldliness, of Mae West’s double entendres sliding out the corner of her mouth, of Gary Cooper’s aestheticized handsomeness, and of the Marx Brothers’ leveling chaos.”³³ It was, therefore, the purpose of Paramount to create “classy”, sophisticated films, but not moral ones.

Universal Pictures

Carl Laemmle, the founder of Universal Pictures, was a very different character. He opened his first theatre in 1906, and even at that very early period of movie history it was evident that many movies were morally offensive. The movie houses themselves were often viewed as dark places of iniquity – and not without reason. But Laemmle, wanting to change this unsavoury image, deliberately named his new theatre “The White Front” so that even its name would conjure up an image of respectability and good clean family entertainment. Laemmle became very successful financially, and by 1909 claimed, with some justification, that he was the largest film distributor in America.

Laemmle’s success was largely attributable to the fact that he recognised America’s expanding working class and booming

immigrant population were on the lookout for cheap entertainment – and the movies were cheap. They were not well made, they were short, they were usually based on incidents from American life and history, but they were cheap. And for immigrants, the movies were a kind of introduction to American life, the life they were trying so hard to assimilate into. In the Jewish ghettos of New York, the movies were extremely popular.

In 1909 Laemmle decided to enter into movie production himself, promising film exhibitors “the grandest American-made moving pictures you ever saw.” An advertisement declared: “My motto will be: The best films that man’s ingenuity can devise, and the best films man’s skill can execute.”³⁴ Laemmle’s desire was to make films that would uplift the movie industry, and make it respectable.

By 1913 he was a power within the industry and a wealthy man, earning an estimated \$100 000 a year and having a personal fortune of over \$1 million. He formed another distribution company and named it Universal, because, he said, the company would be supplying “universal entertainment for the universe.”³⁵

As studios increasingly gravitated from New York to Hollywood in California, and the studio bosses with them, Laemmle eventually bought a massive mansion in Beverly Hills, California.

He could be brutal too – he once sent a group of thugs to seize the studio of the member of a faction trying to claim control of Universal. But by 1915 Universal was under his control; and as Neal Gabler writes in his history of the Jews in Hollywood, “From this point on, the Jews would control the movies.”³⁶

Universal films were at one time suggestive and pushed the boundaries, but later they were aimed more decidedly at rural America. Universal became best known for its westerns and horror films in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The Fox Film Corporation

Turning now to the Fox Film Corporation, we find, once again, a very different type of Jewish character. William Fox was loud, ambitious, and got things done. Once he had his foot in the door of the movie industry, he went from strength to strength. He aimed to provide cheaper entertainment for the masses. And his formula worked: he

became a millionaire in a short space of time.

But there was also more to it. Fox, like so many of the other Jews in the movie industry of that time, saw his rise in the industry as a way to climb the social ladder. He bought a large estate on Long Island, New York, among the rich Gentile gentry, renamed it Fox Hall, and lived an autocratic life there, lording it over his extended family and demanding absolute obedience from them all. Family members lived in fear of him. And yet, despite his best efforts to assimilate into upper-class American society, he was acutely aware of the fact that he was still a Jewish ghetto boy who made good, and who would never really be fully accepted into the high society he craved.

Fox believed in his own version of God, not in the Judaism of his father; he also believed in numerology, which was divination through numbers. His wife claimed she was psychic, and Fox himself claimed he could enter men's minds and read their thoughts.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

Next we turn to Louis B. Mayer. This was a man who wanted to do everything better, and to a greater extent, than anyone else. The studio he would ultimately come to control, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, had to be the biggest, the greatest, and the best.

He obtained a theatre in Haverhill, Massachusetts in 1907, renovated it, and began to show what he deemed good, clean, respectable, family-oriented pictures. He went from strength to strength, acquiring other theatres, becoming wealthy and well-respected in middle-class society. He saw films as a means to inculcate values, and he sought to become a kind of “father figure” in society, something which he sought after all his life.

He formed the Louis B. Mayer Film Company; and then later he and some others formed a company for financing feature film production. This company was first called Metro Pictures (the “Metro” part later becoming the first initial in MGM), and Mayer was president of its New England branch.

As he grew wealthier, Mayer joined a middle-class Conservative Jewish temple, and began to live somewhat more lavishly. He also moved now into movie production itself, not just movie distribution, and relocated – as all the movie Jews had begun doing since 1907 –

to California in 1918. By the time Mayer arrived, over 80% of the world's movies were being made in Los Angeles.

Here he began to hobnob with industrial, political and religious leaders. One of these was the powerful newspaper magnate, William Randolph Hearst – a Roman Catholic. Hearst admired and respected Mayer, and this meant much to the latter. They would talk about all kinds of things, and Hearst would even consult with Mayer about the running of his Hearst Corporation.

This relationship with a prominent Roman Catholic would not be the only one Mayer would cultivate.

At this stage he was not as powerful as other Jews in the industry, but that was soon to change. Marcus Loew, another Jew from New York who owned a long string of movie theatres, bought Metro Pictures, which Mayer had once been connected with, in 1919, and later bought Goldwyn Pictures, which had also been started by Jews. And after negotiations with Mayer, Loew bought Mayer's studio, and Mayer became vice-president of Metro-Goldwyn. In 1926 it became Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Mayer suddenly found himself a major player in the film industry.

He believed in making what he considered were quality films with moral messages. He once told an MGM writer, "I worship good women, honorable men, and saintly mothers."³⁷ In this he was different from the other Hollywood Jews – but not too different. It was his own version of morality, after all, and although it was more conservative than the others, that is all that can really be said for it. Mayer believed in the institution of the family, in virtue, and in America. He was a Jew, but a proud American Jew. And he was seeking to fashion the America of his imagination.

He idealised his female "stars", and at MGM they always had to be depicted so as to make them look as good as possible. The MGM actresses were always to be beautiful or sensual, clever, but also remote and cool: actresses such as Greta Garbo and Joan Crawford personified the MGM "look". As for the male "stars", they too were generally cool, sophisticated, well-dressed, as personified by Clark Gable. And yet at the same time, Mayer had a view of America that was more domestic, moral according to his own lights, and down to earth. In many MGM movies of this kind, motherhood was exalted, and children learned from their parents. Mayer, therefore, was a strange mixture: on the one hand wanting to use his films

to influence the morality of America, and on the other hand promoting a fashionable, glamorous, idealised view of women in particular.

By the early 1930s, MGM was the greatest studio in Hollywood, thanks in large part to Mayer's efforts.

Warner Brothers

Turning next to the Warner Brothers studio, the two brothers most crucial to it were Jack and Harry Warner, both of whom had volatile tempers and who hated each other to boot. Harry had been born in Poland, Jack in America. Harry was conservative, moral according to his own lights, a family man. He was a religious Jew, and believed in racial and religious tolerance. Jack, on the other hand, was a more assimilated American than Harry, and rebelled against the Judaism of his father. He was crude, vulgar and loud, openly boasting about his sexual affairs. Unlike the other Hollywood Jews, he did not care a whit about being respectable and acceptable in polite society.

Another brother, Sam, was the one who convinced the Warners to go into the movie business as exhibitors. Harry was the leader of the brothers. They started their business in 1903, and rapidly began to get rich. They then moved into movie production. Harry based himself in New York, where another brother, Albert, would work with him, and Sam and Jack went to Los Angeles and San Francisco. In this way the Warner brothers were strategically positioned in the two main centres of film production. In time they forsook distribution and focused on production alone.

At first the Warners were very much the outsiders in Hollywood Jewish circles, but they did not care. They were not trying to ingratiate themselves with genteel society. When other studios were unsure of supporting the newly-invented sound movies, thinking the use of sound might be just a temporary fad, Warner Brothers pitched in. They saw sound as the wave of the future, and they were right. With the release of *The Jazz Singer* in 1927 – a movie with sound that revolutionised the industry – Warner Brothers moved up into the top ranks of studios.

Jack Warner, always a rebel against his father's Judaism, shackled up with a Roman Catholic actress, Ann Page Alvarado, even before his own divorce, or hers, had been finalised. This disgusted Harry, and the rift between them widened.

Warner Brothers' films deliberately put across a message of being films with a conscience, films in which the poor and weak were shown to be pitted against the rich and strong. Jack once told a reporter that films could and did play an all-important part in the cultural and educational development of the world. Surprisingly, this statement was in line with brother Harry's own beliefs – and it was not often that Jack was found expressing what his older brother believed. Many of their films depicted both the contributions of Jews to society, and their victimization by society. Many of them, also, exposed prejudice in society in general. Others portrayed the weak and marginalised in a good light, taking on the might of the privileged, even when this meant that “heroes” engaged in antisocial behaviour. This raised the ire of many, who saw such films – rightly – as essentially promoting civil disobedience, the uprising of the lower classes. To this Harry replied: “The motion picture presents right and wrong, as the Bible does. By showing both right and wrong, we teach the right.”³⁸

It sounded good, but it was not true, for in the words of the Hollywood Jews' biographer, Neal Gabler, Warner Brothers movies took a more ambivalent attitude towards American values than any other Hollywood studio. “Out of this mix of energy, suspicion, gloom, iconoclasm, and liberalism came not only a distinctive kind of film, but also a distinctive vision of America – particularly urban America. It was an environment cruel and indifferent, one almost cosmologically adversarial, where a host of forces prevented one from easily attaining virtue.”³⁹ In other words, Warner Brothers produced films which attempted to alter American society by portraying urban America as a dark, cruel place where the poor and marginalised needed to rise up and change things. This was incipient Gramscian Marxism; cultural Communism, the means whereby the Italian Communist, Gramsci, had said America would be communised. Change the culture, change the traditions, and you will change the country. America today is, tragically, living proof that Gramscian Communism worked.

Columbia Pictures

As for the founder of Columbia Pictures, Harry Cohn, he was a Jew at war with the world. People hated him, and he did not care. He was a spiteful, vengeful man and a bully, a man who loved power and who

wielded it mercilessly. He greatly admired the Italian Fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, made a documentary on his life, even visited him in Rome and decorated his own office like Mussolini's, proudly displaying a photo of the dictator there. And he copied Mussolini in his own personal style. "Cohn epitomized the profane, vulgar, cruel, rapacious, philandering mogul, and Red Skelton spoke for many when he said, after thousands attended Cohn's funeral, 'Well, it only proves what they always say – give the public something they want to see, and they'll come out for it.'"⁴⁰

Cohn turned his back completely on his religious Jewish upbringing. He did his best to push the fact that he was Jewish right out of his life. He married a Roman Catholic and ignored all Jewish festivals and other aspects of Judaism. Whereas other Hollywood Jews got rid of their Judaism so as to be accepted into American Gentile society, Harry Cohn went further – he held it in contempt. He once said, when asked for a contribution towards a Jewish relief fund, "Relief *for* the Jews! How about relief *from* the Jews? All the trouble in this world is caused by Jews and Irishmen."⁴¹

He was also extremely immoral in his personal life, having many affairs with many women. He divorced his first wife because she could not have children and because she was not attractive enough, in his view, to be the wife of so great a man as he fancied himself to be. He married his new wife, a young, attractive actress and a Gentile, three days after he divorced his first wife. Within a year she bore him a son.

As for the films Columbia made in the 1930s and 1940s, in some ways they resembled those from Warner Brothers: they were so often about the poor against the ruthless rich, the individual against the corporation, and the traditional against the new. The Columbia films may not have been as class-conscious as Warner Brothers films were, and the heroes were more middle-class than lower-class, with ethnicity nowhere near as prominent; but even so there was a resemblance to Warner Brothers' offerings.

The Religion (or Lack Thereof) of Hollywood's Jews

Edgar Magnin was the rabbi to many of the Hollywood Jews. He was *the* rabbi in Los Angeles, not only by his own admission but by that of many others too. In 1914 he had been invited to become

the associate rabbi of B'nai B'rith, which was Los Angeles' first Jewish congregation. It was what was known as a Reform Jewish congregation. The controversial and liberal Magnin later became the chief rabbi there. He was truly "one of the boys", mixing with the wealthy Jewish elite of Hollywood and never too interested in religious Judaism himself, despite being a rabbi. He overlooked their sins, and they loved him for it.

Magnin called for an Americanized Judaism, where Jews were fully assimilated as Americans; and this was a doctrine well received by the Hollywood Jews, for they had turned their backs on Orthodox Judaism. One after the other joined Magnin's B'nai B'rith – Carl Laemmle, Harry and Jack Warner, Louis B. Mayer, William Fox, and literally dozens of film executives, directors and actors. But they joined, not because they wanted their Jewish religion, but rather the secularised "religion" preached by Magnin. Very few of them were religious. They attended Magnin's ornate and lavish Wilshire Boulevard Temple on Jewish holy days, and they gave generously to Jewish welfare organisations and other Jewish causes; but that was all. Partly, they supported such groups with their money because it was just what Jews did; partly, because philanthropy was a status symbol, a sign of respectability; partly even, perhaps, because they felt a certain amount of guilt at having turned their backs on their Jewishness; but never did they do so because of any real *religious* feelings. The Hollywood Jews deliberately distanced themselves from the Jewish religion as far as possible.

And they were always cautious, even in their giving to Jewish causes. They did not want to be associated (at least at first) with any Jewish *political* causes. When Ben Hecht, a radical Jewish-American writer in Hollywood, tried to raise funds to support a Jewish group in Palestine which was aiming to use terrorism to drive the British out, he found no sympathisers among the Hollywood Jews. They did not want to do anything that would jeopardise their assimilationist efforts into American Gentile society. They wanted to be seen as Americans, not Jews.

But their opposition did not last. As Nazism grew in strength in Europe, the Jews in Hollywood softened in their stance, and began to show an interest in supporting the Jewish political cause in Palestine. In 1942 the younger-generation Jews in Hollywood, especially, were

supportive of efforts to form a Hollywood organisation to combat growing anti-Semitism in the United States, in particular when they felt such anti-Semitism was directed at the movie industry.

One of the primary movers and shakers in this regard was Mendel Silverberg, a powerful Jewish lawyer in Hollywood with close connections to the Chandler family, who owned the *Los Angeles Times*, and to the Republican Party. He became closely associated with Hollywood's elite Jews, although he himself was only nominally Jewish. He was very useful to the Hollywood Jews in combatting growing Nazi sympathies in Los Angeles in the early 1930s. They formed what was called the Community Committee, with Silverberg as its chairman. Its name was later changed to the Community Relations Council, and its purpose was to be the official liaison between Jews and Gentiles in Los Angeles. Silverberg also sat on various other Jewish committees.

Prior to World War Two, the Hollywood Jews saw no value in making films promoting Jews or Judaism. They wanted to assimilate into Gentile America, not stick out as Jews. Jewish actors and actresses even changed their names to make them sound more Gentile. But with the rise of Hitler and Nazism and the horrors of World War Two, the Hollywood Jews began to see the value of using their immense power and influence, via their film studios, to promote a positive image of Jews. A new Jewish organisation was created in 1948, called the Motion Picture Project, which enabled each major Jewish organisation to have some say over the way Hollywood would portray the Jews. It would be used to review scripts, influence producers, and inform the Jewish organisations of any films that would either benefit Jews, or harm them. Silverberg correctly saw that this was an attempt to censor the movie industry. The Hollywood Jews now felt the pressure, channelled through the Motion Picture Project, from such Jewish organisations as the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League.

As an alternative to Hollywood's liberal rabbi, Edgar Magnin, there was Max Nussbaum, who came to Hollywood in the 1940s to lead the Jewish congregation at Temple Israel. This temple had been founded by important men in the movie business, essentially as an alternative to

Magnin's version of Judaism. For although Magnin was very popular, both with non-Jews and with many of the elite Hollywood Jews, not all liked him. One even called him "Cardinal Magnin" because of his closeness with Roman Catholics.⁴² This alternative rabbi, Nussbaum, and his Temple Israel, was more pro-Jewish, committed to Jewish tradition and ritual. Nussbaum himself had escaped Hitler's madness in Germany and made his way to the USA. He was a fiery and eloquent speaker. He attracted many, just as Magnin did, but for different reasons. And during and after World War Two he began to attract more Hollywood Jews than Magnin was doing.

The reason for this was that the second-generation Hollywood Jews, as a result of the war and Hitler's Holocaust, were far more interested in their Judaism, and also in being involved in Jewish social activist causes. For although Nussbaum was religiously conservative, he was socially activist, supporting various causes including the establishment of the state of Israel.

The Surprising Influence of Romanism Over Some Hollywood Jews

There was another powerful, albeit at first surprising, influence over some of the influential Jews of Hollywood: Roman Catholicism. One writer recalled that when it came to religious matters, the Hollywood Jews were always "very tender with the Catholics."⁴³

Louis B. Mayer was closer to Roman Catholicism than Judaism. His daughter Edith said her father was "very Catholic prone. He loved the Catholics."⁴⁴ This was a true statement. Mayer was a close friend and admirer of New York's powerful Roman Catholic cardinal, Francis Spellman. A large portrait of Spellman hung in Mayer's library. According to Magnin, Mayer admired power and importance, which was the reason he admired Spellman and Romanism. According to his grandson, Danny Selznick, Mayer was attracted to Roman Catholicism because of its respectability, and also because Mayer, as head of MGM, identified with the pope of Rome. These may indeed have been some reasons for Mayer's fascination with Romanism, but clearly there was more to it. Still, he was not above making use of his friendship with Spellman to get his own way when a movie was going to be banned by the Roman Catholic "Church". He would call Spellman and seek his help.

He was an admirer of other prominent and conservative Roman Catholics as well, notably Senator Joseph McCarthy. Mayer fully supported McCarthy's efforts to rid the U.S. government of Communists. At a Chamber of Commerce dinner in his honour in 1954, Mayer said, "The more McCarthy yells, the better I like him. He's doing a job to get rid of the 'termites' eating away at our democracy.... I hope he drives all the bums back to Moscow. That's the place for them." He also said: "Why is it that there are so few Catholic converts to Communism? It is because they learned the love of God when they were children. Why don't Jews and Protestants do the same thing?"⁴⁵ Yes, Mayer esteemed Roman Catholicism very highly.

It was not just Mayer, however (although he was the closest of all Hollywood's top Jews to Rome). Other Hollywood Jews were under Rome's spell as well, to varying degrees. Harry Cohn, for example, was friends with the cardinal, Spellman, and whenever he was in New York he would visit Spellman. Cohn's first wife had been a Roman Catholic, and his second wife was a convert to Roman Catholicism who was very devout; and Cohn allowed her to raise their children as Roman Catholics. There were rumours that Cohn himself would convert to Romanism, but he never did. Still, there were strong influences at work.

The Politics of the Hollywood Jews

Politically, because they wanted to be accepted into American society so much and because the Republican Party was seen as the party of the American elite, most of the Hollywood Jewish elite were Republicans. And they certainly were among the country's elite by the mid-1930s, with 19 of the 25 highest salaries in the USA being paid to movie executives, and Louis B. Mayer, the highest-earning movie man, earning over \$1 million, which was more than any other American was earning at that time. Mayer would always entertain important senators, congressmen, and other officials whenever they were in Los Angeles. This enabled him to rise within the ranks of the Republican Party, and when Californian Herbert Hoover became president in 1928, Mayer and his family were invited to the White House. It was even rumoured, some years later, that Mayer himself might run for president.

The Warner brothers were really the only major Democrats among

the Hollywood Jews – and only for a brief period. Prior to 1932 they too had been Republicans, but in that year Jack and Harry Warner met with top Democrats in New York and were brought on board the campaign to get Franklin Roosevelt elected. It is likely the Democrats sought for the Warners' support because it was well known that they were considered the "outsiders" in Hollywood. Harry was quoted by Jack as saying, "The country is in chaos. There is a revolution in the air, and we need a change."⁴⁶ In Hollywood Jack worked to get Roosevelt elected. When Roosevelt became president and Jack was invited to the White House at various times, Jack claimed he was simply the court jester of the White House because he was a humorous man; but in truth there was far more to it than that. Warner Brothers threw its weight behind Roosevelt and the president knew it.

Nevertheless, by 1936 the Warners were Republicans again, after Harry Warner saw Roosevelt as having turned his back on him in an hour of need. "It was the last time any of the first generation of Hollywood Jews would support a Democrat."⁴⁷

Conclusion

Thus, the first-generation Jewish creators of Hollywood were, for the most part, men who abandoned their traditional Judaism; who were Capitalists, not Communists; some of whom were attracted to, and influenced by, Roman Catholicism; and many of whom were immoral in their personal lives and produced immoral movies, lowering the morals of the world. And thus they played into the hands of international Communism's assault on America and the entire western world. Furthermore, the *next* generation of Jewish Hollywood leaders leaned far to the left.

This then was the Jewish industry which the powerful American Roman Catholic institution sought to influence and control for its own ends.



CHAPTER THREE

PROTESTANTS, ROMAN CATHOLICS AND FILM CENSORSHIP IN THE EARLY YEARS

Despite the fact that Jewish-Americans of Eastern European origin created the film studios and ran them, the actual *control* of the industry, of what movies would be made, etc., was in the hands of the Roman Catholic “Church” for decades. But why? Why was it that the movie industry came to be controlled by Roman Catholics? Why was it that “Catholic characters, spaces, and rituals have been stock features in popular films since the silent picture era”?⁴⁸ How was it possible that in Protestant America, the Roman Catholic religion came to dominate the movie industry? The following explanation, written by Colleen McDannell, editor of the book *Catholics in the Movies*, is very accurate:

“An intensely visual religion with a well-defined ritual and authority system, Catholicism lends itself to the drama and pageantry – the iconography – of film. Moviegoers watch as Catholic visionaries interact with the supernatural, priests counsel their flocks, reformers fight for social justice, and bishops wield authoritarian power. As the religion of many immigrants [to the United States], Catholic characters represent outsider status as well as the ‘American way of life.’ Rather than being marginal to American popular culture, Catholic people, places, and rituals are central. At the movies, Catholicism – rather than Protestantism – is *the* American religion.”⁴⁹ Later she wrote: “in the world of the movies, religion is Catholic.”⁵⁰

This is very true. But then also there is the more sinister reason: a *deliberate purpose* behind Roman Catholic control of the industry, the reason for which has been set out already in this book, and the evidence for which will be given in the pages to follow.

Striving to Break Down Early Protestant Opposition to the Movies

In the early years of the twentieth century, it was Protestants, even more than Roman Catholics, who influenced the content of movies.

They sought to uphold moral values, desiring that such things as crime and punishment, class, ethnicity, family and romance, would be portrayed in a way that would do so. American Protestants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were also for the most part still very aware of the dangers posed by Popery to Protestantism, and to America itself. They knew that the “Church” of Rome was bent on subjugating the United States to itself, and for this reason they were deeply suspicious of large-scale Roman Catholic immigration into the country. They rightly saw this as a Papal plan to eventually take control of America through sheer force of numbers. Protestant books of the period were strong in their condemnation of Popery and of its sinister plans.⁵¹

And as a consequence of all this, early moviemakers portrayed the Protestant settlement house in a good light, as a place where the Irish Roman Catholic criminal could be converted or rehabilitated. Roman Catholicism itself was portrayed in a bad light, as a religion which played a part in the social problems of the day. Priests were depicted as men who did not condemn alcohol, etc. Roman Catholicism was portrayed as a religion of the Dark Ages, a time when freedom of religion and other freedoms had been cruelly suppressed.⁵²

And in these things they were very right. Romanism *was* most definitely a religion opposed to religious and other freedoms, and it still is. This is part of its very nature. At that time in America the Protestantism of many was still very strong, and they well knew the dangers of Popery. America, after all, had been founded by people fleeing Papal persecution and tyranny in Europe. Unlike today, the early twentieth century was still a time when Protestants had a good knowledge of these things, and viewed Popery as abhorrent and contrary not only to the Bible, but to the very principles on which America had been established.

But all this was to change. For in the early twentieth century, which was the infancy of this new American phenomenon known as the movie industry, the very time when movies as a form of entertainment were coming into their own, the United States was experiencing a large-scale influx of immigrants from southern, central and eastern Europe. Large numbers of these immigrants, coming as they did from that part of the Old World, were Roman Catholics – and also, large numbers were

Jews. These immigrants were poor, working-class folk struggling to make better lives for themselves in this new country, and they took to the movies because it was an inexpensive form of entertainment for them. Their English was usually very limited, but it did not matter because this was the silent movie era, where the story was conveyed to the audience via such things as facial expressions, body language, etc., and was generally fairly easy to follow. It did not take long for moviemakers to begin making films that would particularly appeal to those large Roman Catholic audiences. Despite the fact that almost all films released in the 1910s and 1920s have been lost because of nitrate decomposition or because of combustion of the cellulose film stock, it is possible to glean, from reviews of the time, newspaper advertisements, trade magazines and publicity images, “a tantalizing sense of a *large number* of motion pictures featuring Catholic characters and settings” (emphasis added).⁵³

In addition to immigrant Roman Catholics, however, it did not take long for native-born Americans to start to flock to the movies, and it was estimated that by 1920 half of all Americans were attending the movies once a week. So from Rome’s point of view, it was a powerful new medium with which to *reshape Protestant America*, leading it inexorably Romeward. But how did this come about, especially considering the conservative nature of much of American Protestantism at that time, which saw real danger in the mesmerising power of the movies and frequently viewed the movie industry with deep suspicion? It came about by movie producers labouring to present moviegoing as a respectable entertainment. Their efforts towards this objective included making religious and “biblical” films. Such films helped to break down Protestant Americans’ objections to the movie industry.⁵⁴

Thus Roman Catholic influence over the movie industry was already quite strong in the early years, during the infancy of film-making. And this influence just grew and grew in the following decades.

Protestants Call for Film Censorship

The movie industry began when what was known as the Progressive reform movement was at its height in the United States. These reformers fought against such injustices as child labour, poor urban living conditions, poverty, corruption in government, prostitution and

drunkenness, etc. And they viewed the new movie industry as a real danger to American youth. They saw correctly that films were a more powerful means of communication – and *indoctrination* – than any other, and that impressionable youngsters would be powerfully and negatively influenced by what they saw at the movies. On the other hand, they also believed that precisely because there had never been such a powerful means of communication as movies before, they could exert a vast amount of good on people, especially children, *if* they could teach and reinforce values such as good citizenship, the importance of hard work, good morals, and the superiority of Anglo-Saxon ideals. In today's world many might smile at the thought of that last one; but for Americans of western European and particularly British extraction in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Anglo-Saxon culture was far superior to any other. And certainly their world was one where the Anglo-Saxon culture and civilisation dominated. It is certainly true that movies have the potential to achieve a vast amount of good. There were many in those very early years of the twentieth century who believed, for example, that decent picture shows might replace the use of alcohol as recreation for the poor working classes.

It did not take long, however, for those who believed that movies could be a powerful force for good to be bitterly disappointed in their hope. It very soon became all too apparent that even way back then, during the infancy of the motion picture industry, the depravity of man was such that he much preferred films of a questionable moral character to those which contained moral themes.

And so it was that a formidable grouping of individuals and institutions began to array themselves against the evil influence of the movies in their very early years: Protestant ministers, social workers, Progressive reformers, police, politicians, women's clubs, civic organisations. All stated that movies were exerting a baneful influence on young minds by glorifying criminals, romanticising illicit love affairs, etc. They stated that movies were altering traditional values.⁵⁵ In all this they were certainly correct. And, because they saw that the motion picture as a form of entertainment was here to stay, they figured that there was only one solution: government censorship. This, then, is what they began to demand.

The concern was real; the desire to do something about the problem

was admirable; but as we shall see, government censorship was not the solution then, and has never been the solution.

The 1915 U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on Censorship

Although in the infancy of the movie industry it was mainly Protestants who worked for reform, and then government censorship, the “Church” of Rome was not silent. For example, as early as 1907 the *Michigan Catholic* accused the movie industry of seeking to destroy the souls of children, and the *Catholic Messenger* in Worcester, Massachusetts, called movie houses “the devil’s lights” and “a chamber of horrors”. During the next few years this publication continued to criticise the industry, and, as one manager of a Worcester movie house put it, “If you played a movie that wasn’t fit to be seen, they [the Roman Catholic priests] would crucify you by saying ‘don’t go to see it.’”⁵⁶

And various important Roman Catholic publications, such as the *Boston Pilot* newspaper and the Jesuit magazine *America*, as well as the Federation of Catholic Societies, at various times threw their weight behind federal censorship of the movies.

The first film censorship law ever created was in Chicago in November 1907. According to the law, exhibitors had to obtain a permit from the superintendent of police before showing a film; and permits would be denied to any film deemed to be immoral or obscene. The police lost no time in enforcing the new law, refusing to issue permits for two westerns. And when the film-makers went to court to try to get the law overturned, they lost. The Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the city had a right to ensure movies were decent and moral, because the low admission price to the movies meant that children and the lower classes could attend.

The next year, various New York religious leaders, including Roman Catholics, were at the head of increasing opposition to the effect of movies on children. They influenced New York’s mayor to close all movie houses in late December; but this time the court sided with the film-makers, and the movie houses were re-opened.

Then in 1909 a Progressive reformer named Charles Sprague Smith established the New York Board of Motion Picture Censorship, as demands for stricter censorship grew. The movie industry at the time was based in New York City, and agreed to submit films to this board

for review, so as to hopefully prevent government censorship later. But the board was declared ineffective by the Pennsylvania legislature in 1911, which formed its own state censorship board, followed by Kansas and Ohio in 1913. And indeed, the New York board had been hugely controversial, for it was very liberal in deciding which movies were acceptable and which were not. The censors focused primarily on excessive violence in films, while paying little attention to sex scenes. They even passed films which dealt with such issues as birth control, prostitution, and nudity, if they deemed that such scenes were not “crass”, “crude”, or “commercial.”

In 1916 the board was renamed the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures (NBR), and by then various other municipal and state censorship boards had come into being. These boards sought to remove any depictions in the movies of changing moral standards. They sought to limit scenes in movies which showed crime, believing such scenes contributed to the increase in juvenile delinquency. They also sought to avoid any depictions of civil strife, government corruption and injustice, or sexual issues.⁵⁷

But these various censorship boards were not created equal. They often differed on what was “immoral”, “obscene”, “illicit”, “indecent”, etc., etc. This meant that the moviemakers could never be certain which scenes might be condemned in one place, and which scenes might be condemned in another. In Pennsylvania, for example, the censorship board decided that a screen kiss could not last longer than a yard of film strip; but when it came to childbirth scenes, they even forbade a scene depicting a woman knitting clothes for her unborn child, on the following pathetic grounds: “Movies are patronized by thousands of children who believe that babies are brought by the stork, and it would be criminal to undeceive them”!⁵⁸

The moviemakers, of course, held very different opinions to the ones espoused by censorship boards. Their defence was that movies should have the same constitutional protections of free speech which were given to other forms of communication. The Mutual Film Corporation therefore went to the U.S. Supreme Court about these matters, where it was argued that movies were “part of the press” and thus “increasingly important... in the spreading of knowledge and the molding of public

opinion upon every kind of political, educational, religious, economic and social question.”⁵⁹ The Supreme Court, however, disagreed, and stated: “We feel the argument is wrong or strained which extends the guarantees of free opinion and speech” to theatre, the circus, or the movies because “they may be used for evil.” And: “Besides, there are some things which should not have pictorial representation in public places and to all audiences.” The Court declared that movies were “a business pure and simple, originated and conducted for profit, like other spectacles, not to be regarded... as part of the press of the country, or as organs of public opinion.”⁶⁰ As such, being commercial enterprises they could be regulated by the states or by the federal government.

Thus, according to this very important 1915 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, known as *Mutual Film Corp. v. the Industrial Commission of Ohio*, movies were a “business, pure and simple”, and therefore could indeed be regulated. It was deemed constitutional to have state and city censorship boards to regulate movies. “The industry now faced the possibility of a proliferation of censorship boards and death by a thousand cuts.”⁶¹ And indeed in the aftermath of the ruling, state and municipal censor boards sprung up everywhere.

What can be said of this judgment? It was certainly incorrect of the court to declare that movies were simply a business, and not to be treated as other forms of communication; and in fact, the court contradicted itself by stating that films may be used for evil – a judgment on their morality (or lack thereof). That movies have been the cause of much moral evil, and have contributed immensely to the degrading of society and the overturning of morality, cannot possibly be disputed by any thinking person. The evidence is overwhelming. Freedom of expression and of speech are important, but should always have limitations set on them –relating to the *physical* lives and the properties of men. Not only the Word of God, but common human experience through the ages demonstrates that unrestrained “freedoms” pose a great danger to individuals and societies. The duty of the State is to ensure the safety of peoples’ lives, bodies and properties from being forcefully violated by others (Rom. 13:1-7).

But the State’s God-given power *extends no further* than this. And when it attempts to extend its power beyond this, into matters of morality or religion, it goes too far. The moral standards imposed on

society will then be those of the men in power; and men in power are not usually godly men. Government officials are, after all, mere men like all others. They have no special wisdom above other men. They are not more qualified than other men to set the moral standards of society, merely by virtue of being elected by a portion of the populace.

Nor should any restriction be placed by the State on matters of religion, of man's relationship to God (whether the true God or even false ones), because earthly governments only have to do with the maintenance of law and order so as to ensure the safety of the physical lives and wellbeing of men – not with spiritual matters. Spiritual matters are outside the orbit of earthly governments. On matters of religion, it would be well if governments took the attitude of Gallio, the deputy of Achaia, when the Jews accused Paul of worshipping God contrary to the law. Gallio replied: "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law [religious law], look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters" (Acts 18:14,15). If one religion incites its members to physically harm the members of another religion, acting against this *is* certainly the duty of the government; but that is all. If one religion, say, makes a movie that is deemed blasphemous by another religion, this is not a matter for the government to interfere in, for it is solely a religious matter.

Thus this court judgment was far from ideal, and far from sensible; indeed, it was even self-contradictory. It granted permission for direct government intervention, via censorship boards, in matters of morality and by extension in matters of religion; matters beyond the God-ordained powers of the government. And government intervention, indeed, interference, in such matters is always a very slippery slope and can even be a very dangerous thing, as history amply reveals.

***Intolerance* (1916): An Influential Early Silent Film Depicting Roman Catholicism**

In 1916 the silent movie, *Intolerance*, was released, "which remains one of the most intriguing portraits of Catholics in cinema history."⁶²

It was the work of David Wark Griffith. Although he was a Freemason, with Ku Klux Klan sympathies, and although the film was not an *entirely* pro-Roman Catholic one, for Griffith depicted Roman

Catholic religious intolerance as well, yet even so in his film he “was celebrating Catholic virtue and exposing Protestant pretense and hypocrisy.”⁶³ It depicted (among many other themes) Roman Catholic persecution of Huguenots; but it also depicted what he considered the persecution of Roman Catholics, with Protestants depicted unfavourably, as oppressors and puritanical destroyers of such earthly pleasures as dancing and drinking.

The film followed certain stereotypes that would come out in one Hollywood film after another in the years to come: Roman Catholics as immigrants to America, struggling to be assimilated, and living in crime-infested ghettos; Roman Catholic girls fighting against the strict sexual moral standards of their parents; etc.⁶⁴

Furthermore, its theme of class warfare, with immoral employers exploiting decent workers, convinced Vladimir Lenin in Russia that Griffith was a Communist. Lenin invited Griffith to manage the Soviet film industry, and Soviet film-makers viewed *Intolerance* as a cinematic lesson in how to use film to promote revolution. The immoral, oppressive employers were depicted as Protestant hypocrites, and the innocent workers were Roman Catholics, so the film appealed to Communists and Papists alike. It foreshadowed the coming alliance, decades later, between Romanism and Communism for their mutual advancement.⁶⁵

***Joan the Woman* (1916): Roman Catholics Furious with Cecil B. DeMille**

When Hollywood religious-epic maker, Cecil B. DeMille, released his *Joan the Woman* in 1916, a film about Joan of Arc, Roman Catholics were furious. He made the film, as he himself admitted, as a “call to a modern crusade”, meaning World War I. It was designed to be a pro-Allies film. But because he depicted the priests of Rome as villains, cruel and vain, Roman Catholics were seething, and this anger caused DeMille to suggest to his distributors, “rather desperately”, that they circulate two versions – “In the strong Catholic communities, those scenes relating to the Catholic church might best be spared; while in Protestant portions of the country, it might be desirable to retain such scenes.”⁶⁶ This certainly reveals two undeniable facts: that at that time there was a clear distinction between Protestants and Romanists, with

many Protestants being very aware of the evils of Rome; and that, when it came to historical movies, the movie industry – even then – could usually not be trusted to depict history as it really happened, but rather so as to suit the sensibilities of the audiences. Bottom line: people who look to Hollywood for accurate historical portrayals of history are simply not going to find them.

And DeMille played fast and loose with historical fact in another way, too: he added a love interest for Joan in the story. As authors Les and Barbara Keyser state in their book, *Hollywood and the Catholic Church*, “DeMille’s creed, which became Hollywood’s gospel”, was that “history and the Bible could justify almost any debauchery and licentiousness. Moral purpose overwhelmed, DeMille and Hollywood thought, any need for restraint, since the end always justifies the means.”⁶⁷

Rome’s Opposition to Two Films for World War One Soldiers

The American Social Hygiene Association developed two educational films, entitled *Fit to Fight* and *End of the Road*, aimed at the armed forces of the First World War and at young women living near military camps, respectively. The first was about venereal diseases. Protests against the film were strong, coming from both Protestants and Roman Catholics. Romish priest John J. Burke, of the Roman Catholic institution’s National War Council, attempted to prevent it from being released, but failed. He then called for titillating scenes in the film to be cut, and some of them (but not all) were eliminated or shortened. As for the second film, Burke was just as much opposed to it as the first, because of how it made illicit sex alluring. Some scenes were cut to satisfy him, but the war ended soon afterwards and the military had no further interest in the film anyway.

Fit to Fight was updated and renamed *Fit to Win*, and shown to the general public, along with *End of the Road*. A major trade journal, the *Exhibitor’s Herald*, was totally against the films. This was because it was owned by Martin Quigley, a Roman Catholic. We shall soon be paying much more attention to Quigley. Priest Burke, meanwhile, continued to oppose the films strongly. His National War Council called on Roman Catholic societies across the United States to come out fighting against the two films. In New York, where Burke had a lot

of clout, he influenced Commissioner John F. Gilbert to come out with guns blazing against the films. And although a U.S. District Court judge allowed *Fit to Win* to be shown in New York at first despite Gilbert's opposition, the U.S. Court of Appeals found in favour of Gilbert. This was a victory for the Roman Catholic National War Council, and it was followed by *End of the Road* being banned from being shown in Pennsylvania, and then the National Board of Review and the Public Health Service withdrawing approval of the film. "The [Catholic] War Council's campaign against these films marked the [Roman Catholic] church's first significant success in combating films it found objectionable.... the War Council... became the National Catholic Welfare Council [NCWC] in September 1919."⁶⁸ Rome's ability to play a more powerful role in national affairs was now strengthened considerably.

Early Romish Attempts to Clean Up the Industry

The Romish bishops in America well knew the immense influence the movies were exerting over their own flocks, and knew that something had to be done. The *NCWC Bulletin* stated: "The influence of motion pictures upon the lives of our people is greater than the combined influence of all our churches, schools, and ethical organizations."⁶⁹ The result was that Roman Catholics turned on the Hollywood Jews. In *Columbia*, the official organ of the Roman Catholic Knights of Columbus, author Karl K. Kitchens wrote that the film industry was controlled by "foreign-born Jews of the lowest sort", men willing to "glorify crime and make heroes of seducers and heroines of prostitutes for a dollar." Another writer, Pat Scanlan, the editor of the *Brooklyn Tablet*, called the Jewish film-makers "alien ex-buttonhole makers and pressers".⁷⁰ Such men were right about Jewish control of the industry and even about the immoral movies they made, but much of this attitude was driven more by the traditional and centuries-old Roman Catholic anti-Semitism than anything else.

Many Papists, priests included, called for state censorship of the movie industry. But there were also more liberal-minded Roman Catholics who opposed censorship legislation. In 1919 the Motion Picture Committee was formed, a Roman Catholic outfit under the leadership of Charles McMahon, who reported directly to priest John

J. Burke. He was instructed to work with film producers to get them to remove indecent movies.

Will Hays and the Hays Office

Things went from bad to worse for film-makers. In March 1921 the major studios adopted their own code, known as the “Thirteen Points”, in an attempt to prove that they would do their own house-cleaning and improve the moral quality of films, which they hoped would cause the states to refrain from passing censorship legislation; but it failed. What is more, in that same year Hollywood was rocked by a series of scandals which served to confirm, to decent citizens, that this was a morally rotten industry, even in its infancy. “Famous directors turned up dead, matinee idols shot heroin (and each other), and doe-eyed ingénues were roused from sordid love nests. In the most lurid incident, the corpulent comedian Fatty Arbuckle was accused of the brutal rape and murder of a party girl named Virginia Rappe at a drunken weekend orgy. Arbuckle’s three trials solidified Hollywood’s reputation as a sun-drenched Sodom luring Midwest farm girls to a fate worse than waitressing.”⁷¹ “Arbuckle’s popularity with children added to the notoriety of the case, and although he was acquitted at his third trial (the two previous ones ending in hung juries), many people continued to believe that Rappe’s ruptured bladder was caused not by periadenitis, as the defense claimed, but by the comedian’s great weight as he forced himself on her.... Despite the actor’s final acquittal, public outrage forced the industry to withdraw his films from exhibition.”⁷²

The next scandal that year was the murder of director William Desmond Taylor, who, it was rumoured, also used drugs and was romantically connected to not one, but two actresses. And a year later actor Wallace Reid died of a drug overdose in a sanatorium. Hollywood was now, in the eyes of millions, nothing but a cesspool of iniquity, “the Sodom of the West”.⁷³ The film-makers realised something had to be done to save Hollywood’s reputation or they would be out of business. And something was – at least to their satisfaction.

In March 1922 the movie industry itself created the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), as well as another, allied organisation, the Association of Motion Picture Producers

(AMPP). These were formed ostensibly to establish and maintain “the highest possible moral and artistic standards of motion picture production.” In other words, they were meant to be self-regulating in-house bodies, designed to prevent outside (state) censorship from occurring. The thinking was that if the studios censored themselves, there would be no danger of state or municipal censorship.

The studio owners’ choice for the man at the helm of the MPPDA was William Harrison (Will) Hays, a lawyer who was postmaster-general in President Harding’s cabinet and the chairman of the Republican National Committee. Hays was a conservative Republican, a staunch Presbyterian who never smoked or drank, who was strongly against any State interference in business, and the Hollywood film-makers thought he would be ideal for the job because he was from outside the industry and would also oppose censorship. His office in New York City became known as the “Hays Office”. He set to work with a will, fighting against censorship legislation and federal regulation of the movie industry, but also cleaning up the industry’s image. “The old careless, helter skelter days are over,” he told the public. “The chieftains of the motion picture now realize their responsibilities as custodians of not only one of the greatest industries in the world but of possibly the most potent instrument in the world for moral influence and education, and certainly one of the most universal mediums of artistic expression.”⁷⁴ In truth, the studio chieftains had not undergone a sudden mass conversion, they were no more moral than they had been before – they merely wanted to avoid state censorship at all costs as this would eat into their bottom line. Those Jewish studio chieftains were very wily when they chose Hays, for they knew that American morality was still very much defined by American Protestantism, and if they wanted to make millions out of American moviegoers they needed someone in charge of movie morality who would put the people at ease.

Even though various Roman Catholic men’s and women’s groups supported a censorship bill in Massachusetts, some prominent Roman Catholics came to Hays’ assistance in the anti-censorship campaign. One was Joseph P. Kennedy, father of future U.S. President John F. Kennedy, who offered his assistance, and another was William Randolph Hearst, whose newspaper, *Boston American*, offered a prize of \$1000

to the winner of an essay competition on “Why Massachusetts should not have political censorship.” Meanwhile, the Romish hierarchy in America remained silent on the issue, knowing that its silence would be interpreted as an opposition to government censorship; and it was. And in a referendum in 1922, the voters in heavily Roman Catholic Massachusetts voted against the state censorship bill.

Hays had the powerful “Church” of Rome on his side; but very few Protestant churches supported him. They were far more opposed to films *per se* than Roman Catholics were, and were in fact Hays’ main opposition. Hays therefore sought out ever more Roman Catholic support and approval for his work, such as that of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae (IFCA). This organisation was very much at the forefront of Roman Catholic involvement in Hollywood at this time, and most Hollywood producers were more than willing to make any cuts or changes it recommended if this would mean an IFCA approval for the film. And proposed cuts and changes were not limited to moral matters only, but included any negative depictions of Roman Catholicism. Hollywood was being edited by Roman Catholics, with the Protestant Will Hays playing along; and this angered Protestants. “Hollywood’s courting of Catholic interests made some Protestants wonder if their concerns were being overlooked. The *Texas 100% American* charged Hays with playing into the hands of the Catholic hierarchy, while the editor of the *National Republic* asked him to explain ‘why it is that when a Protestant minister... is shown on screen, nine times out of ten, he is portrayed as a sap or a sissy.’”⁷⁵ These charges were true. The *Churchman*, a Protestant journal, said that Hays was a “seller of swill and an office boy” for Hollywood producers, men who were turning American society into a “brothel house.”⁷⁶

Hays became very friendly with New York’s cardinal, Patrick Hayes, and thus Hayes supported Hays: the cardinal supported the MPPDA president whenever he was being criticised for his work by Protestants and the Protestant press. The cardinal went so far as to declare, in 1929, that Will Hays’ work enabled the movies “to stand out like a shining light of great potential goodness in America.”⁷⁷ Well, Rome’s idea of “shining lights” and “goodness” has always differed widely from the biblical teaching. Hollywood was already, by this time, pushing the boundaries of morality as far as they could be pushed

in that era, and Hays and the MPPDA were cleaning up certain aspects of certain films, but nothing more.

***The White Sister* (1923): a Staunchly Roman Catholic Film Worries Exhibitors**

This was the most popular of many film versions of a 1909 book by Francis Marion Crawford. It was directed by Henry King, himself a Roman Catholic mystic. The story is about a woman who believes the man she was to marry has been killed in battle during the First World War, so she becomes a nun, only to find that he is still alive – and now she must choose. Before he began filming, King met the papal delegate to Washington, who arranged for the Vatican’s chief ceremonial director to show the film company an Italian nun’s traditional “wedding” to Christ (supposedly). And the company was permitted to film a ceremony that had never before been filmed, in which the nun-bride was “married” just before dawn.

As the film was so obviously pro-Roman Catholic, exhibitors were afraid there would be angry reaction from Protestant America. Many refused to show it. The film’s “star”, however (Lillian Gish), stated that the real reason for the exhibitors shying away from it was an economic one: “the big companies who owned the theaters said the public could get religion free on Sundays, so they’re not going to pay for it during the week.”⁷⁸

When the film opened in New York, it was extremely popular and did very well. Nevertheless, even when it was distributed nationally its overt Romanism was a cause for concern, and theatre owners were instructed to actually let local Protestant ministers know what the film’s theme was and just how pro-Papist it was, hoping that these ministers would then urge their congregations to see it anyway, despite this.

Two Movie “White Lists” Issued by Two Papist Organisations

By 1923 the National Catholic Welfare Council’s Motion Picture Committee had begun issuing lists of approved movies, through the *NCWC Bulletin*. This was a so-called “white list”, i.e. it only dealt with films it could recommend; all others it ignored. It was believed that publicity given to a bad movie, even negative publicity, would encourage people to go and see it. This list was supervised by Charles

McMahon, the chairman of the Motion Picture Committee of the NCWC.

But there was also another “white list” of recommended movies, this one issued by the Motion Picture Bureau of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae (IFCA). This was headed by Rita McGoldrick, a devout Papist, and she and her staff of volunteer graduates from Roman Catholic schools and colleges were reviewing some 11000 films a year, far more than the NCWC was doing.⁷⁹

The IFCA grew increasingly influential, as it dawned on studio bosses that by making what amounted at times to just a few changes to their films, they could earn the IFCA’s approval and thus make more money from their films. Both McGoldrick and McMahon opposed government censorship of films, believing the movie industry could be cleaned up by co-operating with the “Church” of Rome, and thus both were firm supporters of Hays and his work. Hays knew that he was backed by the two Romish organisations these two people represented.

The “Don’ts and Be Carefuls”: the First Movie Code

Hays, wanting to influence the movie studios and the content of the films they produced, created the Studio Relations Department (SRD), or Studio Relations Committee (SRC), in 1926. This sought to delete offensive material from films. It produced a code, the first ever for the motion picture industry, containing the most common requirements of censorship boards both at a municipal and state level. The working document of this code was known as the “Don’ts and Be Carefuls”, or the “Do’s and Don’ts.” The “Don’ts” consisted of such things as profanity, nudity, sex perversion, drug trafficking, and white slavery. These were all forbidden. It also urged that such themes as criminal behaviour, sexual relations, and violence be depicted in “good taste”; and it forbade “scenes of actual childbirth”. The “Be Carefuls” consisted of such things as crime methods, rape, and wedding-night scenes. But the studios all interpreted this code as they saw fit, so it was not very effective. Studio bosses argued that if movies were too “clean” no one would go to see them, and if they did not make racy movies, their competitors would.⁸⁰

All this just proves that unregenerate men will always impose their own ideas of morality on such matters, which are arbitrary and

subjective and should not therefore be binding on anyone other than those who voluntarily submit themselves to it. For example, members of the Roman Catholic religion could submit to these measures if this is what their religious leaders demanded, for they were Roman Catholics because they wanted to be and it is universally acknowledged that when a person joins any institution, he voluntarily places himself under the rules of that institution; but the concept of morality which these men had was being forced upon the entire public, so that the film industry was under the iron grip of those who had no right to speak for the entire country on such matters. The subjective nature of what was deemed morally offensive and what was not, was glaring. For example, under the “Don’ts” were such things as profanity, nudity and sexual perversion, and these are most definitely damaging to morals. But also under the “Don’ts” were such things as drug trafficking and white slavery – the mere depiction of which would not damage the morals of anyone, and thus prohibiting their depiction was simply foolish. In fact, people need to know when such things are going on. If a film depicted such things as being wrong and criminal this would have been a good thing.

All these things were preparatory for what was yet to come.



CHAPTER FOUR

JESUIT REGULATION OF THE MOVIE INDUSTRY: THE PRODUCTION CODE

“A Jewish-owned business selling Roman Catholic theology to Protestant America.”⁸¹ This description of Hollywood’s “Golden Age” is very true. This is exactly what it was. The Jews owned the studios, but the “Church” of Rome dictated the morality of the movies, and Protestant-majority America rushed to cinemas to soak it all up. It was, when one stops to think about it, a truly extraordinary situation.

Jews were making most of the films, and various Roman Catholic reformers (and Protestants too) viewed Jews and their movies as attacking the morals of America. For example, a newspaper account at the time stated, “The Jews control the film industry and they are using their power to demoralise this Christian country. What they are doing today against the Irish they will do tomorrow against every other element in the American population with the exception of the ‘chosen people’ who must not be ridiculed in the movies or criticized in the press.”⁸² There was truth in this. Jews *did* run the movie industry, and even if the major first-generation Jewish executives in Hollywood were not Communists themselves, they had become unknowing pawns in the hands of those who were out to pull down the morals of America. And the use of Hollywood to do this *was* part of the Communist agenda.

It was, in fact, a time when two powerful forces were vying for ever-greater influence over the American way of life; but Roman Catholicism was poised to trump Jewish-influenced Communism for decades.

In 1921 Henry Ford’s *Dearborn Independent* stated that the movies were “Jew-controlled, not in spots only, not 50 per cent merely, but entirely; with the natural consequence that now the world is in arms against the trivializing and demoralizing influences of that form of entertainment as presently managed.... As soon as the Jews gained control of the ‘movies’, we had a movie problem, the consequences

of which are not yet visible. It is the genius of that race to create problems of a moral character in whatever business they achieve a majority.” Later it stated: “It is not that producers of Semitic origin have deliberately set out to be bad according to their own standards, but they know that their whole taste and temper are different from the prevailing standards of the American people.... Many of these producers don’t know how filthy their stuff is – it is so natural to them.”⁸³

By sheer weight of numbers due to the large-scale Roman Catholic mass migration to the United States, by the late 1920s urban areas were politically in the control of Roman Catholics. In 1928 Al Smith, an Irish-American Papist, was even nominated as the Democratic presidential candidate. Rome’s plan was working: the United States was gradually becoming a Roman Catholic nation, via huge Roman Catholic immigration.

Many Protestant Americans saw the danger from both camps: Jewish Communism and Roman Catholicism. They began to speak out and oppose both. This caused William Brady, president of the National Association of the Motion Picture Industry, to say in 1921: “If these slanderers, Jew-baiters and Catholic haters are not silenced, we must fight to the finish with no quarter.”⁸⁴

And because of this new-found political clout, American Papists were now able to strongly oppose whatever they considered a threat to their religion:

***The Callahans and the Murphys* (1927): a Storm Erupts Over the Portrayal of Irish Papists**

In 1927, right at the tail end of the silent movie era, *The Callahans and the Murphys* was released by MGM. This movie, a comedy, dealt with the rowdy relationship between two Irish-American Roman Catholic families living in a New York City tenement – and a storm erupted over the fact that Irish Roman Catholics were portrayed as dirty, often drunk, rowdy, vulgar; and also because it portrayed Irish Romanists essentially as foreigners in America, implying in addition that they were not even racially white. Irish-American organisations in Los Angeles asked MGM to recall the film, but the studio would not do so, saying that it was a comedy and that the Irish-Americans, like everyone else, must learn to accept a certain amount of good-natured

humour. “Unfortunately for MGM”, however, “Irish eyes weren’t smiling, much less laughing, by that point”.⁸⁵ The protests spread across the country, with Irish-American organisations leading the way. Many theatres refused to show the movie. MGM tried to calm things down by pointing out that Irish-American actors had played in the film, and Irish-American groups had been consulted before it was released; but to no avail. And furthermore, films about the Irish made by other studios now also came under the spotlight. Things got so bad that a warning was issued to all studios, by an MPPDA official, that special care had to be taken with any movies dealing either with the Irish or the Roman Catholic religion.

MGM agreed to consider possible cuts to the film, and also asked Rita McGoldrick of the IFCA and priest John Kelly of the Catholic Theater Guild to suggest possible revisions to the movie. They suggested that all references to the Roman Catholic “Church” be cut out of the film. But Charles McMahon and priest Burke of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC) were disgusted with the film, and claimed that it could not be redeemed by any cuts. In a statement to America’s Roman Catholic press, the NCWC declared, “In its introduction of Catholic ‘atmosphere’ – the name of St. Patrick, the Crucifix, the Sign of the Cross – it [*The Callahans and the Murphys*] is a hideous defamation of Catholic beliefs and practices.”⁸⁶ State and local censorship boards became involved, withdrawing the film in some cases. Cuts were made. But even when Will Hays convinced Los Angeles Romish bishop, John Cantwell, to issue a statement that the changes meant the film was no longer anti-Catholic, the Irish-American and Papist press did not widely report on this. And the opposition continued unabated, the cuts that were made not changing Irish Papist anger at the film. The *Gaelic American*, a New York Irish newspaper, stated that the film was still, after all the cuts, “the most insulting characterization of the Irish ever put on the screen”, and actually warned MGM that unless the studio withdrew the movie people would take matters into their own hands.⁸⁷

MGM decided to fight back, saying no more editing would be done to the film, and declaring that the attacks were unfounded. The Irish Roman Catholic press continued to condemn the film. Irish-American Papists and their priests protested vehemently countrywide, even at times throwing rotten fruit, lightbulbs, rocks, and even acid

at the screen. Many protesters were arrested. And similar protests occurred at the screenings of other films perceived as being anti-Irish. Stampedes occurred in the movie houses. Some theatres were placed under police guard. Irish Roman Catholics were on the rampage, and yet could not see the irony and the hypocrisy of their actions: they were violently protesting against a film in which the Irish were depicted as violent brawlers! They were demonstrating, to the rest of America, that Irish Papists were precisely the kind of people as depicted in the film! As *Life* magazine put it so well in an exchange: “Mr. Callahan: ‘Did you protest against showing the movie that represents the Irish as disorderly?’ Mr. Murphy: ‘Did we? We wrecked the place!’”⁸⁸

Next, the Irish-American press fumed that “traitorous” Irish-American judges issued what they deemed harsh sentences against the protesters who had been arrested. And the *Gaelic American* stated that when one protester refused to pay his fine, a Jewish judge had taken the “outrageous step” of ordering him to be sent to jail, handcuffed to a black prisoner – thereby (according to the paper) “express[ing] his opinion of the entire Irish race.”⁸⁹

In fact, this barb about a Jewish judge mistreating an Irishman was part of a much wider attitude of Irish Romanists to Jews. The Irish-American press claimed the “Jewish Trust” was warring against Irish-Americans, and one paper, the *Irish World and Independent Liberator*, spoke of the “filthy hands” of Hollywood Jews being laid on Irish women.⁹⁰ The opposition continued throughout that year of 1927. Romish priests condemned the film in their sermons, and in places Roman Catholics were told by their priests to boycott it. Theatres began to withdraw it in cities and towns across America. And ultimately, under huge pressure, MGM withdrew the film from circulation.⁹¹

The Irish-American Roman Catholic critics rejoiced at their power to force a major Hollywood studio to cave in to their demands. Roman Catholicism had flexed its muscles, and was very pleased with its growing power. “The campaign against *The Callahans and the Murphys* taught Irish and Catholic organizations that united action could force Hollywood to bend. As a member of Hays’s staff prophetically remarked at the end of 1927: ‘I am inclined to think the withdrawal of *The Callahans and the Murphys*... has established a precedent which

will rise up to plague us in the future.”⁹² As subsequent events proved, he was right.

***King of Kings* (1927): Introducing Jesuit Priest Daniel Lord to Hollywood**

This silent movie was a depiction of the life of Christ, by Hollywood’s larger-than-life religious-epic creator, Cecil B. DeMille. DeMille, fearful of negative reaction over his depiction of Christ, asked Will Hays to assist him in finding religious consultants to advise on the film as it was being made; and he also invited possible religious critics to the set, where they held Bible readings and prayers. Hays recommended certain consultants, but DeMille chose advisors from the three major religious groups: Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish. Of the three, DeMille knew that his Roman Catholic choice would be the most important, for Roman Catholic reaction to the film was what concerned him the most – Rome’s muscle in Hollywood was being flexed and he knew it! So, to placate possible Papist protesters, he took no chances: on the recommendation of priest Burke of the NCWC, he employed a *Jesuit* priest, Daniel Lord, to be the technical advisor for the film. We shall hear much of Lord, for he was to become a very prominent and important figure in Hollywood. In a few short years’ time, he would be the author of the all-important Motion Picture Production Code, that would cast Rome’s shadow over Hollywood for decades to come.

DeMille, a very vain man, managed to convince Lord that his motive for making the movie was – as he told the cast and crew on the very first day on set – because he wanted to “do good and make people know and love Christ”. He told the Jesuit that he was willing to do anything to make the Roman Catholic “Church” happy with the film. He was even willing to cut the “Protestant” ending to the Lord’s Prayer when the film was shown in the USA and in Roman Catholic countries. He banned profanity on the set, and every morning, as he appeared on set, the musicians played “Onward, Christian Soldiers”, “with all the players standing with bowed heads in reverence”.⁹³ He even asked Lord if Roman Catholics could pray for the film’s success. All these things convinced Lord that DeMille’s was “the only real Christian company producing films”.⁹⁴ And DeMille was later to state in his autobiography that the sight of priest Lord saying mass at sunrise

on the set every morning was one of his “brightest memories”, because it was “like a continued benediction on our work.” Well, that might be the reason he gave, but here is the real reason: it was “a good insurance policy against future attacks on the film.”⁹⁵ DeMille was certainly *not* a “Christian” film-maker, as many Protestants foolishly assumed. He was in it for the money, plain and simple, and he knew that keeping the “Church” of Rome satisfied was the best way to make money.

In fact, it was believed by many that the real reason he loved to make biblical epics was because they enabled him to film scenes that would never make it into a film otherwise. This was certainly seen in *King of Kings*, when it came to the portrayal of Mary Magdalene. DeMille used the opportunity to film her “nude from the waist up except for large jewelled plates at her breasts and a loose robe over her shoulders”, giving a sensual kiss, with her leg being leered at by a man.⁹⁶ All this was too much for Lord, although DeMille convinced him not to make an issue of Mary Magdalene’s costume, claiming it was necessary to the story. But on Lord’s advice, DeMille cut the kiss scene and the leg scene. He also revised a scene which gave the impression that Mary Magdalene was Judas Iscariot’s mistress. Lord, who had no problem with DeMille taking certain liberties with the factual history of the life of the Lord, drew the line here!

Hollywood producers in the decades ahead learned from DeMille that this was the way ahead: to get Roman Catholic advisors onto their sets. “Hiring Catholic technical advisors became roughly analogous to obtaining an *imprimatur*. It did not assure there would be no controversy, but it did smooth the way to the theater.”⁹⁷

Films in which an actor portrays the Lord Jesus Christ are completely contrary to Holy Scripture,⁹⁸ and thus Christians are not to support or endorse *any* film of the life of Christ in which He is shown. But a film could still be made of biblical or historical events if it is accurate and truthful. Hollywood, however, from its inception sold its soul to the devil, and simply could not be trusted to produce such a movie, because film-makers desperately tried not to offend anyone, religiously. In making a biblical film, it was inevitable that if it was going to be accurate, it would offend someone; but Hollywood, in seeking to offend no one, produced films that were inaccurate, leaving

out major events or important aspects, preferring rather to attempt to keep all religious groups happy by producing movies that trod carefully between all of them. To offend no one, they had to please everyone; and to please everyone they had to sacrifice truth.

Daniel Lord, the Jesuit, rejoiced that his influence was so great on the set of *King of Kings*, and wanted Roman Catholic influence over Hollywood to continue and to grow. The last thing he wanted was for the (Protestant) Federal Council of Churches, represented by minister George Reid Andrews, the Protestant advisor on the set, to increase in influence over Hollywood productions. So Lord asked priest John Burke of the NCWC to appoint a committee to critique *King of Kings*. Lord believed that if the “Church” of Rome would endorse the movie, Roman Catholic influence over future Hollywood films would be greatly increased.

A committee was duly appointed, and all but one of the members endorsed the film. That one was Lord’s fellow-Jesuit priest, Joseph Husslein. He objected to the movie’s sensuous nature and the historical licence permitted in the making of it, saying, “It is the movies that must yield to the scriptures and not the scriptures to the movie”.⁹⁹ This was of course a very correct statement; but he was still a Roman Catholic and a Jesuit priest, not a true Christian.

The result was that the NCWC did not endorse the film. It was however recommended by the IFCA. This lack of NCWC endorsement must have been a severe blow to DeMille, who believed he had bent over backwards to accommodate the Roman Catholic “Church”. But his troubles were far from over, for in addition, Jews objected to his film as well. Even though a rabbi had been a consultant on the film, the Jewish B’nai B’rith organisation, and various Jewish papers, demanded the withdrawal of the film on the grounds that it would prejudice Christians against Jews. Eventually it was agreed that certain scenes which Jews found objectionable would be eliminated, and a foreword would be added exculpating the Jews for the death of Christ.¹⁰⁰

These concessions to the Jews, in turn, angered influential Roman Catholics! One of these was Rita McGoldrick of the IFCA. She engaged in an all-out battle to promote the film despite Jewish objections. If the Hays Office heard of a local Jewish protest against

the film, McGoldrick was contacted, and she immediately wrote to Romish priests to get them to promote the film in their areas.

The Production Code: a Jesuit Creation

The first step towards regulation and control of the movie industry came in 1927, a result of growing calls for censorship: as was seen, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America adopted the “Don’ts and Be Carefuls”, guidelines for handling such issues as religion, race, national origin, etc.¹⁰¹ But as far as a small but growing number of Roman Catholic priests and “laymen” were concerned, it did not go far enough. They felt something more had to be done, and that more censorship, *in Rome’s favour*, was needed. And now the Romish hierarchy in the United States and the leadership of some Romish “lay” organisations became involved, more than ever before, in film censorship, resulting in Roman Catholics actually becoming the regulators of the movie industry from 1930 onwards! This is how it happened:

Hollywood producers felt that the censorship boards were too strict; and so the trade organisation for movies, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA), worked out how they could get around these censors. In 1930 the members of the MPPDA adopted what was called the Motion Picture Production Code (also known as the Hays Code). This Code set out the moral standards for movie plots, behaviours, and representations. It stated, “No picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it.”

There was heavy Roman Catholic involvement in the actual formulation of this Production Code. And here is the bombshell: the man who actually authored the Code was none other than the *Jesuit priest*, Daniel Lord, assisted by a staunch Irish-American Roman Catholic publisher of a film trade journal named Martin Quigley!¹⁰² And who would enforce it? Yet another staunch Irish-American and Jesuit-trained Roman Catholic, Joseph I. Breen! Lord, Quigley, Breen: the three Papists who held Hollywood in their hands.

Let us see how this came about:

Martin Quigley was a devout Irish-American Papist, a graduate of Catholic University, and the owner and publisher of *Exhibitors Herald*,

a movie industry trade journal. This later became the *Motion Picture Herald*. He wanted movies to promote Rome's idea of good morals, not pull them down, but he opposed government censorship, believing it to be ineffective. He was also in a very compromised position himself, condemning immoral movies yet making his living by advertising those very movies in his trade journal! This often meant that he was viewed as a hypocrite – which, in fact, is what he was.

His view of censorship was that objectionable content in a film should be removed during the production stage, thereby removing the need for government censorship. In addition, he believed that movies should avoid social, political and economic subjects. They should be straightforward entertainment, not social commentaries.¹⁰³

So what did he do? In 1929 he teamed up with a *Jesuit priest*, Fitz-George Dinneen, to come up with a new code of behaviour for the movie industry!

Dinneen differed with Quigley on the issue of government censorship, believing it was necessary. He viewed movies as destroying, in particular, the morals of the youth of America. Both he and Quigley were on the board of trustees of Loyola University, and one night in 1929 Dinneen declared at a trustees' meeting, "I'm going to teach some people in town a lesson. I'll stop these filthy pictures from coming into my parish." He believed that the moviemakers were incapable of policing themselves, and in an anonymous editorial in the archdiocesan paper, which he probably wrote, it was stated that the moviemakers "were not artists [but] ex-pants pressers and ex-push cart merchants of the lower east side of New York", and that few of them were "real Americans."¹⁰⁴ However, once he began meeting with Quigley to discuss how movies could be cleaned up, Dinneen listened to Quigley's thoughts about the need for a self-regulating system of censorship rather than government censorship. They saw a need to replace the "Don'ts and Be Carefuls" with a better set of rules for the film industry, and they began to draw one up. It was to be a code of morality. They asked Roman Catholic "layman", Joseph Breen (more about him further on), and another Jesuit priest named Wilfred Parsons, to give their input as well.

Dinneen arranged a meeting for Quigley with Romish cardinal, George W. Mundelein, to discuss this proposed Code. Mundelein

was a long-time advocate of police censorship of movies, but Quigley reasoned that a new Code, written by Roman Catholics and supported by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, would remove any need for censorship, either by the police or by the government. He believed that the movie industry could be massively influenced by the Roman Catholic institution, consisting as it did of twenty million members in America at that time, most of whom were massed in the great urban centres (where most movies played). Quigley reasoned – correctly as it turned out – that the movie industry would be too afraid to oppose any united Roman Catholic action against immoral films. The industry had too much to lose by effective Roman Catholic opposition.¹⁰⁵ Essentially Quigley was saying: money talks.

Mundelein agreed with Quigley, and when Dinneen suggested that yet another Jesuit priest, Daniel Lord (Dinneen’s friend and a former pupil of his), be brought in to write the Code (Lord had been suggested to Dinneen by Quigley), Mundelein supported this as well.

Lord was an intellectual, a professor of dramatics at St. Louis University, a gifted musician, popular speaker, prolific author, lover of movies, and the editor of *Queen’s Work*, a publication for Roman Catholic youth. Thus he was well versed in the Jesuit techniques of using theatrical productions for Rome’s own purposes, analysed in an earlier chapter. He of course was the priest who had been hired in 1927 by Cecil B. DeMille as a technical advisor on the production of the movie *King of Kings*. He not only became lifelong friends with DeMille but he also caught the Hollywood bug. As a result of his work on *King of Kings*, he was considered to be the leading Papist expert on movies. Although he loved films, he hated immoral films. He wanted films to promote good in society, not evil. He was very opposed to drama and literature which realistically dealt with sexual and social issues, as well as evolution, birth control, abortion, secular education, and Communism. And so it was that when Quigley approached him with the task of writing the Production Code he was ecstatic, saying, “Here was a chance to tie the Ten Commandments in with the newest and most widespread form of entertainment.”¹⁰⁶

The Motion Picture Production Code, which Lord wrote, making use of the notes prepared by Quigley, Breen, and the Jesuits Dinneen and Parsons, was far more comprehensive than the earlier “Don’ts and

Be Carefuls” had been. It had a list of positive and negative injunctions, giving specific guidelines on what was morally acceptable and what was not.

We see, then, the hand of the Jesuits at work behind the scenes, establishing their sinister influence over this relatively new, but vast and powerful medium. The very Code that would regulate Hollywood movies for decades to come (from 1930 to 1968) was conceived in the mind of a devout Roman Catholic, and then drawn up by Daniel Lord, a priest of Rome and a *Jesuit* priest, no less, with input from two other Jesuit priests, Dinneen and Parsons.

The Roman Catholic control of Hollywood was deliberate. And it was Jesuit-inspired and Jesuit-controlled!

All these Roman Catholics wanted movies to emphasise that the “Church” (by which they meant the “Church” of Rome), the government and the family were vital to an orderly society, and should not be undermined in films. Films should reinforce religious teaching concerning morals. Lord stated that films were, above all else, “entertainment for the multitudes” and therefore had a “special Moral Responsibility”. And because films were so immensely popular with all classes of people, and so powerful and seductive a medium, he believed they could not be permitted the same freedom of expression granted to plays, books or newspapers. It was vital, therefore, that no film should lower the moral standards of the one watching. No movie should make the audience feel any sympathy for a criminal, adulterer, etc. Right and wrong should be clearly set out in a film, and never be doubtful. Society’s values should be upheld, not attacked in films. The sanctity of marriage must never be questioned or attacked. The judicial system must be portrayed as being just and fair. Police must be shown to be honest. Government must not be ridiculed.¹⁰⁷

No sensible person can deny that when a society’s moral foundation is undermined, that society has to crumble; and the evidence of this is all around for anyone with eyes to see. The problem, however, was twofold. Firstly, as we have seen and as will yet be seen in this book, *any* kind of moral or religious censorship, imposed either by a government, or by one segment of society, or by a particular false religion, is never a good thing, in fact it is a very dangerous minefield for many reasons. An

entire country is forced to bow to the “morality” of a particular group or power. And secondly, this particular Code was, from beginning to end, a *Roman Catholic* Code, a *Jesuit* Code, with its great purpose being to exert *Roman Catholic* and *Jesuit* control over Hollywood. As moral as some Roman Catholics can be, they are still Roman Catholics, and their morality is a Roman Catholic morality, which is not (despite some resemblances) a biblical morality. Furthermore, the commitment of these men to their “Church” meant that they would also seek to ensure that films painted Roman Catholicism in a very good light. It was therefore a very dangerous thing.

After Lord had written the Code in 1929, Martin Quigley, with the backing of the “Church” of Rome, took the draft to Will Hays, and began working to get the movie industry to adopt it. Hays himself was sold: “My eyes nearly popped out when I read it,” said this Presbyterian. “This was the very thing I had been looking for.”¹⁰⁸ He liked it because it would give him more control over the Hollywood studios. So he too began to work hard to get studio bosses to accept it. He and Quigley, fully supported by Mundelein the cardinal, set out to win over Hollywood. And later, as we shall see, so did Joseph I. Breen, who became the Code’s enforcer.

It was no easy task. The producers were not impressed. Some of them argued that the only restriction needed was that of moviegoing audiences themselves, who would simply support films they liked and stay away from those they did not. Lord, of course, was totally against such an idea.

How, then, did it come about that ultimately these servants of Rome were successful? How did the Code come to be accepted by Hollywood’s producers?

Well, many in Hollywood did not actually believe that the Code meant exactly what it said; and in addition, the producers had insisted on a concession that if a studio felt the Hays Office was interpreting the Code too strictly, a “jury” of producers, rather than officials from the MPPDA, would have the final say on whether a cut should be made to a film. The producers, therefore, on the strength of this, accepted the Code. But this was certainly not the way Lord understood it! As far as he was concerned, Jason Joy, the man appointed to enforce the

Code for Hays, was authorised to reject scripts, thereby preventing a film from being made; and he was also convinced that Joy would enforce his Code rigidly, with the producers agreeing fully. Lord and the producers were certainly not reading from the same script! The producers believed the Code was nothing but a general guideline; the Jesuit believed it had to be enforced strictly.¹⁰⁹

Playing Down the Papist Origin of the Code

The Code was adopted by the MPPDA and the Association of Motion Picture Producers (AMPP) in March 1930. But the Production Code Authority (PCA) would not actually be created until a few years later. Sometimes this period is referred to as the “pre-Code” years, but this is incorrect: the Code was in fact enforced during this period, just not as strictly as it would be after Joseph I. Breen was appointed as the Hollywood censor and the Roman Catholic Legion of Decency was created, in 1933-4.

The Code was known as the Hays Code, although in truth it was the Quigley-Lord Code. Hays himself, devout Presbyterian though he was, was certainly somewhat underhanded in this whole matter. Knowing that the Code had been written by “a Catholic priest, and a Jesuit at that”¹¹⁰, he sought to keep this fact hidden. As Lord put it, “Mr. Hays rightly felt that it was most effective if the spontaneous nature of the Code was stressed, the fact that it grew out of the will of the industry.”¹¹¹ There was nothing spontaneous about it, of course, and the very fact that Hays was so willing to accept a Jesuit work says much about him and his Protestantism. And although he did not want it to be widely known that the Code was a Jesuit production, Hays was nevertheless perfectly willing to claim the glory for it himself by being “willing to let the Code be called the Hays code,” as Lord himself remarked. The reasons for Hays’ reluctance to let the truth be known were well understood by the three most important Roman Catholics involved: Quigley, the Jesuit Lord, and Code enforcer Joseph Breen. Quigley told Breen, “The recollection of your colleague, W.H., also is not very correct about this development [i.e. the origins of the Code], but the purpose in this case, is, of course, obvious.”¹¹²

The reason for keeping the true origin of the Code secret for a long time was because its creators did not want a Protestant backlash, if it

became widely known that the movie industry's morality was in the hands of Papists. Quigley told his colleagues that it would not be a good idea for a Roman Catholic publication, such as the Jesuit weekly, *America*, to be in the forefront of supporting the new Code. Rita McGoldrick of the IFCA was very enthusiastic about the Code, but the Jesuit, Wilfred Parsons, told her to play it down. He told Quigley, "She didn't like it, but she always does what we ask of her, even though she doesn't know why."¹¹³

Lord's authorship of the Code was only publicly revealed, in fact, in May 1934, in *America*; and *Variety* magazine stated that Lord's authorship was "kept more or less a secret even from the average member of the film trade by the Hays organization during the [four] years the Code has been in effect." Martin Quigley himself played down the Roman Catholic involvement in the Code's creation, not wanting to "increase the fears and apprehensions of non-Catholics and strengthen the opposition to the Code operation." He made it clear, to Lord himself, that "It is most undesirable that the Code and the Legion of Decency should be confused, [to imply] that the idea of the Code did not originate in the industry but was, seemingly, imposed on the industry by a Jesuit priest who came to New York and made the company heads take it".¹¹⁴ He stated that the Code "was formulated after intensive study by members of the industry and, according to Will H. Hays, by church leaders, leaders in the field of education, representatives of women's clubs, educators, psychologists, dramatists and other students of our moral, social and family problems."¹¹⁵ Not by any means a true statement, but he was, after all, a Roman Catholic, influenced by Jesuits, with a Jesuit's attitude to lies and deceit if it serves the "cause". He even omitted mentioning, in his own journal, that he had played a significant role in devising the Code.

Lord attempted to play down his own role (and thus that of the "Church" he represented) in the creation of the Code. Years later, in 1946, he stated, "The Code was not to be an expression of the Catholic point of view. It was to present principles on which all decent men would agree. Its basis was the Ten Commandments, which we felt was a standard of morality throughout the civilized world." Yes, he said, the Code just "happens to have been written by a Catholic priest," but "the Motion Picture Production Code is not the product of the Catholic

Church.” As one author remarked, “In so saying, Father Lord broke what, in the Catholic Decalogue, is the Seventh Commandment.”¹¹⁶ Indeed he did; but a Jesuit priest has never been shy to lie if it will advance the cause of Rome by hiding Rome’s true intentions or involvement in something.

Roman Catholic Reverence for the Code

At first the Code was not well received by many Roman Catholics, with some Romish publications openly opposed to it. And what these publications said about it naturally filtered down to the general Roman Catholic public. This was very problematic, for the studios would eventually cotton on to the fact that there was no need for them to abide by the Code if the public did not support it. The devout Roman Catholics who had created it knew that something had to be done, and fast. They earnestly believed that the Code was primarily promoting not just any morality, but *Roman Catholic* morality. And so they went to work. On her radio show Rita McGoldrick praised the Code, while being at pains to hide its Roman Catholic origin, as she had been instructed to do by Parsons the Jesuit. Joseph Breen contacted most of the editors of Roman Catholic newspapers in 1930 to obtain their backing for the Code, and convinced over half of those he contacted to support it. Parsons, meanwhile, worked hard at getting the readers of *America* magazine to give it their support. Things did not go smoothly, however. Quigley distrusted Hays and told Mundelein, the cardinal, to avoid the Hays Office “as he would poison”, but Parsons wanted Mundelein to publicly endorse the Code. And Quigley was also angry to learn that Lord had accepted a \$500 honorarium from Hays for his work on the Code. This caused Parsons to withdraw an article on the Code which Lord had written for *America*. But eventually Mundelein endorsed it, followed by the New York cardinal, Hayes. The cardinals’ endorsements of the Production Code were then published in *America*,¹¹⁷ the Jesuit magazine.

In time, the Code came to be revered by many devout Papists. “Conceived in faith and invested with a sacred aura, the Code would be likened to another text, the Bible, and metaphors of print-based religiosity would waft around it like incense: the commandments, the tablets, the gospel... ‘The more I thought about it, the more it

seemed to me to be an *inspired* document,' Breen recalled years later, italicizing his reverence."¹¹⁸ To the Roman Catholics who sought to control Hollywood, the Code practically *was* Scripture, given by God through His servants Quigley and Lord to keep Hollywood clean and to promote the "one true Church". Breen believed the Code was "a moral treatise" whose "rules and regulations" stemmed from "the ancient moral law, which had been accepted by mankind almost since the dawn of creation." Thomas Doherty, Breen's biographer, declared: "To Breen, the Code was less a collaboration between Martin Quigley and Father Lord than a tablet handed down from Mount Sinai."¹¹⁹

Enforcing the Code a Constant Struggle

After the Code was adopted, Hays appointed Jason Joy and the Studio Relations Department (SRD) to enforce Lord's creation. Joy served as censor till 1932, followed by Dr James Wingate until 1934. Producers voluntarily submitted scripts to these censors, who tried to get films to conform to the Code. At first the Roman Catholics behind the Code were quite satisfied. At the end of the first year of the Code's adoption, Martin Quigley felt able to write, triumphantly, that "it has been enormously successful." And Rita McGoldrick stated, "These are the days when the most fastidious person may have a wide variety of splendid films to select from." Furthermore, "Everything Catholic on the screen has been, and is being, protected one hundred percent." As for Lord, he wrote to Mundelein that if there was no Code, "conditions in the motion pictures this year [the first year of the Code's adoption] would have been beyond description."¹²⁰

But despite such gloating, it was an uphill struggle for them and things were not going as well as they would have liked. The Great Depression had started, and moviemakers, desperate to woo back a dwindling movie audience, made films that were increasingly sensationalistic. Gangster films became extremely popular at this time, as gangsters were portrayed as above the law, with lots of money, fast cars and beautiful women, and yet they were men who did not work for their money and thumbed their noses at the authorities. Even the fact that at the end of these films the gangsters were either killed or arrested did not make them any less appealing to moviegoers struggling in the Depression era. Over fifty gangster movies had been made by the end

of 1931. And of course such films were very popular with boys, which enabled the studios to rake in even more money. Yet the notorious gangster, Al Capone himself, during a press conference before going to prison, said that all gangster films should be thrown away. “They’re doing nothing but harm to the younger element,” he said. “[They] are making a lot of kids want to be tough guys, and they don’t serve any useful purpose.”¹²¹

But because the gangsters were punished in the end, and thus the lesson was put across that crime did not pay, Joy felt this rash of gangster movies did not in fact promote crime, but rather the opposite. He did not want to be seen as narrow-minded, but constructive as far as possible in his censorship; and so these movies were passed by him. But his approach was anathema to censorship boards, and he had an ongoing struggle to convince them that he was right. As one author put it, “With the chair of the Studio Relations Committee going around the country lobbying for crime films, Code supporters began to wonder if the fox had been appointed to protect the henhouse.”¹²²

***Little Caesar* (1930): Just a Nod to the Roman Catholic Religion**

This, one of the most famous gangster films of all time, like other gangster films of the period pitted Roman Catholic immigrants against native-born Protestant Americans, the former being depicted as free-spirited, anti-Prohibition, etc., and the latter as puritanical spoilsports. In this film the gangster hero is a lapsed Roman Catholic, a tough immoral killer and a closet sodomite. Many railed against the film because of its apparent glorification of crime and criminals, but the lead actor, Edward G. Robinson, often stated that this was not the case, and that the film taught the Christian lesson that “he who lives by the sword shall die by it, or, the wages of sin is death.”¹²³ Doubtless this was the angle used to attempt to mollify offended Romanists and others, but more discerning people could see the real truth: that gangster movies, first and foremost, were entertainment for people in the Depression era, *not* moral lessons. One cannot watch an entire film in which the hero lives the high life by means of his criminal deeds, and then expect the audience to go home with the message that “crime doesn’t pay” merely because the hero “dies like a rat” at the end. Any supposed “morality” in such films was inserted merely to pacify religious critics.

***Public Enemy* (1931): Depicting Irish Papist Gangsterism**

This film, another gangster movie, revolves around an Irish-American immigrant family where two sons are gangsters. “Hollywood’s Irish are all shantytown papists, full of blarney and bluster.”¹²⁴ The movie is permeated throughout with the Roman Catholicism of the brothers, for in those times to be Irish was to be Papist, and everything in their world was permeated by their “Church”. But even so, the movie was certainly not a pro-Papist morality film. It was a gangster film, plain and simple, in which the gangsters happened to be Papists (as so many were). In an attempt to mollify critics, the producers added a title card in which they stated: “It is the intention of the authors of *The Public Enemy* to honestly depict an environment that exists today in a certain strata of American life, rather than glorify the hoodlum or criminal.” But again, this disclaimer was nothing more than a sop to the critics and to the new Production Code administrators. The film, like all gangster films of the time, was all about violence and vice to thrill the audience. The producers’ advertising copy, as has been correctly pointed out, revealed their real intentions far better, for there they said: “It is real, real, devastatingly real. A grim depiction of the modern menace! Come prepared to see the worst of women and the cruelest of men – as they really are!”¹²⁵ When one truly wants to get across the message that crime is evil and does not pay, one does not make a movie which focuses on the criminals’ lives with relish and in graphic detail. Plainly, some film-makers were ignoring the Code, or at most paying only scant attention to it. Jason Joy was *not* doing a good job of enforcing it.

***Scarface* (1932): Depicting Italian Papist Gangsterism**

The film’s main character, Italian immigrant Antonio Camonte, was perhaps the most disturbing of all the gangsters portrayed in movies of that era, for he was based on real-life gangster Al Capone. And just as with *Public Enemy*, the producers of *Scarface* tried to mollify critics with a prefatory title card, in which they stated that the movie was an “indictment of gang rule in America and of the callous indifference of the government to this constantly increasing menace to our safety and liberty.” But, as with *Public Enemy*, this disclaimer was simply designed as a sop to the critics and the Production Code administrators.

Director Howard Hawkes made certain that there was always a religious context to the crimes of Camonte, by including the all-pervasive symbol of the cross. It is, quite literally, almost everywhere in the film. It is seen at every depicted killing. Also, Camonte's mother is depicted in the film as an Old World Papist, superstitious, devout, trying to protect her daughter from going the same way as her evil son.

Italian Roman Catholics were not impressed. They felt the film besmirched their religion and their ethnicity. Calls were increasingly being heard for something to be done about such movies.

“Fallen Woman” Films Follow the Gangster Films

When, finally, a clampdown by Hays occurred, the studios turned to making movies with frank sexual themes and seductive actresses, such as Mae West, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo and Joan Crawford. Sex, they knew, always sells. There was a rash of “fallen woman” films. In a movie called *Possessed*, Joan Crawford was the mistress of a politician. Jason Joy challenged MGM producer Irving Thalberg over this film, but Thalberg claimed that there was no nudity in it, the subject was handled “in good taste” (how often these words have been used to justify sin!), and the Code was therefore not violated. Joy told Hays that it would be very difficult to force Thalberg to make any changes because in all likelihood a jury would rule in Thalberg's favour.¹²⁶

Joy was increasingly struggling to enforce the Code, as one “fallen woman” film followed another, each pushing the boundaries as far as they dared. Thus, despite the supposedly good influence of the Hays Office over Hollywood via the Production Code, things were going from bad to worse. “Even Irving Thalberg, whose studio had started the cycle with *Possessed*, feared that the industry was suffering from a surfeit of sex and crime pictures. He suggested as an antidote that each major studio should make ten important movies each year without any sex or crime angles, but no one, including Thalberg himself, volunteered to take the lead.”¹²⁷

Jason Joy left the Hays Office in 1932 to work as a story consultant for Fox studios, and was replaced by James Wingate. When Wingate saw the Mae West films, *She Done Him Wrong* and *I'm No Angel*, full of one-liners containing sexual innuendo, he found nothing much offensive in them and told Hays so. They were passed by Wingate,

amidst a storm of criticism from censorship boards countrywide.

Making Indecent Films of Indecent Books

It was precisely at this time of the Roman Catholic campaign against movies it deemed unsuitable, that Rome was also coming out with guns blazing against obscene and dangerous literature, calling on Papists to avoid it; and Daniel Lord was involved in this campaign as well. So was another Jesuit priest, Francis X. Talbot, who called for federal censorship of indecent novels, and who would later become an important player in the Legion of Decency. Hollywood, of course, wanted to make films of the very books that were being condemned as indecent: books by authors such as Sinclair Lewis, William Faulkner, James Joyce, Theodore Dreiser, Eugene O'Neill, and Ernest Hemingway. Talbot called some of these authors "crawling vermin"¹²⁸ – and he was right.

Paramount Studios purchased the screen rights to Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms*. The Hays Office pointed out that the book contained profanity, illicit love, illegitimate birth, and a not very flattering picture of Italy during the war. This unflattering picture of Italy offended the Roman Catholics in America, for Italy was a very Papist country. Paramount, consequently, sought to remove Hemingway's anti-Italian sentiments, toned down the illicit affair, and inserted some morality. Jesuit priest Dinneen, however, was greatly angered by the immorality in it.

RKO studios bought the screen rights to Sinclair Lewis' novel *Ann Vickers*, a book containing such themes as illicit affairs and abortion. The script was submitted to the SRD for approval, and Joseph Breen, whom Hays had hired, said that he had not read anything quite so vulgarly offensive in years, and that it would not do. James Wingate agreed, and informed RKO. The studio was livid, but eventually agreed to make some cuts, which satisfied Wingate, and the film was released, angering Roman Catholics and others. Meanwhile Hays wrote to all the film studios, saying illicit relationships in movies were never justified, and demanded that films abide by the Code.

The Hays Office and the studios were colliding.

Enter Joseph I. Breen.



CHAPTER FIVE

JOSEPH I. BREEN AND THE CODE

Joseph I. Breen and the Jesuits

Significantly, as we have seen, the top five key figures in the development of the Code were Roman Catholics with connections to the archdiocese of Chicago:¹²⁹ Martin Quigley; the Jesuits Daniel Lord and Fitz-George Dinneen; George Mundelein, the cardinal; and a Roman Catholic “layman” named Joseph I. Breen. We must now turn our attention to Breen, for he was very, very important in the history of Rome’s involvement in Hollywood.

In 1933 Breen was appointed to ensure that the Code was applied to Hollywood scripts. He was a staunch Irish-American Roman Catholic.¹³⁰ Trained as a journalist, politically conservative, a deeply committed Papist and *ardent admirer of the Jesuits*, whose brother Francis became a Jesuit priest and served on the influential Jesuit weekly, *America* (for which Joseph himself wrote a series of articles on the threat of Communism), he was strongly opposed to the public discussion of things like divorce, birth control, and abortion – especially in movies, because he believed that average moviegoers were in the 16-26 age-group, and that most of them were “nit-wits, dolts and imbeciles.”¹³¹ He was educated at St. Joseph’s College, Philadelphia, a Jesuit university, and maintained strong ties to it ever afterwards. “According to [the university’s] official historian, ‘a militant Catholicism, often typical of the Jesuits, was evident during the college’s earlier decades, when Catholics found themselves a somewhat spurned minority in an overwhelmingly Protestant nation.’”¹³²

Even Roman Catholics of that time knew of the immense power and influence of the Jesuits (though not always of their evils), as shown by Breen’s biographer when he wrote: “The Jesuits, or ‘Jebbies’ to their familiars, were the shock troops of the Catholic clergy, an exclusive fraternity within an exclusive fraternity, priests with a special

devotion to higher education, the Virgin Mary, and the propagation of the faith. As an honorific, the initials S.J. (Society of Jesus) were harder to earn and, among Catholics, more revered than a Ph.D.”¹³³ And Joe Breen was a man who was: “Nursed on the *Baltimore Catechism*, shaped by parochial schools, and guided to maturity by the Jesuits”.¹³⁴ Before taking up the job to which he would dedicate his life, that of Hollywood censor, Breen received excellent preparation. Not only was he Jesuit-educated and well-connected to the Jesuit Order via his brother, but he also formed close connections and at times friendships with various Jesuits and other prominent Papists – priests, politicians, businessmen. Even those who were not Jesuits themselves were usually Jesuit-educated and had close Jesuit connections. In particular, he was mentored by the Jesuit priest Wilfred Parsons, whom we have met before, the editor of the influential Jesuit magazine, *America*, and a Romish Monsignor named W.D. O’Brien, editor of the Roman Catholic monthly *Extension Magazine*. Breen wrote for both magazines throughout the 1920s.

This man, who was to play such an immense part in controlling Hollywood during its “Golden Age”, remained under the Jesuits’ spell for the rest of his life. Hollywood during that time, it can therefore be safely said, was to a huge extent under the control of the Jesuits via their man, Joseph Breen.

His biographer wrote of him: “Joe Breen, the consummate insider, backstage operator, and go-to guy. For twenty years, from 1934 until 1954, he reigned over the Production Code Administration, the agency charged with censoring the Hollywood screen, an in-house surgical procedure officially deemed ‘self-regulation.’ Though little known outside the ranks of studio system players, this bureaucratic functionary was one of the most powerful men in Hollywood. His job – really, his vocation – was to monitor the moral temperature of American cinema.”¹³⁵ Yes, it was – *and to see to it that Hollywood reflected Roman Catholic morality*. In 1936 *Liberty* magazine wrote that Breen “probably has more influence in standardizing world thinking than Mussolini, Hitler or Stalin. And, if we should accept the valuation of this man’s own business, possibly more than the Pope.”¹³⁶ Such was the immense power of Hollywood that this statement was all too true – except that Breen, being a faithful servant of the pope of Rome, carried

out Rome's wishes. He had even formed a friendship with the future pope of Rome, Pius XI, when the latter was still a monsignor and the papal attaché in Warsaw and Breen was a foreign correspondent there.

How Breen's Career Got Started

How did Breen's career as "Hollywood's censor" get started?

In 1925 he was appointed as publicity director for the 28th International Eucharistic Congress, a worldwide gathering of Roman Catholics to be held in Chicago in 1926. This was the first such event held in the United States, and in a very Roman Catholic city. The reason for this was that the previous year, some 50 000 members of the Ku Klux Klan had marched through Washington, DC, and Romish cardinal, George Mundelein, believed that a Eucharistic Congress on a vast scale would present a bold face to anti-Roman Catholic organisations.

Joe Breen was in his element and this event launched his life's work. The Congress, the Romish *Brooklyn Tablet* gushed, was: "The most impressive religious spectacle the world has witnessed, perhaps since the Savior was put to death on Calvary." Even the secular press was full of praise, with the *Chicago Tribune* describing it as "the most colossal prayer meeting and song service in the authentic annals of Christendom." It was a public relations dream-come-true for the Roman Catholic institution in America. It was, in a very real sense, the coming of age of American Roman Catholicism. And Breen was at the centre of it. His career was made.

Coverage of the Congress was given to International Newsreel and the Fox Film Corporation; and Fox not only paid for a feature-length documentary of the Congress but also donated exclusive copyright and all profits from the film to the Roman Catholic institution! This was because, whereas almost all Hollywood studios were run by Jews at this time, Fox was now run by Winifred "Winnie" Sheehan, an Irish-American Papist. Only one other major studio was run by another Irish-American Papist, and that was FBO, under Joseph P. Kennedy. Of course, this generous action on Fox's part was not without an eye to the long-term investment of a partnership between Fox and the Papacy, but naturally Sheehan was also serving his "Church".

And it was Martin Quigley who brokered the deal between Fox and

the “Church”. He and Breen worked together to bring the project to fruition. These two devout Papists viewed it as a missionary project to spread Roman Catholicism to the ends of the earth. The film (called *Eucharistic Congress* for short) was described as “the screen’s greatest man-made spectacle.” The film did very well in Roman Catholic cities, with standing-room-only crowds in theatres, but not well in the Protestant heartland of the country – a fact which Breen attributed to the “anti-Catholic bigotry in certain parts of this country”.¹³⁷ The truth is, America at that time was still far more Protestant than Roman Catholic.

But this film did something else. It showed the moviemakers in Hollywood that there was money to be made by pandering to Roman Catholics – a lot of money. In the words of *Variety* magazine, the Fox-Papist collaboration on this film “*certainly tied up the picture business for all time with the churches.*”¹³⁸ The “Church” of Rome was to dominate Hollywood for a very long time to come.

Breen: Rome’s Man for the Times

By the end of 1932, the calls for government regulation of Hollywood were becoming much louder, from both religious and educational institutions. Then in 1933, the Payne Fund financed a series of twelve studies on the effect the movies had on children. These studies were then condensed into a book by Henry James Forman, entitled *Our Movie-Made Children*, which pulled no punches: movies, it said, were having a terrible effect on the morals of the young. Will Hays called a meeting of the board of directors of the MPPDA and told them that unless the Code was adhered to, government regulation of the industry would become inevitable. The result was that the directors signed an agreement which re-affirmed the Code.¹³⁹

Will Hays attempted to act tougher via the Studio Relations Committee. The Jesuit Daniel Lord was invited by Hays to assist James Wingate in 1933, but Lord said no. He was utterly disillusioned with Hollywood, convinced that movies were actually worse now under the Code than they had been prior to its adoption, and he maintained that this was primarily Wingate’s fault. He wanted nothing more to do with the Hays Office.

Things were not going well for the Roman Catholic creators of the

Code. They needed someone to take a very firm stand and clean up Hollywood's mess. Wingate was not that man and Hays could not be trusted. Hays came under heavy criticism from *America's* priest Gerard Donnelly. Jesuit priest Parsons and Martin Quigley now became inclined towards the idea of government censorship as the only, albeit very flawed, solution to Hollywood's slide.

Lord was asked by his friend Cecil B. DeMille to act as consultant on the latter's latest religious epic, *The Sign of the Cross*, and he agreed. As we have seen, DeMille was known for hiding behind his religious epics to introduce sex into his films, and this film was no exception. It supposedly made Roman Catholics into the heroes – at least, that was what DeMille himself always claimed (he was claiming that the first-century Christians were in fact Roman Catholics, which of course they were not). But this was not true and DeMille played up the debauchery of the Romans. For him, depicting their sensual pleasures was far more important than what was happening to the “Catholic” martyrs. As always, he simply used certain historical facts with a religious slant to sell his film, which was more devoted to pagan debauchery than Roman Catholic doctrine. Exciting the viewer's lust was more important to him than any “Christian” theme. The pagan women were scantily clad, the “Catholics” were modestly attired, the emphasis was always on the pleasures of the flesh. Even lesbianism was implied in one scene.

The actual Roman Catholicism in the film was very wishy-washy and ambiguous, with the emphasis being more on romantic love between a “Catholic” woman and a pagan man than on even proper conversion to the “Catholic” faith. Lord complained that the pagan orgies and banquets in the film made sin seem fascinating, and the “Christians” virtuous behaviour dull by comparison. Wingate initially had some complaints, but DeMille managed to satisfy him by making some cuts. Lord himself did not preview the film, and when it was released he was shocked, with its scenes of seduction, sensuous dancing, and implied homosexuality and lesbianism.¹⁴⁰ Lord suggested cuts. The Roman Catholic press blasted the film, especially the dance scene, and Joseph Schrembs, bishop of Cleveland, denounced it in a sermon. DeMille appeared taken aback by all the negative criticism, and wrote to Roman Catholic critics in an attempt to defend his movie, but essentially to no

avail. Readers of Romish papers were urged to boycott the film.

Roman Catholic pressure on Hollywood mounted, and Will Hays met with DeMille to see what could be done. But DeMille was adamant: he was not going to change anything in the film. Ironically, then, a film which its maker purported to be about “Catholic” heroes and martyrs actually played an important part in the formation of the Roman Catholic Legion of Decency, aimed at seeing to it that films did not portray Romanism unfavourably!¹⁴¹

The Papist criticism of Hollywood increased tremendously in 1933. Priests and people felt that the time had come to act decisively. The Papist press issued calls for something to be done. The Papist creators of the Code and their allies knew that this was the moment of truth: the Code they had come up with needed to be properly enforced, and this was their opportunity to do so.

In Joseph Breen they found the man they needed.

Breen was first brought to Hollywood in 1931 by Will Hays, president of the MPPDA, who wanted “a well-connected and media-savvy Roman Catholic layman” as his assistant.¹⁴² His duty, as “assistant to the president” (of the MPPDA), was to maintain friendly relations with the Roman Catholics who were always up in arms over something or other emanating from Hollywood, and to smooth their ruffled feathers. As a fellow-Papist who understood his people, Breen was ideally placed for the job. But it was a two-way street: Breen reported to Hays on the Papist mood, but simultaneously Breen was approached by Papists to put pressure on Hays. Breen cleverly worked things so well that he became the indispensable middle man. His own position was thus a very secure one. And always, first and foremost, he was a Roman Catholic. His biographer wrote: “The MPPDA only provided his day job; the Church of Rome held his immortal soul. He would render unto Hays due service, but his true mission was to convert Hollywood.”¹⁴³ This was the reason why he had taken the job, the purpose to which he devoted pretty much the rest of his days. He wanted a *Roman Catholic* Hollywood, and he lived and breathed to achieve that objective.

Breen was the man who really had the power. For it was Breen, not Hays, who literally read through and commented on every single movie script of that era. He became known as the “Hitler of Hollywood”. He

believed that films should promote high morals (Papist morals, that is).

Breen was ambitious. Hays had given him a job, but he wanted more. He wanted to be in charge of it all. Not even a year after getting the job, he wrote a long letter to Hays, saying the industry needed “the best man in America” to control publicity, and ended by saying, “Don’t you see what an opportunity such a job offers?” Although he did not go so far as to state that he believed he himself was the perfect candidate, he did hint that the right man might already be working in a department in Hays’ office. And it was not that long afterwards when Hays appointed him as head of public relations for the West Coast.¹⁴⁴

When Breen began to assist James Wingate with the reviewing of scripts and films, it was learned that Universal was going to make a movie of a novel called *The Seed*, and it was believed that this film would promote contraception, which in all forms was anathema to Roman Catholics. Breen put pressure on Universal to re-write the script, and he was able to write triumphantly to the cardinal Mundelein that the studio had accepted “our Catholic viewpoint against the sneers of the opposition.”¹⁴⁵

It soon became clear to Will Hays that Breen was a far better man than Wingate for Wingate’s job. And just as importantly as Breen’s toughness was his devout Romanism. Breen, however, distrusted Hays and believed he was afraid of taking a stand and preferred to compromise. He also spoke his mind about what he thought of Hollywood’s movers and shakers (most of whom were Jews): “most are a foul bunch,” he wrote to Jesuit priest Fitz-George Dinneen, “crazed with sex, dirty-minded and ignorant in all matters having to do with sound morals. I don’t suppose five percent have a shred of religion.”¹⁴⁶

In early 1934 Breen was formally appointed as the head of the Studio Relations Committee, the body tasked with enforcing screen morality, to represent Will Hays and the MPPDA on matters pertaining to the Production Code. In this way the Studio Relations Committee was being re-created as a new agency under the MPPDA, not the AMPP. A few months later he took control of the Production Code Administration (PCA), which replaced the Studio Relations Committee. The PCA was popularly referred to as the “Hays Office”, but in truth it was Breen who became the real power within it, and he ruled it with a very firm

hand, having the final say over the contents of literally hundreds of movies every year. Breen's work was to approve – or disapprove – of scripts and films. He made it clear that he saw his job as carrying out some “real Catholic action”, “to lessen, at least, the flow of filth”.¹⁴⁷

Once Breen came into this position, “Roman Catholics exerted a virtual veto power over the visible universe of Hollywood's Golden Age – and the man wielding the gavel was no lackadaisical Midnight-Mass-at-Christmas Catholic but a self-described soldier in ‘the Church Militant.’”¹⁴⁸

The *New York Times* put it like this: “[Breen] finds himself not advising but actually writing portions of the script. There is a sizable and embarrassing list of successful films for which he has written whole sequences: there is at least one in which he outlined the entire treatment.”¹⁴⁹

Some would argue that Breen, as head of the PCA, was not a censor in the strict sense; for the State did not enforce his censoring of freedom of expression. He was in fact employed by a group of private companies. As one producer, Arthur Hornblow, Jr., put it, “It is a mistake to think of the Production Code Administration as a form of censorship, a sort of policeman patrolling a beat. We are responsible members of a responsible profession, and the Code is the articulate enunciation of the ethical standard we have set up for ourselves.”¹⁵⁰ He compared the Code with the doctors' Hippocratic Oath. However, Breen *was* a censor for all practical purposes, and there is no getting around it.

Breen's Interpretation and Enforcement of the Code

Breen himself left no doubt of what he sought to do in Hollywood by enforcing the Code. He told Jesuit Dinneen in 1934 that his purpose was to establish “an overall authority which would function on a platform of Catholic understanding and interpretation of moral values.”¹⁵¹ Clear enough!

Breen went to his task with a will, fighting with film producers and enforcing the Code. He maintained that every movie had to have “sufficient good” in it to compensate for any evil it contained, and that every movie had to have a good moral character in it, making it clear to the bad guys in the movie that they were wrong. He lost no time in

waging war against such things as prostitution, narcotics, sex and rough language that were common in many movies already, even in those days. If scripts did not live up to the standard, deletions and changes had to be made. Movie themes were not to be depressing. Middle-class social standards were not to be disparaged. The top-billed “star” in the movies was expected to respect all lawful authorities and to speak out for good morals. Divorce was expected to be portrayed as sinful. Adultery was to be portrayed as sinful and shown to be punished. Marriage was to be upheld as sacred. Heterosexual monogamy alone was to be portrayed as normal, with all other sexual behaviour to be removed from the movies. The naked human body was not to be shown, and nor was a clothed human body to be shown in a revealing or sexually provocative way. Kissing on-screen was permitted, but passionate, prolonged or lustful kissing was not. Although they were so obviously immoral as not even to be mentioned in the Code, Breen made it clear that sadism, homosexuality, incest, etc., were not permitted to be even hinted at in films.

Of course, clever Hollywood directors could always find ways around many of the restrictions – not by actually showing sex scenes, but certainly by hinting at them, by their use of lighting, fading out the pictures, etc. Audiences simply had to read the signs, looking for the hinted messages of what was being suggested behind what was actually shown.

Anything which he deemed to be “subversive of the fundamental law of the land” was forbidden. Any Communistic propaganda was banned. Insurrections against priests, pastors, police or politicians were strictly forbidden. Although individual policemen might be shown to be corrupt, the police force as a whole had to be always shown as honest, a force for good. Such things as drinking, jazz music, and married women going out to work were to be portrayed in a bad light. Inter-racial romance was not permitted. Clothing was to be modest. Swimming or sleeping naked was forbidden. Even married couples could not be shown to be sharing a double bed.

Women were to be portrayed as virtuous, and treated in a way bordering on reverence – influenced no doubt by Breen’s Popish veneration of Mary as much as by his respect for women. Indeed, in many films of the “Breen period”, “the backlit halos and divine close-

ups of the female face in Hollywood's frame bespeak a kind of religious adoration.... The reverence flowed... from the Victorian regard for the idealized female that Breen enforced under the Code. Roughing up women, even a slang term for a young girl, was intolerable under the Breen Office in its prime." In addition, the Code forbade: "Pointed profanity (this includes the words, God, Lord, Jesus, Christ – unless used reverently – Hell, S.O.B., damn, Gawd), or every other profane or vulgar expression however used."¹⁵²

And yet hypocritically, "the man who fumigated screen dialogue was known to be foul-mouthed in his own conversation." J.P. McEvoy, a screenwriter and friend of Breen's, once wrote, "I can't give you a verbatim report of one of Joe's sulphurous speeches explaining how he won't stand for sulphurous speeches." And *Variety* magazine declared that Breen's language "would make a Billingsgate fishmonger blush", but then added, "It may sound paradoxical, but Hollywood is turning out cleaner pictures because of Joe Breen's profanity." For Breen would curse and swear at the movie moguls to get his way – and get it he did. One who knew him well said of him, "He figured... that when you got a script with coarse episodes in it, the best way to discuss the coarseness of the script was by using coarse language."¹⁵³ A physically big man, he was also known to threaten other men with bodily injury at times; and his profanity and tough guy image gave him the reputation of being a "man's man" who would take no nonsense.

"Bathroom humour" (also known as "toilet humour") of any kind was forbidden – in fact, bathrooms themselves were not to be seen at all. And no reference was ever to be made to the "call of nature" in any form. Anything considered vulgar was forbidden – even runny noses.¹⁵⁴ This was often taken to ridiculous extremes. The Breen Office "blushed at the most innocuous exposures. A cameo appearance and product placement by Elsie the Borden milk cow in RKO's *Little Men* (1940) confirmed that breast oversight was not restricted to *homo sapiens*.... 'At no time should there be any shots of actual milking, and there cannot be any showing of the udders of the cow; they should be suggested rather than shown' [said Breen]."¹⁵⁵

Today people would laugh at such restrictions. Certainly many of them (such as the "no bathrooms" and "no runny noses" rules) were utterly ridiculous, while others (such as the prohibition on inter-racial

romance) were just wrong. But as can be seen from the above, there were other things forbidden by the Code which every true Christian would of course agree were sinful (even though, as we have seen, knowing that something is sinful and should not therefore be viewed is not the same thing as supporting media censorship by a religious or political body, which is never a good thing). Even Rome gets some aspects of morality right, and no Christian would deny that movies which attack morality, and lower moral standards, are harmful. However, that is not the issue here: what is at issue is that this Code was drawn up by a Jesuit priest, and then enforced by another faithful Roman Catholic. Papists were now the regulators of the movie industry. They were now the ones who decided what movies people could see. It was a triumph for the Roman Catholic institution in its bid to control every aspect of the movie industry for its own purposes.

And far more sinister than Roman Catholic regulation of movie morals, was Roman Catholic regulation of how *Roman Catholicism itself* was portrayed in movies. This is what the Production Code had to say about religion in the movies: “No film or episode may throw *ridicule* on any religious faith. *Ministers of religion* in their characters as ministers of religion should not be used as comic characters or as villains. *Ceremonies* of any definite religion should be carefully and respectfully handled.”¹⁵⁶ And Breen saw to it that priests, nuns, and Romish rituals and objects were portrayed in such a way that they did not offend Romanists. They also had to be accurately portrayed. For example, when Romish director, Alfred Hitchcock, made the movie *I Confess* in 1953, he had to ensure that it not only met the Production Code’s standards, but also that it met the rubrics set out for priests administering the Romish “sacrament of penance.” To make sure of this, Breen and a Romish priest/advisor checked the script.¹⁵⁷ The same kind of strict control was exercised over the making of *The Song of Bernadette* in 1943, even though it was a pro-Papist film. Lines in the script which merely *appeared* to be critical of the Roman Catholic “Church” were recommended for deletion; the priest’s contempt for Bernadette was toned down; and priests and nuns were on the set often and contributed advice on the proper method of carrying out Romish rituals, in obedience to Breen who had recommended to Henry King,

the film's Roman Catholic director, that he "secure the services of a very competent Catholic priest, who will serve as a technical advisor on this picture. We think it is enormously important that you have a very competent priest read the script thoroughly in order to check much of the dialogue and action." A Romish priest named John J. Devlin, the executive secretary of the Legion of Decency, was the priest who was watchdog over many movies coming out of Hollywood in those years.¹⁵⁸

Although the Production Code prohibited movies from portraying *any* religious leader as a villain or in a comic manner, the fact is that Breen paid more attention to Roman Catholic matters than to Protestant ones. This was not surprising, given that Breen was a Papist, but it definitely shows up the impossibility of a member of one religion treating all religions equally or fairly. Naturally one will pay particular attention to one's own religion, and Breen did just that.¹⁵⁹ The Production Code was in Rome's hands, and Rome was going to milk it for all it was worth.

A real contradiction in the Code was the way in which it dealt with black Americans. On the one hand, the Code stated categorically: "Miscegenation (sexual relationship between the white and black races) is forbidden" in movies; yet on the other hand, it stated: "The history, institutions, prominent people and citizenry of other nations shall be represented fairly." Blacks, like all others, were to be treated fairly in movies, as long as no miscegenation was allowed.

The miscegenation clause had been added to the Code's third draft in 1930 with an eye to the bottom line: if films were to make money in the American South, there could be no miscegenation shown. Both Quigley and Lord were dead against this clause in the Code, however. But there it was and there it stayed, for many years. Only after World War Two was it seriously challenged.

Breen's censorship meant that movies based on popular novels often ended up bearing almost no resemblance to the novel at all. The situation, then, was that immoral novels were not censored, but immoral movies *of* those novels were. To many this may sound like a good thing, a kind of halfway victory for better morals: "Well, the

novel might be filled with sex and crime, but at least the movie isn't." But in truth it is not a good thing at all. This "halfway" censorship would mean many would think the book is as "clean" as the movie, and would thus read the book after seeing the movie, thereby defeating the "halfway" censorship in the first place; but on the other hand, if *full* censorship is applied, to books as well as movies, such censorship is entirely up to the whims and fancies of whoever is doing the censoring – and inevitably this leads to censorship of Christian materials and can even lead to persecution of Christians in the long run. The censorship of immoral books or movies simply cannot be entrusted to unregenerate men. It is up to *individuals* to simply refuse to read immoral books or watch immoral movies. This is the correct kind of censorship. If a book or movie is bad, it should just be shunned. It is not the place of a government to tell us what can or cannot be considered "moral", and also, when such power is placed in the hands of one religion, this is a very dangerous thing. A Nanny State turns its citizens into babies needing to be spoon-fed by the supposedly "all-wise" authorities, and a "Nanny Religion" means, in effect, that all the country's citizens are under that religion's power.

Breen's Staunch Anti-Protestantism

Breen, with his Jesuit university education, was a militant Papist who described those who viewed Romanism as a religio-political system seeking the destruction of Americanism as "stupid and ill-informed".¹⁶⁰ Of course, this was his "official" position; but being the well-educated son of the Jesuits that he was, he must have known that this was *precisely* what the Papacy was plotting to do – and heartily approved of it. Passionate about America and the American way of life he may well have been, but he wanted a *Papist* America all the same. As he himself said in 1922 when he worked for the National Catholic Welfare Conference: "We stand for the preservation of the faith among our Catholic foreign born who come here among us. We stand for loyalty and devotion to America, its government, its institutions, its ideals."¹⁶¹ In truth, the Jesuits have *never* stood for the government, institutions, and ideals of America, and as they indoctrinated their servant Joe Breen, he would have been well versed in the Jesuit tactic of saying one thing but meaning another. Perhaps he, personally, would stand

for America – but only as long as America could be slowly transformed into a Roman Catholic nation. As his biographer put it: “He assailed the Ku Klux Klan, Bolshevism, the British Empire, and any other menace, foreign or domestic, to the Catholic Church.”¹⁶²

He was strongly anti-Protestant. When he edited the official monthly magazine of the NCWC from May 1923 to March 1924, he would deride any “anti-Catholic bigot who has the misfortune to be at the same time brainless”, as he put it. Hating America’s Prohibition era, he referred to Protestant teetotaling women and ministers as a “horde of female fanatics” and “Protestant ‘gentlemen of the cloth’” who “seem to be ever-ready to poke their noses into the other fellow’s business”.¹⁶³ Yet he failed to see the irony of the fact that, although condemning Protestants for forcing their morality on everyone else via Prohibition, as Hollywood’s censor *he himself* was always ready to poke his nose into “the other fellow’s business” and insist on forcing his own Papist morality on Hollywood!

Breen’s Hatred of the Hollywood Jews

As we have seen, in its very early years the Code was almost ignored by the film studios. From Los Angeles in 1932 Joseph Breen complained that “nobody out here cares... for the Code or any of its provisions.” Writing to Wilfrid Parsons, Breen said that Hays may have thought “these lousy Jews out here would abide by the Code’s provisions but if he did he should be censured for his lack of proper knowledge of the breed.” He added that the Code would fail in Hollywood because the Jews, who controlled the studios, were “dirty lice” and “the scum of the earth.” Moreover, he said that the whole American nation was being “debauched by the Jews” and the movies they made.¹⁶⁴

Breen believed it was his purpose in life to force the immoral Jewish film-makers to make moral films in accordance with the Roman Catholic religion, via pressure at the box office. Martin Quigley took a somewhat different approach: he too believed in box office pressure to force Hollywood to clean up its act, but instead of blaming the Jewish owners, producers and writers solely, he also blamed the “Church” of Rome itself for not keeping up the pressure on Hollywood to force the studios to stick to the Code.

Breen hated Jews and this comes out clearly in his words. In this

he was no different from a great many Roman Catholics of his time, for Rome has hated the Jews for centuries, and in a few short years Hitler, a Roman Catholic himself, would embark on a diabolical plot to eradicate Jews *en masse*, and would receive immense support from Romanists in Germany and other parts of the world. The Roman pope, Pius XII, would give tacit support to Hitler in his treatment of the Jews (recent Roman Catholic attempts to whitewash him notwithstanding).¹⁶⁵ Breen, like his papal master, viewed Jews as untrustworthy and greedy. In 1932 he wrote to Martin Quigley, “The fact is that these ... Jews are a dirty, filthy lot. Their only standard is the standard of the box-office. To attempt to talk ethical value to them is time worse than wasted.”¹⁶⁶ To priest Parsons Breen wrote: “These Jews seem to think of nothing but money making and sexual indulgence. People whose daily morals would not be tolerated in the toilet of a pest house hold the good jobs out here and wax fat on it. The vilest kind of sin is a common indulgence hereabouts and the men and women who engage in this sort of business are the men and women who decide what the film fare of the nation is to be. You can’t escape it. They, and they alone, make the decision. Ninety-five per cent of these folks are Jews of an Eastern European lineage. They are, probably, the scum of the scum of the earth.”¹⁶⁷

Moreover, he held it was ludicrous to believe that “these dirty lice would entertain, even for an instant, any such procedure as that suggested by a Code of Ethics”. He also turned his guns on Wall Street bankers, who watched as America was “debauched by the Jews. Some bankers may – some of the Jew Bankers. But you can’t make me believe that our American bankers, as a general thing, have fallen so low that they will permit their money to be used to paganize this nation.”¹⁶⁸

Breen called on Roman Catholics “to get after the Jews in this business”. He called a Warner Brothers district manager “a kike Jew of the very lowest type.”

The irony was that Breen, while bitterly complaining about what the Jews were seeking to do to America, was serving the interests of a monolithic religious power (Roman Catholicism) that was seeking to destroy America – the very thing he accused the Jews of seeking to do!

It is beyond dispute that in the United States of America, Jews, though a tiny percentage of the population at the time, had risen to prominence in all kinds of fields: politics, entertainment, sports, arts, science, business – and especially in Hollywood! “The names of William Fox, Louis Mayer, Adolph Zukor, Marcus Loew, Samuel Goldwyn, the Warner brothers, Carl Laemmle, etc., are so permanently identified with the movie industry that the Jewish trademark on the movies is virtually indelible,” declared the *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle* in 1934. “The Jewish angle is not being dragged into the movie issue; it exists, whether you like it or not.”¹⁶⁹

And this total dominance of Hollywood by Jews was of deep concern to Roman Catholic – and Protestant – America. In *Columbia*, the official magazine of the Romish Knights of Columbus, Karl K. Kitchen wrote in 1922: “Pants pressers, delicatessen dealers, furriers, and penny showmen started in the picture business when it was in infancy and they are now the type of ‘magnates’ who preside over its destinies today. If the Jews who shaped its policies were cultured gentlemen of taste and refinement there would be no occasion to find fault with them. But the men who control the motion picture industry are foreign born Jews of the lowest type.”¹⁷⁰ The *Catholic Standard and Times* called Hollywood a “school of vice” and said the men in charge of the studios were “by race and conviction, alien to the ideals of Christendom.” In the *Ecclesiastical Review* in 1934, Romish bishop John J. Cantwell of Los Angeles gave his name to a piece in which was found the following: “Jewish executives are the responsible men in ninety per cent of all the Hollywood studios. If these Jewish executives had any desire to keep the screen free from offensiveness, they could do so. It is not too much to expect that Hollywood should clean house, and that the great race which was the first custodian of the Ten Commandments should be conscious of its religious traditions.” It turned out that Joseph I. Breen had actually ghostwritten Cantwell’s piece!¹⁷¹

Breen was right, of course: if the Jewish studio owners wanted to clean up Hollywood, they could have done so. But they did not want to. They were using Hollywood to lower western morality. But these were not Jews who loved their religion and believed in the Ten Commandments. These were men who were Jews, not by religion

but by descent, and who were opposed to morality, Christianity, and even common decency, serving (often without knowing it) the Marxist cause. And they could be just as foul-mouthed as Breen. “Whether in Yiddish or English, the Jewish moguls matched the Catholic censor in linguistic crudeness. In moments of anger, the foul-mouthed Harry Cohn [a Jew], head of Columbia Pictures, did not refer to Frank Capra [an Italian], his ace director, as a vertically impaired gentleman of Sicilian heritage.... According to Pete Harrison, Joseph M. Schenck – Loews Theater tycoon, founder of Twentieth Century Pictures, and Russian-born Jew – spat out an expression at the Roman Catholic Church ‘so foul that it cannot be printed’ when the prominent Catholic lawyer Joseph Scott and the financier Dr. A.H. Giannini met with the Association of Motion Picture Producers in 1933 to warn about the storm brewing among the Catholics.... the Hollywood moguls were not delicate flowers cringing before a clerical Gestapo.”¹⁷²

It was war: war between two powerful sides, both fighting for dominance over the dream factory called Hollywood. And no quarter was given.

Such anti-Jewish sentiments were not unique to Breen at that time. Prior to World War Two, when Hitler’s elimination of millions of Jews shocked the world and changed its attitude towards them, people all over the western world had little liking for the Jewish people. And this attitude towards them was very much encouraged by the fact that so many Jews were committed Communists and were using their wealth to advance the international Communist cause. Hollywood became a major weapon in the Communist arsenal. In addition, the Papal institution itself had been rabidly anti-Jewish for centuries, had persecuted Jews, and stirred up its millions of members to hate Jews. Breen, faithful Papist that he was, was merely spouting the anti-Jewish hatred so prevalent within his “Church” at the time – ironically, his accusations often based on truth about what Jewish Communists were doing. After World War Two, when the Roman Catholic Adolf Hitler was defeated and with his defeat the plans of the Papacy to use Nazism to advance Romanism across the world, and also with the dawn of the ecumenical and interfaith movements, Rome started to sing a different tune and to smile upon and speak well of the Jews; but it was, and is, all

a front. It is a change of tactics, that is all. Rome still hates the Jews.

Breen, however, despite his strong dislike of the Jewish moguls controlling Hollywood, was, at other times, far milder in his statements about Jews than in the quotations given above, even at times speaking admiringly of them and praising them. This seems to be a contradiction, and indeed it may be that, like most people, Breen was sometimes in favour of what at other times he was against. People frequently change in their attitudes, sometimes swinging back and forth, depending on all kinds of factors. They can at one time admire something in a person of a different race, and even wish that person well, whereas at another time they may speak disparagingly of every member of that race. One frequently sees this in the attitude of whites to blacks, and *vice versa*. But more than just a contradiction within himself, one can also perceive, in his attitude to Jews, the dichotomy of so many American Roman Catholics. On the one hand, being Americans, they are raised from childhood in the American ideals of equality, “one nation under God”, the “melting pot” concept, where all men deserve the opportunity to find their place in the sun and should be treated with respect. On the other hand, they are raised from childhood in the doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion, an autocratic, top-down hierarchical system which allows no dissent, and which makes it abundantly plain that Roman Catholics are above all others, and that Romanism must be advanced by all faithful Papists throughout the world. Romanism has never sat easily alongside Americanism.¹⁷³ In fact, Romanism is decidedly anti-American and always has been – *must* be, by its very nature. It seeks to conquer America, but the difficulty it has always faced is that Americans are raised with ideals far removed from that of Roman Catholicism. This is why, far more so than, say, in Europe, so many American Roman Catholics end up either leaving their religion outright, or at least seriously questioning, and even rebelling against, many of its teachings.

Joseph Breen was a rabid Romanist, but he was also an American. And this fact well explains his sometimes contradictory statements about Jews. Sometimes his Americanism overcame his Romanism. And sometimes not. Especially when he was fighting daily with immoral Jewish moguls in Hollywood.

Breen's Later Apparent About-Face Regarding the Jews

Then, too, there was something else which actually made him far less anti-Jewish as the decade of the 1930s ended and World War Two began, and eventually led to an about-turn on his part: Nazism. Although his "Church" was enthusiastically backing Hitler, Mussolini and Franco, Breen, as an American, was extremely anti-Nazi. Most American Roman Catholics were blissfully unaware of the Vatican's pro-Nazi stance, or of what it hoped to gain from a Nazi victory in Europe. There most certainly were pro-Nazi Roman Catholics in America, and they did their best to swing American Roman Catholics to Hitler's side; but it was an uphill struggle. American Papists, raised in the ideals of Americanism, could see nothing good in Hitler. And nor could Breen. And, because he was anti-Nazi, his sympathies towards the Jews, suffering such terrible atrocities at the hands of the Nazis, increased.

Breen joined with many other Hollywood top dogs, including Irish Papist actors, screenwriters, directors and producers, Jewish producers, and agnostics, in seeking to promote anti-Nazism through the movies. Considering the dominance of Jews in Hollywood, it is not surprising that Hollywood was so anti-Nazi at this time. An organisation called the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League for the Defense of American Democracy was at the forefront of this campaign. But this organisation was in fact a Popular Front for international Communism: an alliance of liberals, leftists and Communists, guided from Moscow. Unfortunately, Communism advanced on a wave of anti-Nazism. And many who hated Nazism did not realise that they were being used, as pawns, to advance an ideology just as evil as Nazism.

Breen was anti-Nazi, but he was also fervently anti-Communist, as most Roman Catholics were at this time. It was only after World War Two, and after the Vatican had realised that with the defeat of Nazism, Communism would become the dominant ideology of the age, and after the anti-Communist pope of Rome, Pius XII, was succeeded by the pro-Communist John XXIII – it was only after all these things that the Vatican would do a complete about-face and begin to promote Communism worldwide.¹⁷⁴ Breen, therefore, was cautious about how far he could support this Popular Front because of its Communist ties. Nevertheless, he continued to lend his name to it, doubtless because he

thought that as it was an alliance of forces against Nazism, and Nazism was the more immediate evil, it was worth supporting.

And then, when certain Roman Catholic ecclesiastics in America sought to oppose anti-Semitism in pamphlets (even though their “Church” was actively encouraging Hitler), these appeared to have a profound effect on Breen. One was written by the Code’s author, the Jesuit Daniel Lord, in 1938, entitled *Why Are Jews Persecuted?* and another was written by a priest named Joseph N. Moody and entitled *Dare We Hate Jews?* Breen saw to it that 25000 copies of Moody’s pamphlet were distributed, and he distributed over a thousand of them himself.¹⁷⁵

It would thus appear that Breen had a change of heart at this time towards the Jews. He was no longer the rabid Jew-hater of a few years previously. And when a leaflet was distributed in Los Angeles in 1938 calling on Gentiles to boycott the movies because “Hollywood is the Sodom and Gomorrha where International Jewry controls Vice – Dope – Gambling, where young Gentile girls are raped by Jewish producers, directors, casting directors who go unpunished”, and where “The Jewish Hollywood Anti-Nazi League controls Communism in the motion picture industry”, Joseph Breen sent a letter to *Box Office*, a trade weekly, in which he wrote: “I have myself received copies of this vicious and salacious leaflet.... The whole business is so revolting, and so thoroughly un-American, that I want to be the first, if possible, to lodge my protest against it.”¹⁷⁶

Yes, Breen appeared to have had a huge change of heart with regards to the Jews. If so, it is not that his Americanism triumphed over his Romanism, but rather that he had found his Americanism and his Romanism could gel on this matter. Previously he had thought that as a good Papist he had to be anti-Jewish; now, thanks to the writings of priests Lord and Moody, he felt that this did not have to be the case. And yet, ironically, the very “Church” which he loved so much was, at that very time, throwing its massive weight behind Nazism and seeking to annihilate the Jews.

Doubtless he still disliked the “filthy Jews” who controlled the studios, but Breen was no longer against Jews in general.

Besides, before the pro-Nazi pope of Rome, Pius XII, came on

the scene, his predecessor, Pius XI, had made such statements as, “it is not possible for Christians to take part in anti-Semitism.” Such statements, from the man he fervently believed to be the Vicar of Christ on earth, would doubtless have made a profound impression on Breen. In 1939 he gave his support to an organisation called the Committee of Catholics to Fight Anti-Semitism. So did Daniel Lord and Martin J. Quigley. The latter asked Breen to sign a pamphlet setting out the Romish “Church”s” supposed opposition to racism, and to get prominent Roman Catholics in Hollywood to sign it too. Breen also issued a statement, which was reprinted in the organ of the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, which said: “It is my judgment that there is nothing more important for us Catholics to do at the present moment [July 1939] than to use our energies in stemming the tide of racial bigotry and hostility.”¹⁷⁷

Besides, Breen was well aware that the Nazis were persecuting not just Jews, but Roman Catholics as well. One may wonder how, if Hitler was Papist himself and being supported by Rome, the Nazis could persecute Papists. But this just shows the complex nature of Roman Catholic politics. Roman Catholics who were anti-Nazi were expendable, as far as Rome was concerned. Those Romanists who suffered at the hands of the Nazis were invariably those who hated Nazism. The average Roman Catholic in America simply had no idea that his “Church” was sacrificing fellow-Roman Catholics so as to advance Nazism, which Rome viewed as necessary to advance Romanism itself!

On November 18, 1938, Breen and many other prominent Hollywood personnel – actors and actresses, directors, etc. – signed a telegram to President Roosevelt, which read as follows:

“The Nazi outrages against Jews and Catholics have shocked the world. Coming on the heels of the Munich pact, they prove that the capitulation to Hitler means barbarism and terror.... We in Hollywood urge you to use your presidential authority to express further the horror and indignation of the American people.”

For Breen, Nazism was about more than the persecution of Jews. He was convinced that it was also about the persecution of Roman Catholics, and that was of even greater concern to this devout Romanist.



CHAPTER SIX

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC LEGION OF DECENCY

The Legion Comes into Being

By 1933 it was obvious to Lord, Quigley and Breen that the Code was not succeeding in achieving their purposes. People were angry at the immorality of the movies – and not just Roman Catholics. They felt that Hays had failed to keep his promise to prevent dirt in the pictures. Clearly, the Code was not being enforced as the Jesuits, other Papists and even non-Papists wanted it to be. Something had to be done.

Breen persuaded Romish bishop John Cantwell to put pressure on bankers (other than Jewish bankers) to in turn put pressure on the film industry to clean up their films. 1933 was a difficult year for Hollywood financially, and also because of Hitler's rise in Germany, which made the Hollywood Jews uneasy about their position in American society. This meant that they were more open to changing their ways than they would otherwise have been. Cantwell warned that America's Romish bishops might release a joint pastoral letter condemning Hollywood. Hollywood listened. Most of the studio heads said they would stick to the Code, with Paramount going so far as to appoint a Roman Catholic as a studio censor, and MGM asking Cantwell to recommend someone whom they could take on in a similar capacity. But men such as Breen and Quigley suspected that, as usual, the Jewish studio bosses made all the right noises at all the right times, but would soon revert back to their old ways. They felt that more needed to be done to keep the studios in line.

As we have seen, in 1933 a book was published entitled *Our Movie-Made Children*, by Henry James Forman, summarising publications written by respected academics, in which films were blamed for corrupting the youth of America. This of course was (and still is) very true, as anyone with eyes in his head can see. And the book's publication was

fortuitous for the Roman Catholics Lord, Quigley and Breen. Quigley realised that Hollywood was, as a result, now more open than ever to pressure, and so he campaigned for more Roman Catholic involvement in the control and censorship of the industry. The pope of Rome's new representative in the USA, the Romish monsignor Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, met with Quigley and Breen and, in a speech in which he included a draft statement prepared by Quigley, called for Roman Catholics to take a strong stand against immoral movies. "Catholics are called by God, the Pope, the Bishops, and the priests," he said, "to a united and vigorous campaign for the purification of the cinema, which has become a deadly menace to morals."¹⁷⁸ It was a declaration of war. America's Popish bishops had been rallied to the cause, and they could not ignore it. And this is how, in that same year of 1933, the powerful Roman Catholic Legion of Decency was founded as well, by both bishops and Romish "laymen", as we shall see.

Breen continued to meet with influential Papists to drum up support as the bishops' annual meeting drew closer. As ghostwriter for a report Cantwell was to "write" on the movies for *Ecclesiastical Review*, Breen got Cantwell to end the report by recommending that the bishops form a committee to study the issue of movies. This, as Breen remarked, was "to keep the Jews worried", for such a committee would "keep suspended over the heads of the producers the sword which is now threatening to decapitate them."¹⁷⁹

At the conclave of bishops in Washington in that year Cantwell gave a speech, saying that the movies, which had always been vulgar, were now also being used to educate people in a "sinister and insidious" philosophy of life. They attacked marriage and the family as being outdated, they condoned such sins as divorce, sexual sins, and even inter-racial marriages (which he held was race suicide). They thereby lowered public and private morals.

Biblically, there is no sin in inter-racial marriages, but this was a commonly-held view of those times. Cantwell was however right about the lowering of moral standards via films. He called for strong action.

When the report was published, many bishops professed to be shocked at just how immoral the movies were, and a committee was formed to study the matter. Its head, the archbishop of Cincinnati,

John T. McNicholas, had Cantwell's report printed and distributed to "Church" leaders across America. The Roman Catholic co-chairman of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Carleton Hayes, felt that Cantwell was endorsing anti-Semitism in his report. Cantwell denied this, correctly stating that the plain fact of the matter was that Jews ran Hollywood. Another result of the Cantwell report was that Romish journals took up the cause, strongly criticising the film industry. And Romish cardinal, William O'Connell of Boston, branded movies "the scandal of the world". Clearly, Roman Catholic opposition to Hollywood was now in high gear.

And all this came in the wake of a growing realisation among America's Romanists that they were now a force to be reckoned with on the national stage. This was articulated by a priest in New York, Owen McGrath, who said that in the past, because it was a minority religion in America, the "Church" of Rome had not spoken up while Protestantism and paganism had taken America down a slippery slope to the present state of immorality, allowing immoral movies to corrupt children. But things had changed, and the "Church" of Rome was now much more powerful in America; and therefore, McGrath declared, "In the name of God let us see the battle to its glorious triumph." A similar sentiment was voiced by a bishop named John Noll, who said, "We must lay aside our inferiority complex and decide that we can do this job." He believed it could be done because one in five Americans was now Roman Catholic, and in most large cities east of the Mississippi River this proportion rose to one in two or one in three.¹⁸⁰

An Episcopal Committee on Motion Pictures (ECMP) was appointed by the bishops, in order to "clean and disinfect" the industry; and Cantwell and two other bishops were requested to co-ordinate a "Catholic Legion of Decency". With Quigley guiding them, these men decided that this Legion would create a pressure group, boycott offensive movies, and support self-regulation and conformity with the Production Code.¹⁸¹ In other words, the Legion would be at the forefront of nothing less than a national Roman Catholic assault on the film industry. And this was no idle threat: as pointed out above, *one fifth* of the American population was Roman Catholic by religion, and most of these were massed in the great cities, with Chicago and

Boston being essentially 50% Roman Catholic, and very large Romish populations in various other influential cities, among them New York, Philadelphia, Detroit and Pittsburgh. The power of Rome in the United States was immense, through its own publications or those it controlled (such as *Catholic World*, *America*, *Sign*, *Thought*, *Catholic Digest*, *Commonweal*), through the pulpits in thousands of Roman Catholic “churches” throughout the country, through radio (such as the national programme, *The Catholic Hour*), etc. A national Roman Catholic news bureau in Washington provided newspapers with a Romish take on the news. It was very evident to the Jewish studio bosses that a Papist boycott of the movies would seriously hurt the film industry financially. And this was the Depression era. The studios could not afford that kind of financial pain.

The Legion of Decency sought to ensure that Roman Catholics promised not to watch immoral movies. It had no legal power to make changes to movies, but as it spread like wildfire across America it became extremely powerful, rating every film, publishing “black lists” of objectionable films and “white lists” of the ones it considered acceptable. Almost every Romish diocese saw the formation of Legion campaigns. Lists of forbidden movies were supplied to the people by their priests. Movie houses which showed objectionable films were boycotted.

Romish archbishop, McNicholas, wrote a Legion pledge for Romanists to sign;¹⁸² and once a year during Sunday mass, Roman Catholics across the United States were obliged by their bishops to stand and recite it in unison: “I unite with all who protest against them [vile films] as a grave menace to you [Christ], to home life, to country and religion. I condemn absolutely those debauching motion pictures which, with other degrading agencies, are corrupting public morals and promoting a sex mania in our land. Considering these evils, I hereby promise to remain away from all motion pictures except those which do not offend decency and Christian morality.” Printed pledges were distributed at Romish gatherings and even outside movie theatres. Although totally accurate figures are not available, a report by the U.S. bishops suggested there could have been over five million pledgers by 1934, while another estimate from that year gave the figure as eleven million.¹⁸³ According to *Variety* magazine, “fully half of the U.S.

Catholic population of 20,000,000 can be counted upon as enlisted crusaders.⁷¹⁸⁴ No wonder the movie bosses were scared. They saw the future, and the future meant dwindling profits.

The bishops never actually came out directly and said so, but it was commonly believed, by the people in the pews who signed the pledges, that it was a mortal sin to watch an immoral movie, and the bishops were certainly not going to correct that assumption for it played right into their hands.

As for the priests themselves, the bishops warned them to stay away from the movies (for many of them flocked to watch them), thereby setting a good example to their flocks. In addition, a letter was prepared by Breen, Quigley and Cantwell and passed on to the country's bishops, who were to send it to the theatre managers in their dioceses to persuade them to do something about immoral movies by contacting the studios about them. And furthermore, the Episcopal Committee also sent a questionnaire to every parish in the United States, requesting the names of the banks which were used by local theatres, whether there were any mortgages against theatre properties, and who held these. Clearly, this was a massive, no-holds-barred Roman Catholic campaign against the film industry.

The 1934 Roman Catholic Boycott: How Irish Romanism Came to Dominate Hollywood

In his first two months at the helm, Breen rejected six movies. The producers accepted his judgment with regards to four of them, but appealed his decision with two of them, and Breen was over-ruled by the Producers Appeal Board. When he rejected the 1934 film, *Bottoms Up*, the three-man producer trio (all Jewish) of the Producers Appeal Board over-ruled him, but the movie's producer himself decided to voluntarily delete the scene Breen had found unacceptable, realising that he would have to constantly deal with Breen in the future.

The other film Breen rejected but the producers upheld was the 1933 film, *Queen Christina*, starring Greta Garbo. Breen demanded that the bedroom scenes be cut, and said that sexual immorality was portrayed in the film as attractive and beautiful, which violated the Code. The AMPP producers' jury, however, over-ruled him, and he fumed at the lack of real authority he possessed to prevent such films

from being shown. He could only suggest, but no more. As he put it: “Our machinery calls for the right of appeal to a jury made up of three producers, brothers-in-arms to the guy whose picture I may reject. This jury, you may be certain, is not likely to concur in any decision of rejection.”¹⁸⁵

It was a battle between the Roman Catholic censor and the Jewish movie producers, and both sides were determined to win. Breen well knew that if he was ever to have real power over what could be depicted in movies, things had to change. The regulators had to have the real power, not the producers.

The vast and powerful machinery of the American Roman Catholic “Church” was set in motion, to teach the Hollywood producers a lesson where it would hurt most – in their pockets. Cardinals issued warnings to their flocks not to go and watch immoral movies; at least one said they should not go to any movies at all. The Legion pledge was recited by millions of Papists. It was a nationwide Papist boycott that had producers shaking in their boots. The opposition was so intense that Hollywood would ever afterwards remember it as “the crisis of ’34” or “the storm of ’34.” According to *Billboard* magazine at the time, “One of the amazing features of the boycott campaign is the amount of publicity given the move by daily papers throughout the country. It is doubtful any similar move ever received the unanimous cooperation of the press as this boycott.”¹⁸⁶ This shows the immense power Popery exerted over the media at the time.

Roman Catholic blacklists of objectionable movies began to appear, even though at first the bishops were divided over their effectiveness. Some felt that they should just issue whitelists of good films, and ignore the bad, while others felt a far stronger approach was needed, with blacklists being issued as well. A move towards a single, national blacklist was started. In 1934 Daniel Lord wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Motion Pictures Betray America*, in which he accused Hollywood of “the most terrible betrayal of public trust in the history of our country”, and stated: “It is no longer a matter of single scenes being bad, of occasional ‘hells’ and ‘damns’, or girls in scanty costumes,” but rather “a whole philosophy of evil...depicted with an explicitness that [has] excited the curiosity of children and the emulation of morons

and criminals.”¹⁸⁷ Lord, after seeing the film *She Done Him Wrong*, told Hays that he had written the Code precisely to prevent a film like this from being screened. He demanded that Roman Catholic youth boycott the film.¹⁸⁸

What was the point of whitelists, he reasoned, since good films were so few and far between that all such films could be listed “on the back of a postage stamp and have room left over for the Declaration of Independence.”¹⁸⁹ Lord’s campaign made waves: letters of protest against immoral films poured into Hollywood from individual Roman Catholics, from chapters of the Knights of Columbus, and from various “Church” organisations. But even so, Lord’s campaign shocked Quigley, Breen and Cantwell. They felt he was going about it the wrong way and was doing more harm than good.

The top Popish players in the campaign against Hollywood were thus clearly divided as to how best to proceed. The Episcopal Committee, influenced by Quigley, supported a whitelist and did not support the IFCA’s reviews of films, believing that that women’s organisation was too lenient and that anyway it was too close to the Hays Office. Both Lord and Quigley had issues with the IFCA’s work. But Lord parted with Quigley over whether to issue only a whitelist (as Quigley desired), or a blacklist as well (as desired by Lord).

Then on May 23, 1934, the Romish cardinal Dennis Dougherty took a strong stand against Hollywood. On this day he issued a call for all the Roman Catholics in Philadelphia to boycott all movie houses, and this call was read out at all masses. He branded films as the “greatest menace to faith and morals in America today”, and then he went even further: he declared that the boycott was “a positive command, binding all in conscience under pain of sin.” This galvanised Roman Catholics into action. Millions began to stay away from the movies. The media now sat up and took note of the Legion of Decency as well, giving it reams of publicity.

In fact, the massive boycott certainly became an *ecumenical* boycott to a large extent. At a time when Protestants did not co-operate with Roman Catholics and by and large viewed Rome (correctly) as a false religion, this Romish campaign against the movies was enthusiastically supported by many Protestants and Jews. This is because Protestants

and Jews could also see the great immorality of Hollywood. The *Christian Century* made it clear that the Roman Catholic system was providing the leadership in the crusade against Hollywood, but that Protestants and Jews had responded to that leadership and to a large extent joined forces with Rome.

Not all Protestant ministers were favourable to this Romish campaign, however. As an example: in Jacksonville, Florida, printed sermons favouring the Legion were ripped up by two ministers when a member of the Ku Klux Klan said the campaign against the movies was a Popish propaganda plot.¹⁹⁰ He was not wrong.

It is one thing when, as *citizens* of a country, people all work together for the common good. It is quite another thing when professing Christians join forces with other *religions* to do so. The Christian is not to fight in social causes with those of false religions, as such. This is a tactic Rome has used ever since, with devastating effectiveness, to break down barriers and get Protestants to view Romanism as “just another Christian church”: one simply has to think of the modern anti-abortion campaign. Rome uses an evil like abortion to rally non-Romanists to its side, and thus a major step towards acceptance of Rome as Christian is taken.¹⁹¹ Likewise with what happened all those decades ago, in 1934.

Breen, naturally, was ecstatic and sure of victory, saying, “We have them on the run”, although admitting they still had a long way to go.¹⁹² Nevertheless, by June of that year it was clear that the Romish boycott in the big predominantly Romish American cities was hurting the movie producers, and hurting them badly.

Will Hays, watching the boycott bite deep into the film industry, saw this as an opportune time to increase the authority of the Hays Office by alligning it with the “Church” of Rome. Thus in May 1934 he met with Quigley for this purpose and said that Hollywood’s leaders were willing for Joe Breen to be placed in charge of the Studio Relations Committee. John McNicholas, the archbishop of Cincinnati, was going to invite Hays to a meeting of the Episcopal Committee, but Jesuit priest Dinneen said to him, “[Hays] is a foxy boy and will promise anything to stop the campaign.... My advice is to stall him off until after the meeting.... You will have them on their knees in another sixty days.”¹⁹³ So Quigley and Breen were invited to represent Hollywood

instead. Dinneen's suggestions of a national boycott of Hollywood and a national blacklist were rejected by the committee, who listened to Quigley when he presented Hays' plan, which was to strengthen the effectiveness of the Code. The result was (as shown earlier) that the MPPDA board of directors unanimously passed a resolution to replace the Studio Relations Committee with a new enforcement agency, the Production Code Administration (PCA), headed by Breen, for that very purpose – the strengthening of the Code's effectiveness. According to this, all the major studios (which were members of the MPPDA) and any producers using the MPPDA's distribution facilities (i.e. independent studios) would first have to get a movie approved by the Production Code Administration, obtaining its certificate of approval, or face a large fine and forfeit financing and bookings for their movies. Furthermore, the Producers Appeal Board was scrapped, so that it was now impossible for the producers to take care of one another and overrule Breen's decisions. From now on, a PCA decision could only be appealed to the MPPDA board of directors.

Breen, the Irish Papist, was acceptable to both the Romish hierarchy and to the moviemakers because he knew the movie business. He was now virtually all-powerful, the supreme inspector general of American cinema, as his biographer called him. He became known by various unofficial titles: the Hitler of Hollywood, the Mussolini of American films, the dictator of movie morals. Hollywood could hardly operate without him, and it knew it. As Harry Warner told his own studio, "If Joe Breen tells you to change a picture, you do what he tells you. If any one fails to do this – and this goes for my brother – he's fired."¹⁹⁴ Non-Papists sent Breen letters calling him an "agent for the Pope" and a "spy for the Papists".¹⁹⁵ They were right, for he was certainly there to do Rome's work.

How true the words of Will Hays when he said, "At last we had a police department, or at least a civilian defense force."¹⁹⁶

It was given to Breen and Quigley to get the Romish bishops, at a bishop's conference to be held a few days later, to accept this and to lift the boycott. Hays actually told the two men, "the Catholic authorities can have anything they want" – such was the power of Rome within the United States to economically cripple the movie industry. Breen, again, was ecstatic, saying, "The stage is set for a magnificent piece of

worthwhile Catholic action and achievement.”¹⁹⁷ He well knew what he hoped to achieve – nothing less than making use of the powerful medium of film to influence America for Roman Catholicism. “If we could provide some means for Catholic story tellers to tell – and write – stories based upon Catholic philosophy,” he stated in 1934, “is it unreasonable to expect that here, again, we shall see the influence of the movies showing itself upon audiences?”¹⁹⁸

The victory was Rome’s, and Jewish Hollywood was now under Irish Roman Catholic domination. As one has correctly written, “In cloth and in mufti, the coreligionists approved a censorship regime that ceded dominion of Hollywood cinema to Irish-Catholic theology for the next twenty years.”¹⁹⁹

By the end of 1934, after a massive publicity campaign, it was believed that between seven and nine million Roman Catholics had taken the Legion of Decency’s pledge. One priest accurately said that the Legion was “Catholic Action’s big opportunity.” American Roman Catholicism knew now that it was extremely powerful. In the Popish paper, *Our Sunday Visitor*; one writer declared triumphantly, “The Catholic church could put anything through it wished, and could crush anything.” This was not far off the mark. In Port Huron, Michigan, students in a Roman Catholic school were enlisted, and forced the local commissioner of police to close a film which the Romish press had condemned, and in Chicago some 70 000 students marched through the streets, holding up banners which said: “An admission to an indecent film is an admission to hell”; “Films we must see, but clean they must be.”²⁰⁰

As Breen’s authority began to be felt and films began to be edited and altered in accordance with his demands, he came in for increasing criticism from some quarters, especially from those who wanted more sex, not less, in movies. According to the *New York Times*, moviegoers in large numbers actually hissed and booed whenever the Production Code seal appeared at the start of each film. Many people believed, and rightly as we have seen, that the Roman Catholic “Church” was now essentially in charge of Hollywood. Newspaper editorials spoke

out against the Legion of Decency. But even so, as pointed out by the chairman of the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, Roy Howard, “most newspapers are frightened to death of church sentiment and especially of Catholic church sentiment”. And in support of his statement, the Hays Office discovered, when it surveyed 172 editorials concerning the Legion in early July 1934, only twenty disapproved of what the “Church” was doing.²⁰¹

Communism Creeps into Hollywood

In 1934 Maurice Rapf, son of an MGM executive, Harry Rapf, a Jew, toured the Soviet Union while still in his teens. This of course was just a few years before the outbreak of World War Two, and Hitler’s Nazism and anti-Semitism was of increasing concern to Jews, even American Jews. The young Rapf was deeply impressed by how anti-Nazi the Soviets appeared to be, and how apparently tolerant of Jews. So impressed, in fact, that he returned to Hollywood a pro-Communist radical.

His father sent him to people he knew in Hollywood in the hope that they would get him to change his mind. Harry Warner said to him, “I don’t want to talk to no [expletive deleted] Communist. Don’t forget you’re a Jew. Jewish Communists are going to bring down the wrath of the world on the rest of the Jews.”²⁰² This was the same Harry Warner who for a time supported the liberal closet Communist, Franklin Roosevelt. Harry’s brother Albert said to Rapf, “Don’t come into my office and start spouting any of that.” And Louis B. Mayer told him, “Everybody thinks that Jews are Communists,” and that Rapf owed it to the Jews to have nothing to do with Communist radicalism. Why this reaction?

The top Jewish elite of tinsel town knew what being suspected of Red sympathies would do to them, their careers, and even Jews in America generally. They knew what Nazism was about, they knew also that Communism was anti-Nazi and tolerant of Jews, but they lived in America and desired to be accepted with the cream of upper-class American Gentile society, and they certainly did not want to rock the boat by being seen to be supportive of Communism in any way. This could best be expressed in the words of another Hollywood Jew, David Selznick, who despite reading Communist literature himself advised

Raf: “Be a radical. Think anything you [expletive deleted] please. But don’t wear it on your sleeve. Don’t go around talking about it all the time because it’s going to get in the way of your career. If you want to be a moviemaker, that’s all you can do.”²⁰³

Still, the Communistic radicalisation of Hollywood had begun, and it would gather momentum in the years ahead. Hollywood’s Jewish *executives* were – at times perhaps for pragmatic reasons – against Communism; but Hollywood’s Jewish *writers* were not. These writers – playwrights, novelists, journalists – had mostly come from the eastern United States (in particular, New York) to Hollywood, and *many* of them were Socialists or Communists. In the words of one of them, Milton Spring: “My father read the *Forward* [the Jewish Socialist newspaper]. He was a member of a union. And my grandfather was a member of a union. The Jews in New York were Socialists. They were old-country Socialists... and unions and left-wing thinking of that simple sort that was so Jewish in those days was translated to their children.”²⁰⁴

Those were difficult times, the Depression and post-Depression years, and that worldwide economic collapse played into the Communists’ hands. They used it to get people to reject Capitalism and embrace Marxism. And those young Jewish writers began to write plays for the New York stage in which they railed against the real and perceived injustices of the American Capitalist system. And of course, the growing threat of Nazism played right into the Communists’ hands as well. As Nazi anti-Semitism grew in Europe and found many sympathisers in America, Jews became increasingly frightened. And thus the very real danger of one radical “ism” pushed many Jews into the arms of another radical “ism.”

When, therefore, those Jewish writers moved to Hollywood, they took their radicalised, Red ideology with them, and transferred it into their writing for movies. It was estimated that at this time, “probably 70 percent of the writers, directors, actors, and so on were liberally inclined”.²⁰⁵

The Legion of Decency’s Power

At this time (1934/35) there was often a lot of animosity and rivalry between the different Roman Catholic players involved in movie

ensorship, usually caused by the fact that some supported the movie list issued in Chicago, and others the list issued in New York. Films approved by Joe Breen were often condemned by the Legion of Decency, priests disagreed over which films should be condemned and which should not, Martin Quigley and Jesuit priest Parsons were accused of being propagandists for Hollywood who were adversely affecting the Legion's work, Jesuit priest Dinneen referred to Quigley and Parsons as traitors who were sowing division within the Romish camp, the friendship between Dinneen and Lord almost ended, and Lord and Quigley – the co-authors of the Code – were fiercely opposed to each other. This enmity between the two caused Quigley to tell a friend at one point, "I hope... to keep as far away from the clergy as possible, except on Sunday mornings."²⁰⁶

With two lists circulating, Roman Catholics were under the impression that they were free to decide for themselves which films to see and which to avoid, which was utterly unacceptable to the hierarchy. Clearly something had to be done to save the Legion campaign.

In 1935 the Romish bishops again assembled in Washington, D.C., and again they discussed movies and the movie industry. Romish archbishop John McNicholas, chairman of the ECMP, told the assembly that the Roman Catholic "Church" had successfully improved the content of Hollywood movies during the past year, and that in his judgment the Production Code Administration had been a success. He also called for Legion of Decency activities to be centralised in New York, and to issue a single Roman Catholic film viewing guide for all Roman Catholics in order to put a stop to all the arguing and fighting between the supporters of the different viewing guide lists, and between the supporters of the various approaches to classifying movies. McNicholas was supported in this by the bishop, John Cantwell. New York, they believed, should be the location because, although movies were made in Hollywood for the most part, they were usually first played in New York. The bishops agreed. The National Legion of Decency would be established in New York, under the guidance of Romish cardinal, Patrick Hayes.

Hayes appointed priest Joseph Daly as the Legion's executive secretary. Daly was also a professor of psychology. Martin Quigley moved his publishing concerns to New York so that he could give

guidance to the Legion. It was administratively under the direction of priest Edward Robert Moore.

As for who would be charged with actually determining a movie's moral values, this was given to the IFCA, the Roman Catholic women's organisation. The IFCA had been carrying out this work for years already, ever since 1922 when it had created a Motion Picture Bureau and followed the practice of praising good films and ignoring bad ones in its published film reviews. The head of the Motion Picture Bureau of the IFCA was Mary Looman. She was made its head in 1930 and held that position for over thirty years. But there were over a hundred women acting as film reviewers. The East Coast group was under the direction of Jesuit priest Francis X. Talbot, and the West Coast group was under priest John Devlin.

At first the IFCA women were sidelined once the Legion came into being, under the control of priests, because the IFCA was considered to be a puppet of the Hays Office by some; and because it followed the policy of praising good films but ignoring bad ones, this was seen as permitting Hollywood to continue producing bad ones. But after the IFCA agreed to issue a "condemned" category of movies as well, the bishops' conclave agreed to make this women's organisation the Legion's official reviewing body.

Yet again, we see the immense grip the Jesuits held over the entire censorship business in the United States, assisted by other priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and many ordinary but staunch Roman Catholics. It was a Roman Catholic stranglehold on the film industry, and it would last for decades.

The Legion created a rating system for the classification of films. There were four categories: A1 (Unobjectionable for general patronage); A2 (Unobjectionable for adults); B (Objectionable in part); and C (Condemned). Roman Catholics were forbidden to see "C" films, which were the worst kind and held by the Legion to be dangerously immoral.

Even though these Legion ratings were not part of ecclesiastical law as such, to ignore them was viewed in a very serious light by the religious leaders of the "Church" of Rome. Certainly most Roman Catholics believed that if they went to watch a film rated "C", they

would be committing a mortal sin, and the bishops were perfectly content to let them think so.

With regards to films rated as “B”, the waters were a lot muddier for the average Roman Catholic. Most priests tended to take the position that such films were hardly any better than “C” films, but still, for the average Romanist trying to figure it all out, it was not easy. In addition, what about the reviewers themselves? *They* had to watch indecent movies in order to decide on how each one should be rated; were they not committing sin by so doing? To this dilemma, Cantwell responded that no, they were not – for they were women of “virtue and judgment”. Hardly a satisfactory answer! But typical of how Roman Catholic leaders have always slithered out of such moral issues. It again just goes to show how subjective all such attempts at censorship and regulation are, when the Bible is not the standard.

Over at the Breen Office, the man was highly regarded by the “Church” hierarchy, overall, for his work in cleaning up Hollywood. Films, the bishops believed, were now far better than they had ever been. And because of Breen’s efforts at the PCA, the Legion of Decency was able to endorse the vast majority of PCA-approved films. Thus the working relationship between the PCA and the Legion was greatly improved.

The Legion became so powerful that film studios would even attempt to send their films to the Legion’s reviewers before they were released, so as to learn what the Legion considered to be objectionable in them! They knew the Legion’s power, and would delete entire scenes, change dialogue, and make all kinds of other alterations to their films just to achieve the Legion’s approval. Thus, although the Legion had no authority from the government to enforce any changes, it effectively censored films anyway merely by threatening to condemn a film of which it did not approve.²⁰⁷ It had become the moral guardian, not only of American Roman Catholics, but of *all* American moviegoers.²⁰⁸ Such was the power of Popery in Hollywood during this time! The Papal institution in America literally controlled the film industry.

Amazingly, even many of the Jewish studio bosses and other Jews in Hollywood accepted the work of the Legion and co-operated with it. Reason: they wanted profits, and profits would only be made if

people went to see the films; and the vast Roman Catholic moviegoing audiences would not attend if the films were objectionable to them. It was all about money. “The mere threat that the more than twenty million Catholics would join in unison against a single film made the Hollywood executives quake with fear.”²⁰⁹ What frightened Hollywood producers more than anything was the Legion’s “C” rating for a film – meaning the film was condemned and thus forbidden viewing for all Roman Catholics. This meant huge financial losses for the industry bosses, as Roman Catholics in their droves would stay away from the film. Producers would therefore bend over backwards to avoid a “C” rating. To do this, they had to enter into negotiations with the Legion, and if they agreed to remove anything in their films that the Legion found offensive, it would then re-classify the film, thereby allowing Roman Catholics to attend.²¹⁰

In the second place, the Jews preferred a situation where the film industry itself was acting as watchdog over the films being made, than the one that existed in England, which was regulated by the government. Jewish artists and intellectuals did not like the Code because to them it stifled “creativity” and suchlike nonsense, but on the ground many Jews supported the Legion of Decency. In fact, the Council of Jewish Women and the Sisterhood of Temple Emmanuel in Denver, Colorado, actually signed up a thousand pledgers! There was, yet again as so often in Hollywood history, a working alliance between Roman Catholics and Jews. Jewish middle-class women fought for decent movies just like Roman Catholics did, and supported Roman Catholic efforts because they saw them as working for a common goal. At this time both Romanists and Jews were still viewed, overall, as religious foreigners in the United States, and this collaboration in regulating Hollywood was an attempt to promote themselves as full citizens and part of the mainstream.²¹¹

The Legion’s power did not go unnoticed by many Protestants. There were Protestants who supported the Legion’s work simply because they hated the immorality of Hollywood; but there were others who realised the danger. They saw that Hollywood was now not only promoting immorality, but being controlled by the “Church” of Rome. They rightly viewed this as gravely dangerous to the United States.²¹²

But by this time, Protestantism in America had already changed much. It was not what it had been at the turn of the century. Liberalism had engulfed much of it. Many Protestant churches were in disarray, floundering doctrinally and full of uncertainty morally. Romanism, on the other hand, was flourishing. There were Roman Catholic schools, hospitals and orphanages, and the parish priests were exerting an ever-growing influence over their people. Irish Roman Catholic immigrants were no longer simply the underdogs of society, but were rising up the social structure. “Irish American Catholics, especially middle-class women and priests, claimed the moral high ground vacated by Protestants. In doing so, they hoped to demonstrate their superiority over other urban dwellers that included African Americans, Jews, socialists, as well as fellow Catholic Italians and Poles whose devotional life felt alien to the Irish. By claiming to be the final arbiters and enforcers of morality in filmmaking, Irish American Catholics assumed a powerful place in defining how Americans would see themselves.”²¹³

Thus the era of Irish Roman Catholic domination of Hollywood had begun in earnest, not of control of the studios themselves (for these were mainly in Jewish hands), but of the kinds of films that the Jews would be allowed to make. It would in time be replaced by Italian Roman Catholic dominance, but for now, Hollywood was dominated by Irish Papists. And Roman Catholics would control the movie industry’s “morals” well into the 1960s. Furthermore, *Jesuitism* was always present, lurking quietly in the background, pulling the strings.

Thus: “For more than three decades, from 1934 to the late 1960s, the Catholic church, through its Legion of Decency, had the power... to control the content of Hollywood films. The Catholic church’s Legion of Decency could, and did, dictate to Hollywood producers the amount of sex and violence that was allowable on the screen. The producers meekly removed any scene that offended the church.”²¹⁴ *That was power!*

As the Legion was not a government censorship body and had no legal power, its Papist supporters loved to point out that it only classified movies, grading them on moral values; it did not censor them. But this was an outright lie. Of course the Legion had the right to rate films for Roman Catholic audiences, and to call on Roman Catholics

to stay away from films, as it often did. This is not censorship, it is a segment of society staying away from a film because it believes it to be offensive; and this is fine. And the Popish press, and priests behind their pulpits, also had the right to condemn a particular film as being unsuitable for Papists to attend; and this too was something that was often done. But when the Legion “demanded that offending films be altered to Catholic tastes before the Legion would bless them”, and furthermore “demanded that Hollywood not exhibit any print of the film anywhere in the world other than that approved by the Catholic Legion of Decency”,²¹⁵ *this* was censorship.

Many Protestants were outraged at the Legion’s power to censor movies for everyone, non-Romanists as well as Romanists, for the Legion’s classification system meant that the entire public was affected by the changes studios made to movies in order to please the Legion. As the *Nation* put it, “What the non-Catholic moviegoers are entitled to decide is whether they wish to have their films censored in advance by the Catholic church.”²¹⁶ This was precisely what was happening. The Roman Catholic “Church” was controlling who saw what emanating from Hollywood. It was extremely powerful, and “even the Legion’s supporters would admit that it was the most powerful pressure group in the film business, relying on the studios’ dread of a nationwide Catholic boycott of objectionable films.”²¹⁷ As Geoff Shurlock of the PCA put it, Hollywood was so afraid of “the Catholics... that there was no room left to be scared of anyone else.” And the *Literary Digest* stated: “What scared the movie makers as they had never been scared before was that the Catholic Church, like the American film, is universal [and] the Catholic bishops can make shots which will be heard around the world.”²¹⁸ Here is the plain fact of the matter: “A third of all movie seats in the early 1940s were located in the forty-nine cities with populations greater than 200,000, and most of these were heavily Catholic.”²¹⁹ No wonder the Hollywood Jews were scared of the power of the Legion!

The Censorship Process

But how exactly was the censoring done? Well, usually the Legion would first threaten to condemn a film privately, not publicly. Officially, scripts were first reviewed by the Production Code Administration; the

Legion did not officially review scripts. If the PCA felt the film could pass, it issued its seal of approval. But before the film was duplicated and distributed, the Legion would review the final print, and demand a change in the film if it saw fit. If there was anything offensive to the Legion, it would inform the producing studio, which would then make the necessary changes in accordance with Legion (and thus Roman Catholic) wishes. If the changes were acceptable to the Legion, the film would be re-classified so that Roman Catholics could attend. And the Legion's power was immense: "Here the Legion moved away from its role of moral judge to that of censors: Legion priests negotiated with studios to eliminate certain scenes, reshoot or cut others, change dialogue, or add a prologue or epilogue to a film to make it acceptable to the Catholic church. This action turned the Legion into a national board of censorship."²²⁰

If a film was condemned by the Legion and yet was still shown by any theatre, that theatre would be boycotted by Roman Catholic organisations such as the powerful Knights of Columbus. The purpose, of course, was to cause the film to bomb at the box office.

In 1936 the Legion issued its first New York list of films. No films received a "C" (Condemned) rating, and Martin Quigley was angry with priest Daly of the Legion for being too liberal and kind to the movie industry. Quigley was trying to take full control of the Legion. He told McNichols, the archbishop, that he believed Daly was undermining the Legion, and Daly was fired. This sent the message that the Romish hierarchy was in disagreement over the Legion, so the cardinal, Hayes, swiftly appointed a young priest as the new Legion director. His name was John J. McClafferty, and he had been the assistant director of the Division of Catholic Action at the Catholic Charities of New York. He was recommended to McNicholas because he was willing to take advice. He easily came under the influence of Martin Quigley – which was entirely to Quigley's liking.²²¹ He also worked well with Breen and the movie producers, and played a large part during the following years in making the Legion so influential within Hollywood.²²²

The 1936 Papal Encyclical Endorses the Legion of Decency

In this year the pope, Pius XI, issued *Vigilanti Cura*, a papal encyclical on the movies, which strongly endorsed the Legion of Decency, calling

it a “holy crusade”, and called on Roman Catholics in other countries to establish similar organisations. He said that it did not seem practical to have a single movie list for the whole world, and he also gave the bishops the authority to apply stricter ratings than the Legion.

It is believed that Martin Quigley played a major part in the issuing of this encyclical.²²³

The Working Relationship Between Breen’s PCA and the Legion of Decency

The Legion of Decency was really a confederation of local organisations, and each local Legion director, who was in most cases a priest, was responsible for the work of the Legion in his diocese. Naturally, then, the Legion’s work was very strong in some dioceses, and weak in others. It all depended on how committed to the Legion each bishop and priest was. “A majority of the bishops,” in fact, “paid very little attention to the Legion and gave nothing more than lip service to its activities. Churches gave members the Legion pledge once a year in early December, and posted the Legion’s classifications.”²²⁴ That was pretty much all they did, many of them. But in Los Angeles, priest John Devlin, who was the guide of the West Coast group of the IFCA. was *very* committed to the Legion. Not only that, but he worked very closely with Joseph Breen of the PCA, and with Hollywood studio bosses themselves. Knowing the power of the Legion to cripple them financially, studio bosses readily sent their scripts to Devlin prior to beginning production on a film. Even Breen himself would often forward a script to Devlin for advice.

Thus Breen’s Production Code Administration, which was the movie industry’s official censorship board, and the Legion of Decency, had an extremely close working relationship. This is not surprising, given the Roman Catholic influence over the PCA from its very inception. The two worked in tandem to keep any movies that they deemed to be a danger to the “Church” of Rome, or immoral, from being seen by audiences. At times, in fact, they were virtually one and the same, constantly in contact with each other. “For twenty years, from 1934 until the retirement of PCA director Joseph I. Breen, the PCA and the Legion were linked so closely that it is next to impossible to separate them.”²²⁵ When the PCA received a movie script for review, it would

send it to the Legion and request an “unofficial” opinion. The Legion would then return the script with its “opinion”, which was often a warning that the film needed to be changed if the Legion was to be kept happy.

The two organisations did not always agree over what was immoral, but this did not alter the close collaboration between them. At times the Legion acted independently of the PCA and even took Breen to task if it believed he had passed something that in the Legion’s opinion should not have been passed. But for the most part “there were only occasional differences of opinion between” the two organisations.²²⁶ Overall, the hierarchy of Rome in the United States, the Jesuits, and the Legion of Decency were very satisfied with Breen. His friends at the Jesuit publication *America* declared, “The greatness of Joseph I. Breen’s performance lies in this: not only has he wiped the slate clean of obscenities, but also – and the Legion believes this to be far more important – he has scotched the teaching of moral heresy. If the Catholic press, like *Time*, were picking the man of the year, it would doubtless hasten to name Joseph I. Breen, the enforcing agent of the Code.”²²⁷

A Jewish Business Selling Papist Theology to Protestant America

Thus Hollywood was in the hands of the “Church” of Rome. “Catholic control over Hollywood was complete: a Catholic censor, Joe Breen, rode roughshod over Hollywood and, in New York, the Catholic Legion quietly approved his moral judgments.”²²⁸ And the films produced during this era reflected Rome’s absolute dominance of the industry, with Papist directors, Papist actors, and Papist film plots everywhere. Furthermore: “If Catholics on screen were close to legion, Catholics behind the screen were nearly almighty. One of the more curious phenomena in the history of American popular culture, the dominion of the minority religion [Romanism] over the mass medium was achieved by a web of Catholic faithful, ordained and lay, whose long tentacles and precision coordination might confirm the darkest Protestant suspicions about Romanish intrigue: Daniel A. Lord, coauthor of the Production Code, a Jesuit priest; Martin J. Quigley, creator and defender of the Code, a graduate of Catholic University; and Joseph I. Breen, Jesuit-educated from boyhood, Jesuit-related by blood (his brother Francis

was a Jesuit priest), and Jesuit-fixated by inclination”.²²⁹

Another quote which sums up what happened in Hollywood in the second half of the 1930s: “Priests were to become major heroic figures in crime films; shoulder to shoulder with FBI men, revenue agents, and other agents of morality, they became part of a phalanx for truth, justice, and the American way. Super-padre would be born around the time Superman came crashing down from Krypton, and for years a few Latin mumblings and a breviary could quiet the most savage beast and transform the most hardened heart. Every priest became an amalgam of Father Flanagan and Father Coughlin, of Bing Cosby and Pat O’Brien; the new armament was moral, the new weapons rosary beads, chapels, and poor boxes.”²³⁰

It was not a situation that pleased many Protestants, or indeed many other Americans, and in 1937 Breen said in a letter to Lord, “I am constantly being charged with being ‘an agent of the Pope,’ ‘a spy for the Papists,’ etc.” He called such people “anti-Catholic bigots.” In 1940 the *Protestant Digest* declared: “The minority control of the most vital amusement source of the nation is one of the most astounding things in the history of the United States.” The secular press’ *New Republic* complained that Breen, “a Catholic of Irish descent, is the one-man censor of the movies”, and declared that “the Catholic machinery” had “stampeded the Protestants” and “captured the movies.”²³¹

Indeed it had. And from 1934 until about 1953, no major Hollywood studio was prepared to stand up to Rome. Its grip on Hollywood was total.

Truly, Hollywood was “a Jewish-owned business selling Roman Catholic theology to Protestant America”!²³²



CHAPTER SEVEN

THE “GOLDEN AGE” 1930s AND 1940s: ROME TRIUMPHANT IN HOLLYWOOD

The Portrayal of Irish Papist Immigrant Life in Movies of This Era

The so-called “Golden Age” of Hollywood was the 1930s and first half of the 1940s. During this time, Roman Catholic characters in films were frequently made out to be immigrants from the “old country” (Europe and specifically, Papist Ireland), as opposed to Protestant Americans who were generally born in America. Movies were made in which Irish Papists lived in what was called the “old neighbourhood” (Roman Catholic ghettos in large American cities) where everyday life was dominated by the “Church”: priests, schools, and songs were all decidedly Papist.²³³

To a large extent this was very true: at that time the USA was a “Protestant” country, where Roman Catholics were often viewed as outsiders; foreigners. And many of them literally were, for they were recent immigrants. Irish Roman Catholics tended to be poorer than native-born Protestant Americans, and because they were immigrant communities they behaved like immigrant communities the world over: they tended to live in the same neighbourhood, and to stick together closely. And this way of life was played up in the movies of the time. American cities prior to World War Two were racially-mixed places: there were various immigrant groups from Europe, there were black Americans, white Americans, Asians, etc. This racial mix was a tense one, and inevitably gangs were formed along racial lines. And Hollywood, in the silent movie era and then in the “Golden Age”, cast the Irish and later the Italian Roman Catholics in the roles of criminal lords, with the Roman Catholic religion itself often being associated with violence.²³⁴

Why was this, if Hollywood was so Roman Catholic, and Irish Romanists were already making movies by 1924? One reason was

because this *was* the reality of that era. But another major reason was because movies, at the end of the day, are still about making money for the moviemakers, and the fact was that at that time, huge numbers of moviegoers *lived* in the Roman Catholic ghettos of American cities. By 1930, 20% of the entire population of the United States was Papist; and where were they concentrated? In cities. Specifically, the cities of the eastern U.S. Throughout the twentieth century, in fact, over half of the citizens of Boston and Chicago were Roman Catholics.²³⁵ Very naturally, then, Papist moviemakers catered for this large moviegoing audience. Even the Jewish studio owners and moviemakers realised the lucrative importance of doing so. Jews and Papists were the ones who ran the vaudeville houses, which in time became the nickelodeons (small converted storefront theatres which charged a nickel for admission) and then the movie theatres. Thus the movies of that time were produced by Jewish and Papist immigrants and their children, and they were produced *for* predominantly Papist immigrants and their children; and such movies would be ones in which those Papist audiences saw some relationship between their everyday lives and what they viewed at the movies. Hence the emphasis on Irish Roman Catholicism, and the connection between that and the criminal underworld of the large American cities. These themes appealed to the Roman Catholic audiences precisely because these were the very realities that dominated their lives as struggling immigrant communities: their “Church” and the criminal underworld of their ghettos, and the close relationship between the two.

The Irish in America, during Hollywood’s “Golden Age”, dominated the screen portrayals of American Romanism. “The Irish were Hollywood’s Catholics *par excellence*, full of whiskey and faith, and prone to fighting, politics, and vocations.”²³⁶ At the time, and for a long time afterwards, American Romanism was in large measure *Irish-American Romanism*. Even when, at a later period, they no longer exercised such great dominion over American Romanism, they were still *perceived* to exercise it, in the popular mind. To many Americans, and even to many people outside America with any knowledge of American Romanism, “Irish” and “Roman Catholic” are virtually synonymous – because for such a long time this was undoubtedly true.

And Hollywood capitalised on this, with so many movies portraying Irish Romanists over the decades: to name just a few, *The Lad from Ireland* (1910), *Rory O'More* (1911), *The Gypsies of Old Ireland* (1917), *Cecilia of the Pink Roses* (1918), *Knights of the Eucharist* (1922), *Little Old New York* (1923), *The Lights of Old Broadway* (1925), *In Old Chicago* (1938), right up to *The Song of Bernadette* in 1943, *Going My Way* in 1944 and others that followed (and which will be examined below in due course).

George Bernard Shaw Exposes Papist Control of Hollywood

In 1936 the famous Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw – a man unfriendly to any religion – exposed the Papist control of Hollywood. And it shook Protestant Americans. Shaw's play, *St. Joan*, was to become a Hollywood movie, but an organisation he called "Azione Cattolica" (Catholic Action) intervened to prevent it. He slammed the work of the Hays Office as "meddling by amateur busybodies who do not care that the work of censorship requires any qualification beyond Catholic baptism." He also said that "very few inhabitants of the United States, Catholic or Protestant, lay or secular, have the least suspicion that an irresponsible Catholic society has assumed public control of their artistic recreations."

These accusations were indignantly denied by Hays himself, of course. Later, in an interview, Shaw said that before the furore over *St. Joan* erupted, "not one American in 50,000 had the faintest suspicion that the film art for which his country is famous was, in effect, under a Catholic censorship, which was bound as such to operate as a doctrinal censorship as well as a common-decency censorship."²³⁷

And Meanwhile, Communist Influence in Hollywood was Growing...

In Europe, Jews had supported Communism from its very earliest days. And in America, for a long time already, Jewish intellectuals had formed a very large minority within the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). From 1935 onwards their numbers and influence within the Party grew even greater, for the CPUSA joined with other leftist organisations in what was called the Popular Front, and it actively wooed Jews into membership. It was estimated, by a

top Communist, that during the 1930s and 1940s something like 50% of the CPUSA membership was Jewish, and of the Party leaders a large minority were Jews – a minority that at times became a majority.²³⁸

And Jews were just as influential over the CPUSA's Hollywood branch. A fairly reliable estimate would be that there the membership was well over half, perhaps as much as two-thirds of the Party.

Why was it that so many Jews were attracted to Communism? It was a liking for the assimilationist policies of Communism, the idea of a classless society, which appealed to Jews who had been underdogs in so many societies for so many centuries. They wanted to destroy what they perceived as the "Christian" society which had rejected them for so long, persecuted them, and still kept them down. And then too, as Nazism rose in strength and threatened Jews throughout Europe, Communism was seen as the only force powerful enough to squash Hitler.

And this Jewish-dominated CPUSA realised the massive potential of Hollywood as a vehicle for promoting Communism. With this in mind, two of its members, V.J. Jerome and Stanley Lawrence, were sent to Hollywood to work for this very goal. Jerome was the chairman of the CPUSA's Cultural Commission. He eloquently sought to persuade Hollywood writers of their unique value to the Communist movement. His words were like music to the ears of these writers – many of whom were Jewish. Hollywood writers were portrayed as industrial workers, just like the other industrial workers the Communists were stirring up. And it worked: "by the time Jerome departed for the East after nine months of agitating in Hollywood, the Party had a firm hold in the film community; estimates ranged as high as three hundred members during the decade from 1936 to 1946 – nearly half of them writers."²³⁹ A Jewish screenwriter, John Howard Lawson, was now in charge of the Hollywood branch of the Communist Party. Hollywood was being Communised – primarily by Jewish Communists.

In Hollywood in 1936, various radical activists wanting to use Marxism to oppose Nazism formed the Hollywood League Against Nazism, which was renamed the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League. This organisation gave every indication of being a Communist front, working hard to promote leftwing causes, especially condemning the German Nazis, but also supporting the leftwing closet Communist,

Franklin D. Roosevelt. It published *Hollywood Now* every two weeks, and sponsored two weekly radio programmes.

The Threat of Nazism to the Hollywood Jewish Elite

As Hitler's power increased and his hatred of Jews became more and more evident, the Jewish elite in Hollywood found themselves in a spot. These first-generation Hollywood Jews – the big-name studio bosses who had built Hollywood – had tried their whole lives long to turn their backs on their Jewish roots, culture, and religion. But now Hitler was threatening their people.

As seen previously, Louis B. Mayer was a friend of the influential newspaper man (and Roman Catholic), William Randolph Hearst. Mayer asked Hearst to talk to Hitler, and this Hearst did, after which he reported to Mayer that all was well. This reassured Mayer. Many Jewish moguls simply took the position of Adolph Zukor of Paramount: he said Hollywood should stay away from making movies of political significance and stick to entertainment alone. They desperately wanted to be seen as Americans first and only as Jews second – if at all. They had spent their lives doing all they could to assimilate as Americans and play down or ignore their Jewishness. And if they were now seen to be openly opposing Nazism, they feared this would simply draw attention to themselves as Jews, and thus (in the eyes of many Americans) as foreigners controlling this huge industry of Hollywood. In addition, as was pointed out by Hy Kraft, a screenwriter working for the Anti-Nazi League, “It was a matter of business. The motion picture companies had large interests in Europe for distribution of their pictures.”²⁴⁰ So they did not want to offend the Nazis in Europe for fear of losing money, or perhaps even their business interests there.

It was only when the elite Hollywood Jews began to feel threatened by Nazis in Hollywood itself, *and* when the Nazis closed down their distribution offices in Germany (in the case of Warner Brothers, the Nazis murdered their representative in Germany), that they were galvanised into action against Nazism.

The Los Angeles Nazi *Bund* was targeting the Jews of Hollywood, through its periodicals and via radio. A meeting of Jewish film executives was called on 13 March 1934 to see what they could do to counter the Nazi attacks on them. There was fear at the meeting,

but also anger. Louis B. Mayer called for retaliation, and a committee was formed to raise funds to counter the Nazi onslaught against them. All the major Jewish studios were represented: MGM, Columbia, Twentieth Century, Warner Brothers, Paramount, Fox, and RKO. This committee later became the Community Relations Committee (CRC).

The committee's work, however, was defensive; the Jewish movie executives were not prepared to become as radical as the Jewish Communist writers of Hollywood, who were far more aggressive in combatting Nazism. The Jewish Marxists' Hollywood Anti-Nazi League was not only opposed by the Nazis, but by the Jewish Hollywood elite as well. The CRC tried very hard to persuade the Anti-Nazi League to change its name to the Hollywood Anti-Nazi, Anti-Communist League!

Here was a strange spectacle indeed: the rich Hollywood Jewish executives at odds with the Hollywood Jewish writers and others, because of opposing positions. The executives were opposed not only to Nazism, but to Communism, but they just could not seem to understand that the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League was comprised of liberals, Socialists and Communists who *only* opposed Nazism, not Communism!

In early 1936, Jewish executives and writers again got together to thrash out what kind of response they should make to what Hitler was doing; but the meeting, which went on into the early hours of the morning, broke down into serious squabbling between the different factions. The older, conservative Jewish executives wanted to remain quiet about Hitler, whereas the younger, leftwing and Communist Jewish writers wanted a far more militant stance against him. But as the year progressed, even a number of the conservative Jewish executives began to start speaking out against Nazism, albeit timidly at first. Louis B. Mayer now called on the USA to join with Britain in opposing Germany.

Finally, some four hundred movers and shakers within the movie industry gathered together to commit themselves to openly warring against any cause that was threatening the United States. It may have meant Communism especially, but it meant Fascism as well. They were being careful to emphasise that both Stalin and Hitler must be condemned.

The Legion's Desire for Papists to Replace Jews as Directors and Screenwriters

The Legion of Decency, for some time after it first began, entertained the hope that Roman Catholic directors and screenwriters would replace the Jewish ones, thereby influencing films for “good” (as Rome understood the word). The bishop, Cantwell, was certainly in favour of it, telling the bishop McNicholas that such work was at that time “largely in the hands of Jews and people without any faith”. In 1936 some Roman Catholic colleges gave consideration to starting screenwriting courses, and the Jesuit publication, *America*, called on Roman Catholics to compete with the “heretics, pagans and infidels” who were churning out the movies. It stated that “priests and nuns... Catholic husbands and wives... altar boys and first communion girls” would provide “sure-fire dramatic material. A Catholic wedding, with a white veiled bride, is intensely more dramatic than a ten minute marriage before a Justice of the Peace, wearing a sign-on-the-dotted-line look, chewing a cigar, and surveying a shot-gun in the corner.” But as one researcher dryly remarked in response to this, “the market for films about altar boys and first communion girls was obviously limited.”²⁴¹ Quite. The heart of man naturally runs in the direction of excitement and thrills, especially those of a sexual or violent nature. Pro-Papist films would only appeal to Papists, and not even to all of them; films with violence and sex appealed to all unregenerate people.

Breen Crams Papist Ethics “Down the Throat of the Jews”

Joe Breen himself viewed his role as something of a divine calling. Jesuit priest Gerard B. Donnelly, visiting the Breen Office in 1936, reported as follows, as he listened to Breen’s fulminations: “Anybody else in the job would be too polite, wouldn’t fight, wouldn’t curse; the studios would mistake politeness for weakness and ride roughshod over the Code. But he [Breen] could fight, he could yell louder than [Jack] Warner or [Sam] Goldwyn; he was the one man who could thrust morality down their gullets. The hand of God had been there.” Neither Breen nor Donnelly, apparently, saw the contradiction in a cussing, swearing Papist lecturing others about morality! Romish morality has never been averse to swearing, among other things. Donnelly went on, making use of Breen’s own words about himself, about “the horrible

state of affairs that would be in existence if he [Breen], a Catholic, were not sitting at the bottle neck, the rotten filth that would be in the pictures. And more than that – the hand of God (he said) had been in this whole thing.”

Yes, Breen believed his job was a calling; a divine vocation. And his religious leaders believed it too. They loved having Breen there, for Hollywood was in the palms of their hands as a result, even though Jews ran the studios. Hollywood belonged to Rome. Donnelly wrote of Breen, “He was the one man in the country who could cram decent ethics down the throat of the Jews, make them like it, and keep their respect.”²⁴²

The House Committee on Un-American Activities

Back in 1934, a Jewish-American in New York, Samuel Dickstein, introduced a resolution for the creation of a committee to investigate Nazism in the United States. The bill was passed, and the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) came into being. But many viewed it as a “Jewish bill” and German-Americans picketed the last session of the committee with signs saying things like “Heil Hitler” and “Down with Dickstein.” In 1937 he again introduced a bill for the creation of another such committee. This time, however, he was trumped by a Texas Democrat named Martin Dies, who submitted a resolution for the creation of his own HUAC. Dies became its chairman. He was viewed by many Jews as anti-Semitic, and with good reason, for despite his denials he certainly associated openly with certain pro-Nazis. For example, the first investigator for the HUAC was a speaker for the Nazi *Bund*. And then there were others who were decidedly anti-Semitic and yet who collaborated with the HUAC, such as Joseph P. Kemp, the publisher of a Fascist magazine; William Dudley Pelley, head of the pro-Nazi Silver Shirts; and James Colescott, Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

Thus, although the original HUAC was created for the investigation of Nazism within America, this second HUAC had no such interest. Its interest was in investigating Communism in America, not Nazism. Of course, *both* Nazism and Communism were anti-American, but sadly Jews – so many of whom were pro-Communist – only wanted the HUAC to investigate Nazism because of its threat to Jews, and the

HUAC Gentiles – so many of whom were pro-Nazi – only wanted the HUAC to investigate Communism. It is a tragic fact that in that era, and so often afterwards as well, many who were anti-Communist were pro-Nazi, and *vice versa*.

We will hear more of the HUAC.

The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938): Never Let the Facts Get in the Way

This film by Michael Curtiz, and starring Errol Flynn, was immensely popular at the time and was passed by the Breen Office – and yet the Roman Catholicism in the film (such as there was) was reduced to little more than slapstick humour and was never taken seriously. For example, Friar Tuck made people laugh but certainly did not engender real, deep respect for Romanism, and in other ways the Romish religion was not treated seriously in the film. It would appear that the film passed the Breen Office scrutiny because it did not attack Romanism outright. After all, as everyone who knows the story of Robin Hood is well aware, many of the villains in the story are the greedy, fat, pompous, persecuting bishops of Rome and other Popish leaders. This fact was well known to screenwriter Roland Leigh as well, but he did not want to offend with the film and stated: “Undoubtedly in medieval times the church took unwarranted liberties with its power and influence. Equally undoubtedly we have no desire to offend either the Catholic or Protestant church of today... a tactful compromise will have to be arrived at.”²⁴³ So: in the usual Hollywood fashion, never mind the facts, never mind the historical setting, throw these out if they offend modern movie audiences. Why let the facts stand in the way of a good story? And so, instead of Robin Hood opposing the greed and oppression of the Romish hierarchy of his day (which would offend Roman Catholic film audiences), almost the only nod to Roman Catholicism in the film was Friar Tuck’s jovial behaviour. Breen could pass it. History had been safely set aside, and audiences would not be misled by the truth. This was the legacy of the Breen Office and of the Legion of Decency: to avoid giving offence to Roman Catholics, including ignoring the truth about their bloodthirsty, greedy religion.

***Angels with Dirty Faces* (1938): the Prototype for the Movie Priest-Hero**

This film, starring Irish-American Pat O'Brien as a priest, was a triumph for Rome. After its success, Hollywood producers knew that in the Roman Catholic priest they had found a new movie hero for the times. A hero, moreover, who would certainly make Joe Breen as happy as could be.

This film was the prototype for many other images of urban Roman Catholics and their lifestyles. It was about a fighting priest who challenged underworld vice. Despite the fact that the producer, director and writer were all Jews, it was a strongly pro-Papist film through and through, and the Romanism of the film was maintained by the two Irish-American actors, Pat O'Brien and James Cagney, both of whom had been raised as Romanists, and who, in Cagney's words, "knew the ceremonial forms [of Romanism] and very well did we know them",²⁴⁴ and insisted on the authenticity of Roman Catholic ritual in the film.

***Boys Town* (1938): a Fighting Irish Priest at the Centre**

This film was a great success, depicting a fighting Irish Romish priest, played by Spencer Tracy, who depicted real-life Romish priest Edward J. Flanagan, a personal friend of his. In fact, when he won an Academy Award for this part, Tracy gave the Oscar to Flanagan with this inscription: "To Father Edward J. Flanagan, whose great human qualities, kindly simplicity and inspiring courage were strong enough to shine through my humble efforts."²⁴⁵

U.S. Romanism: Anti-Communist, Pro-Nazi, Pro-Fascist

In the United States, the Roman Catholic hierarchy was solidly behind Franco in Spain, behind Hitler in Germany, and Mussolini in Italy, and just as solidly anti-Communist. In fact, at their annual meeting in 1936 the American bishops voted to make a study of U.S. Communism so as to combat it. The hierarchy felt that Nazism and Fascism could be used to combat Communism, which was in line with the Vatican's support for Hitler, Mussolini and Franco, who were all Roman Catholics and were serving the Vatican's interests. Various influential Roman Catholics warned of the growing Communist menace in Hollywood. Quigley warned McNicholas after the 1936 meeting of bishops that

American Communists were seeking to harness Hollywood to serve their interests, and that the Legion would have a real battle on its hands. A few years later he stated that Communism was now so strong in Hollywood that the fight against “Red propaganda would make the battle for decency [the reason the Legion had come into being in the first place] seem a skirmish.”²⁴⁶

In 1936 Joe Breen stated that he could see there was a very definite attempt to get Communist propaganda into an increasing number of Hollywood films. Even allowing for the likelihood that Breen may have seen more than was actually there, it cannot be denied that the Communist movement saw the immense power of movies, and was seeking to harness that power. And priest Daly issued a similar warning. Then in 1938 John J. McClafferty reported at length to McNicholas on what he perceived to be the growing Communist take-over of Hollywood.

In 1939 the film *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* was released, just before the outbreak of the Second World War. The film dealt with the Nazi threat to the United States; but a Breen staff member, Karl Lischka, attempted to delay production, stating it was unfair to depict Hitler as “a screaming madman and a bloodthirsty persecutor”, considering his “unchallenged political and social achievements”. Breen himself gave the film a seal because it was based on a true spy case, but priest McClafferty labelled it as Communist propaganda. And the Jesuit publication, *America*, a month before the attack on Pearl Harbour, stated that Hollywood was promoting Communism. Occasionally some Romanist would admit that Hitler was also doing evil things, but seldom if ever was it stated to be as evil as Communism. For example, in the IFCA’s *Quarterly Bulletin* the question was posed: “Have you ever noticed in motion pictures the present tendency to deplore Hitlerism and all its concomitant atrocities, and to gloss over or even to make light of the work of Stalin?” The message was clear: Hitlerism may have been bad, but Stalinism also was, and much worse.

These Roman Catholics were not simply pro-Nazi because they were anti-Communist, although that was of course a major part of it; but it must be remembered that they were pro-Nazi because *Roman Catholicism was pro-Nazi*.

Thus two extremely powerful forces were at work in Hollywood at this time: Communism, which was most certainly seeking to use

Hollywood to promote its agenda, and was even succeeding to some extent; and Romanism, which at that time was firmly anti-Communist, and was doing its best to combat Communism, even if it meant supporting Nazism.

***Blockade* (1938): Papist Anger at a Perceived Communist Film**

This film, inspired by the Spanish civil war, caused an outcry from American Roman Catholics. It had been written by John Howard Lawson and directed by William Dieterle, two men whom priest McClafferty had stated were leading leftists in Hollywood. Breen had declared that the script would only be approved by him if there was absolutely nothing in the movie tying the story to either side in the Spanish civil war. The last thing Rome wanted was a film depicting its hero, Franco, in a bad light. And so, to get past the censors, the film's hero fights in an army without a name, against an enemy that is never identified. But even such radical steps were not enough. Despite the precautions, *Life* magazine declared that those who read the newspapers "will see in *Blockade* a stern indictment of General Franco's war, a passionate polemic for the humble Spaniards fighting for Republican Spain." All this horrified the Papist censors of the PCA and the Legion, with Will Hays (a non-Papist himself) telling priest McClafferty that he always remembered the words of the pope, Pius XI, spoken to him (Hays) in a private papal audience. Pius had said it was Hays' responsibility to keep Communist propaganda from being depicted in films, and he had shown Hays a communication from Stalin to Communist Party leaders worldwide, ordering them to take control of the movie industries wherever possible.²⁴⁷ Nevertheless, even though Hays believed Breen had erred in granting a seal to the film, he felt that if the Legion attempted to prevent the showing of it, this would be even worse.

After Martin Quigley had met with the producer, Walter Wagner, Wagner agreed to add a foreword to the film. This foreword, written by Quigley himself, stated: "This story of love and adventure is not intended to treat with or take sides in the conflict of ideas involved in the present Spanish crisis." The Legion, however, felt that this was not strong enough. But what could be done? The Legion had been formed to protect Rome's moral values, not deal with political issues, and if it condemned the film it would certainly give the impression that

it was overstepping its boundaries – an impression it certainly did not want to give, even though it desperately wanted to extend its power. So in the end, it classified the film in its “special” category, with the following words of explanation: “Many people will regard this picture as containing foreign political propaganda in favour of one side in the present unfortunate struggle in Spain.” This was at McClafferty’s suggestion. Of course, Rome did not view the Spanish conflict as “unfortunate” at all, and it most certainly favoured one side in the conflict! The hypocrisy here was probably lost on most if not all of the Legion’s members. Their “Church” always had double standards.

Roman Catholic priests and organisations came out with guns blazing against the movie for what they called its pro-Red, anti-Christian (meaning anti-Romanist) message. There were picket lines in several cities. The film studios got a fright, but they were ultimately victorious in this particular battle because the film was not deemed morally objectionable, only politically so, and thus the Legion’s hands were tied to a large extent.

The House Committee on Un-American Activities Turns Its Attention on Jewish Hollywood

In May 1939, Martin Dies, the anti-Jewish, anti-Communist head of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, began to cast his and the committee’s eyes towards the Jews controlling Hollywood. “It was apparent,” he said, “that un-Americanism had made more progress in California and on the West Coast than in any other part of the country.” And: “I told the producers we had reliable information that a number of film actors and screen writers and a few producers either were members of the Communist Party, followed the Communist line, or were used as dupes, and that there was evidence that the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League was under the control of Communists.”²⁴⁸ In this he was certainly correct, as we have seen previously. It is just such a pity that in combatting the dreadful menace of Communism and its efforts to infiltrate Hollywood so as to use that powerful medium for Red propaganda purposes, the HUAC did not show the same zeal, or even interest, in combatting that other dreadful menace, Nazism. As shown previously, various HUAC collaborators were decidedly pro-Nazi and against the Jews just because they were Jews, rather than

being solely against Jews who were Communists. This meant that the HUAC investigations into Hollywood took on the decided appearance of being an anti-Jewish witch-hunt. The HUAC did not make a clear distinction between Jews who were Communists in Hollywood, and Jews in general.

There is the possibility, also, that the older Jewish producers, who, as shown previously, were often anti-Communist, had actually invited Dies and his committee to come to Hollywood to investigate the radical leftwingers within the Hollywood writers' fraternity, and even to help destroy the Screen Writers Guild. For it will be remembered that Hollywood's writers were often decidedly pro-Communist. If this is indeed what they had done, little did the producers realise that Dies would not be content with merely investigating the writers, but the entire Hollywood industry for Communist subversion.

In July 1940 the HUAC work began. A former Communist, John L. Leech, told Dies in closed session that Hollywood was a major centre of Communist subversion, and he gave Dies a list of 42 members, sympathisers and contributors to the Communist Party. These had to face Dies and answer for themselves. But after a month Dies declared that it was all over. The whole thing just seemed to fizzle out, at least for the time being.

Then the Second World War touched America, and the menace of Communism receded somewhat into the background as attention was focused on the menace of Nazism. But the HUAC would be revived after the war, as will be seen.

The Hollywood Jews Support the War Against Nazism

Warner Brothers decided to make anti-Nazi movies, even though Harry Warner had reservations about doing so, being concerned that such movies would be interpreted by non-Jews as having been made by Jews just because they were Jews. When Europe went to war, however, the Warners wired President Roosevelt that "personally we would like to do all in our power within the motion picture industry and by use of the talking screen to show the American people the worthiness of the cause for which the free peoples of Europe are making such tremendous sacrifices."²⁴⁹

The Hollywood Jews were worried, and they had reason to be. There were many in America itself who sided with Hitler and hated the Jews. In late 1940 the Papist Joseph P. Kennedy, the U.S. ambassador to England but a man suspected of being pro-Nazi, went to Hollywood and at a meeting he requested, addressed the Jewish executives. He called on them to remain neutral, for Britain had not won the war yet. He very forcefully told them that anti-Nazi films should not be made, that anti-Semitism was on the increase in Britain, and that there were those who were blaming the Jews for the war. In America itself, a large percentage of the population deeply distrusted Jews, and furthermore there were those who felt that their control over Hollywood was being used to push America into the war. Movies, in a word, were being used for pro-war propaganda purposes, which infuriated those Americans who were opposed to getting involved in the conflict in Europe. A Senate sub-committee was appointed to investigate, and the Hollywood Jews had to appear before it.

But they came out with guns blazing, defending themselves – and they had the support of the president himself. The sub-committee adjourned to consider the information that had been gathered, but then Pearl Harbour was attacked and America was brought into the war anyway.

The Office of War Information (OWI) Steps into Hollywood

With the outbreak of World War Two, the Breen Office was forced, against its will, to make certain changes; certain capitulations to the times. Will Hays and Joe Breen wanted Hollywood, even in wartime, to provide nothing but entertainment, and not to be used for war propaganda. Nor would the Production Code Administration's standards be lowered in the least to permit more profanity, etc. The Office of War Information (OWI), however, saw things differently.

The United States' Roosevelt Administration realised that Hollywood could be a powerful ally in winning over Americans to the idea of entering into the Second World War. So the federal government created the OWI, its purpose being to use film, radio and the press to build public understanding of and support for the war; i.e. to coordinate wartime propaganda across the civilian media. Movies, of course, were ideal tools for this, and Elmer Davis, the director of

the OWI, set it out very well when he stated that the “easiest way to inject a propaganda idea into most people’s minds is to let it go in through the medium of an entertainment picture when they do not realize that they are being propagandized.”²⁵⁰ The OWI established a special unit called the Motion Picture Bureau for this purpose, and published a booklet entitled *Government Information Manual for the Motion Picture Industry*. This manual wanted film-makers to ask, regarding each film, “Will This Picture Help Win the War?” The OWI wanted moviemakers to present the war as a “people’s war”, with America united against Fascism and in alliance with Russia, Britain and China. This meant that Hollywood effectively now had not one but two supervisory agencies – the PCA and the OWI – and not one but two guidebooks – the Production Code and the *Information Manual*. The manual became in effect a *second* Hollywood code during the war years, with Hollywood producers being asked to submit their scripts to the OWI for examination. It was inevitable that there would be a clash.

Joseph Breen had long opposed any propaganda in films, censoring those which contained political content deemed to be such. The OWI, however, believed that the PCA’s Code “lulled the home front” and “impeded the war effort”. To the OWI, the PCA was fiddling while Rome burned, arguing over morality in pictures when it should have been employed in the service of the war effort.

During those years, then, Breen and the PCA were often pretty much limited to moral issues, whereas the OWI controlled the political content of the movies.

The fact that hundreds of Hollywood executives and other Hollywood people had been commissioned to make training and propaganda movies for the war was something that did not sit well with the U.S. Congress; and in early 1943 another Senate committee was established to investigate. But it did not come to any firm conclusion. The truth is that during the war Hollywood’s Jews produced many films showing up Nazism as evil and the Allies’ cause as just. But the Jewish moviemakers were not doing this solely because they were Jews and Nazism was anti-Jewish; they wanted to make these films to show all Americans how patriotic, how *American*, they (the Hollywood Jews) really were. As two examples: Jack Warner said, “I want all our films

to sell America ‘long’ not ‘short.’ My brothers and I are examples of what this country does for its citizens. There were no silver spoons in our mouths when we were born. If anything, they were shovels. But we were free to climb as high as our energy and brains could take us.” And the president of Paramount, Barney Balaban, said, “We, the industry, recognize the need for informing people in foreign lands about the things that have made America a great country.” And he added, “We are prepared to take a loss in revenue if necessary.”²⁵¹

Breen’s decided antipathy to the American government using Hollywood for propagandistic, pro-American films during World War Two sprung, without question, from his Roman Catholicism. The pope of Rome at the time, Pius XII, was pro-Nazi and anti-Communist,²⁵² but many Roman Catholics were unaware of his pro-Nazi position. Breen was anti-Nazi and anti-Communist; and America’s close relations with Soviet Russia and with Stalin (via pro-Socialist President Roosevelt) filled him with concern. America and Russia may have been allies against their common enemy Nazism, but Breen did not view this as a good thing. In this he was certainly right. And what is more, he saw that Hollywood itself had become to such a large extent decidedly pro-Communist. As we have seen, Hollywood was dominated by Jews, and many Jews were Communists. “Hollywood films such as *Mission to Moscow* (1943), a starry-eyed whitewash of Stalinism, and *Song of Russia* (1944), an anthem to the noble heart of Mother Russia, were celluloid testimony to the affection between Hollywood and Moscow, something that before the war would have been unimaginable, and would be so again soon after.”²⁵³ Hollywood had immense power to influence public opinion, and always has had. The evidence is seen in western society today, where leftist causes and pro-Marxist positions, promoted by Hollywood, are now fashionable and have been for decades. Breen, like many Papists of his generation, rightly saw the danger of Communism and its subversive tactics against the West, even while they could not see the dangers of their own Roman Catholic religion.

So Breen was firmly against the OWI, saying in an interview that it had “set out to use the screen to propagandize for selfish if not sinister purposes.” He added that the OWI personnel was dominated by “the

short haired women and long haired men type.” When the interviewer asked what he meant by that, he replied, “Pink”.²⁵⁴

When *Mission to Moscow* was released in 1943, the difficulty for the Papist censors was that it contained no morally objectionable scenes, so they could not condemn it, even though it portrayed Stalin in a good light and was thus extremely objectionable, politically, to the Legion. President Roosevelt, arch-Socialist that he was, had encouraged the making of the film precisely because he believed it would improve relations between the USA and USSR. The strongest action the Legion could take was to give it a rating of “A2”, meaning “suitable for adults”. There was no question that the film was Red propaganda, and plenty of angry letters from Roman Catholics to priest McClafferty of the Legion made this point clear, but there was nothing more he could have done. The Legion was created to condemn morally objectionable films, not politically objectionable ones.

But of course, the Legion of Decency was extremely opposed to any pro-Red films, and longed for more to be done about them. The film, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, about the Spanish civil war, was one which caused great concern to the Papist censors. “The Spanish consul in San Francisco had even asked the church to suppress the film, but Quigley warned McClafferty that any attempt to oppose it on anything other than moral grounds would be ‘political dynamite.’”²⁵⁵ After Breen had worked the film over, so that it no longer mentioned Franco or the Republican forces, the Legion gave it a “B” classification for various moral reasons.

How World War Two Changed Hollywood – and American Morals

At this time the film studios once again started to push the limits, with racier dialogue and sexier scenes. It caused Will Hays to meet with the studio bosses in 1940 to express the Legion’s increasing concerns. One such film, which the Legion condemned, was *My Darling Daughter* (1939), a film about premarital sex. Breen only approved it after Warner Brothers agreed that there would be no hint of any illicit sex in the film, even though this was what the Broadway play, which the film was based on, was about. Breen may have approved it but the Legion was horrified, especially at the sexual dialogue and the implication of a trial marriage. It condemned the film. Warner eliminated the offensive

scenes and lines, and the Legion then gave it a “B” classification.

Another film, *This Thing Called Love* (1941), was an opportunity for Hollywood writers to again attempt to introduce some suggestive lines and “sexiness” into a film, with another “trial marriage” theme. Breen’s PCA eventually passed it (reluctantly), the Legion very naturally condemned it, Columbia studio made the cuts, and the Legion then passed it with a “B” classification.

The Legion believed that Hollywood was attempting to destroy morality in America, via its treatment of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. What deeply troubled the Legion, too, was that it often felt it had to condemn a film which Breen and his PCA had approved. Breen himself, however, devout Papist that he was, was troubled as well. Complaining about Hollywood moral standards to Count Enrico Galeazzi, an influential Roman Catholic, Breen branded the USA a “nation of pagans”, and said that most Americans had by this time sunk so low that they no longer even professed a watered-down Protestant “Christianity”.²⁵⁶ He believed a solution was for the bishops in Roman Catholic countries of Europe to lead boycotts of immoral movies. This would never have worked, however, because European Papist nations did not have their own versions of the Legion of Decency. Breen spoke to Quigley about doing what they could to deal strongly with films which treated divorce and remarriage sinfully, but Quigley, despite agreeing with Breen, felt that if the Code was amended in this way it would cause a backlash against the Roman Catholic “Church”.²⁵⁷

Also in 1941, the film *Two-Faced Woman* was released. It was about a woman who, fearing she was losing her husband to another woman, posed as her twin sister to get her husband to fall in love with what he thought was a “sexier” version of his wife. It contained passionate love scenes and racy dialogue. The film was passed by the PCA, but the Legion was incensed and said it would be condemned if changes were not made. In addition, the powerful archbishop of New York, Francis Spellman, condemned the film in a letter that was read out at all masses in his diocese, calling it a “near occasion of sin”. In some places the film was banned, in others cuts were ordered. Many people were angered that the Romish “Church” had such power over what people could or could not see. The American Civil Liberties Union even got involved. This was the first time there was such a *widespread* public

condemnation of the “Church” of Rome’s power over the movies, and it caused Romish leaders to go on the offensive. Martin Quigley even accused one periodical of acting like the Ku Klux Klan in its criticism of the Legion. Pressure continued to mount against the film, until MGM said it was withdrawing it pending discussions with the Legion. After the studio eliminated various scenes and much dialogue, the Legion classified it as a “B” and it was again released.

World War Two was to change the morals of Americans. The Legion, of course, was deeply concerned that the movies were playing a major part in lowering morality – as indeed they were. Breen recognised this, writing to priest McClafferty in 1944, “it would appear that there has been a near approach to what looks like a complete breakdown in the moral structure of the nation.”²⁵⁸ Yet at the same time Breen, working as he did for the film industry, came to the conclusion that with the changing morality in society he would have to accept, to some extent, the changing morality of the movies.

Language in the movies became harsher and cruder, for example, yet more socially acceptable. But in this area the Breen Office continued to apply the same standards for language in films as it had before the war. This annoyed and angered the OWI. It felt that if a film showed the Americans and the Allied forces in a good light, the Breen Office should turn a deaf ear to swear words and blasphemy. The need for such films in a time of war over-rode all other considerations, including those of decency and morality, it believed. The true Christian of course would state categorically that no circumstances justify a lowering of morality.

One such film was *In Which We Serve* (1942), a British film seen as patriotic and thus helpful to the wartime effort. But it contained certain expletives, considered mild by the public in those days, which caused the PCA to censor it. Another film it censored for the same reason was *We Are the Marines* (1942). This brought down upon the Breen Office a flood of criticism from many quarters. But Breen stood firm, stating, “the motion picture screen would do a very definite disservice to the growing boys and girls of America if we were to accustom them to harsh vulgarities, or worse, in screen dialogue.”²⁵⁹

The PCA emerged victorious in this matter; but then, having won

its point that the use of such words would be permitted at the sole discretion of the PCA when used by military men, it turned around and relaxed the provisions of the Code in the case of these two wartime films, because of the nature of the scenes in which certain words were used. Yet when the movie *Air Force* (1943) was submitted to the PCA, Breen insisted that an expletive which by then was considered mild be deleted; but as he also knew that the air force was on the film's side and that public opinion would be on the air force's side, he exercised the "sole discretion" granted to him and permitted the words to remain!

Breen, and even occasionally the Legion of Decency, applied double standards to their movie reviews. For example, when the movie *Miracle of Morgan's Creek* was released in 1943, it was okayed by the Breen Office and given a "B" rating by the Legion, the latter doing so because the movie was "very funny". And yet this movie was about a young woman who becomes pregnant while drunk by a man she cannot remember afterwards. This hypocritical standard was very confusing to people, and the film generated a lot of angry letters from a concerned public.

Breen had changed, to some extent, with the times. For example, back in 1935 a film called *Double Indemnity* had not been granted the seal, because of the "general low tone and sordid flavor of the story", and the fact that it contained an "adulterous sex relationship"; but in 1944 he approved a new script of the film, stating that "details of crime have become more common" in the intervening years "and adultery is no longer quite as objectionable."²⁶⁰ Breen, the Roman Catholic, was in fact serving two masters: Rome and Hollywood. And he was finding it a difficult juggling act. The Legion, on the other hand, usually (though not always) served only one master: Rome. This explains why in general, Legion standards were higher than Breen's, but (as seen above) not always by much.

This again goes to show the subjective nature of this kind of censorship, when the Bible is not the standard.

Hollywood's Strong Roman Catholic-Jewish Alliance at This Time

In the late 1930s and into the 1940s the Legion was extremely powerful, and moviemakers were not prepared to antagonise it, so they made films that painted the Roman Catholic religion in a very good

light. One pro-Papist film after another was released by Hollywood, including some extremely successful ones: for example, *Boys Town* (1938), *Angels with Dirty Faces* (1938), *The Fighting 69th* (1940), *Knute Rockne, All American* (1940), *The Song of Bernadette* (1943), *Going My Way* (1944), and *The Bells of St. Mary's* (1945). It was a period of Romanist advancement on a number of fronts in the United States, and a confident and powerful Romish hierarchy was going all out to Romanise America. And one of the ways it was doing so was through its huge influence over Hollywood.²⁶¹

In Hollywood there was thus a working alliance between Roman Catholics and Jews. But what did these two groups stand to gain by their strange alliance? Each group stood to gain much – and did. “Catholic censors, concerned to insinuate themselves into the heart of Jewish Hollywood, would eventually become themselves industry insiders by shaping production standards in ways that benefited the studios and punished independents and foreign rivals to the American movie industry. Jews would benefit from their efforts through box-office profits and in terms of increased cultural capital. By delivering high-minded and even sacred topics on-screen as antidotes to the charges of vulgarity that were launched against them by Catholics and Protestants, Jews joined Catholics as new participants in the American cultural and moral mainstream.”²⁶² Together they moulded America’s values and morals through the movies they made. “Catholics and Jews found themselves together in the movie industry and created a set of American values and practices that spoke to their own position as minority communities in what they perceived to be a Protestant America.”²⁶³

But these two quotations only tell a part of the story. Yes, Jewish studio bosses, etc., stood to gain financially from the alliance, and by making themselves more acceptable in American society thereby. But Roman Catholics did not *only* gain a foothold in Jewish Hollywood or the position of industry insiders; they also gained immense influence and power over the reshaping of the United States of America in the Vatican’s image. Little did Protestant Americans realise how their lives, their values, their morals and practices would be moulded and formed and *manipulated* by Roman Catholic and Communist forces

(often Jewish-dominated) through the decades. All thanks, to a vast extent, to Hollywood.

And yet voices were beginning to be raised against the Code and its enforcers:

***Gone With the Wind* (1939) and *Rebecca* (1940): Rumbblings of Discontent Against the Code**

Although Roman Catholic domination of Hollywood was almost total in the 1930s and first half of the 1940s, and the major studios submitted to the PCA and the Legion of Decency with barely a whimper, there were occasional but very serious challenges, at least from maverick producers. One of these was David O. Selznick, and another was millionaire Howard Hughes.

Breen was always wary of Selznick, saying he produced more unacceptable material in a year than any two larger studios did. Selznick, for his part, believed that the times had changed and Breen had not changed with them. After Selznick left MGM in 1939 he established his own film company, Selznick International. In that same year he produced *Gone With the Wind*, cementing his position as one of Hollywood's "greats." In that film, actor Clark Gable utters the word, "damn". This became one of the most infamous utterances in Hollywood history. Joseph Breen, applying the Code firmly, stated that the line had to be cut from the film, although he sympathised with Selznick as the word was not used as a curse in that context; while Selznick, who was strongly opposed to movie censorship, resisted the strict application of the Code to the matter. Selznick also demonstrated that the word appeared in various magazines, including *Ladies Home Journal*, and had been used in a previous film in a similar way. He filed an appeal with the board of directors of the MPPDA, and eventually he emerged the victor and the line stayed in the film, being permitted by Will Hays. But the Breen Office came in for much criticism over its opposition to the word. Hollywood columnist Jimmie Fidler mocked Breen as "probably the only Irishman in history to be appalled by so mild an expletive".²⁶⁴ In truth, however, Breen, who was known to use far stronger language himself, was merely applying the letter of the law so to speak, when he tried to enforce the Code's position on the use of such words. Selznick, meanwhile, called for a reform of the Code,

branding it “dated”.

Martin Quigley believed, with Breen, that Will Hays’ decision had done much damage.

But the scene with the infamous word was not the only one to which Breen objected. In another scene in the film, a wounded man is brought to a brothel for medical attention. Breen did not want the brothel as the location. When one of Selznick’s assistants said to him that brothels were a reality of life, Breen pointed out that bathrooms were a reality as well and he went to one every morning, but that did not mean it should become part of a film. In the end, he allowed the brothel to stay in the film as long as nothing was shown that would make prostitution appear to be pleasant or exciting, so as not to stir lustful emotions in young people.²⁶⁵

So very subjective! The only censorship there should be is that of the State for the protection of the physical lives and property of its citizens. This is the State’s God-given duty. Any other censorship, whether applied by the State or (as in this case) from religious or other institutions, oversteps that boundary and becomes each man doing what is right in his own eyes, censoring things which do not need to be censored, and not censoring things which should be.

In 1940 Selznick and Alfred Hitchcock (a Roman Catholic) made the film *Rebecca*, containing adultery, murder, and hints of abortion and lesbianism. Naturally Breen insisted on cuts to anything that smacked of abortion or sexual perversion, but in the novel on which the film was based, the murderer is not punished. This, of course, was also unacceptable to Breen, for he strongly believed that all crimes be punished in movies. To get around the problem, he suggested to Selznick that instead of a murder occurring in the film, the death should rather be an accidental one. Selznick had no choice but to agree if he wanted his film to see the light of day – but he was livid, and considered suing the Hays Office. He said that he would be a Hollywood hero for waging war against “so insane and inane and outmoded a Code as that under which the industry is now struggling.”

The movie, however, was a great success at the box office, and Selznick’s anger abated – for the time being. But he would not disappear. And he would challenge the Code, and thus the Roman

Catholic “Church”, a few years later.

***The Fighting 69th* (1940): Rome’s Army Chaplains Exalted**

In 1940 Warner Brothers released one of the most pro-Irish (and thus pro-Papist) films to date, a combat movie entitled *The Fighting 69th*. This film, “[b]esotted with near-toxic levels of blarney, brogues, and malarkey,” demonstrated the plain raw fact that Irish Romanism “was in full command of the center stage in American culture.”²⁶⁶ The film was brimming with stereotypical Irish soldiers and an Irish priest-chaplain. This war film promoted Roman Catholicism by “recounting the glorious achievements of the Rainbow Division and its Irish Catholic contingent.... Pat O’Brien was unrelentingly pious and patriotic as Father Francis J. Duffy, the real life chaplain of the unit.... Father Duffy has a formal monument and his own park in the middle of Times Square, but another part of his legacy is Hollywood’s deification of this Irishman as the prototype for all chaplains in its pro-war films. There’s a little of Father Duffy in every brave cinematic religious mentor leading his flock to glory and salvation.”²⁶⁷

Still, even the production of this pro-Papist film was not without objectionable aspects as far as the Legion was concerned. Priest Devlin of the Los Angeles Legion attempted to get Warner Brothers to do something about what he called Duffy’s “religious indifferentism” in the film, i.e. his belief (at least as portrayed in the film) that all religions had merit and were acceptable to God. This of course was certainly not official Roman Catholic doctrine, which held that “outside the Church [of Rome] there is no salvation”. Devlin said that producers always sought to put “expressions of tolerance in the mouth of a character of a priest”, such as “all religions are good, we’re all going to Heaven by different routes”, “it doesn’t matter what your religion is so long as you have some religion.” He added that it was difficult to explain the Roman Catholic teaching of “tolerance” to the producers, and that “the best we can do is to have such expressions removed.”²⁶⁸

The reason Devlin found it difficult to explain Rome’s teaching on tolerance to movie producers was very simple: Rome *had no* true teaching on tolerance! Biblical Christianity proclaims very clearly that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and to God the Father, for this is precisely what Christ Himself taught (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12).

But tolerance is about allowing those of other religions to state their beliefs as well (even if one totally rejects them), and *not persecuting* those of other religions. The Papal system, of course, throughout history persecuted even unto death those who differed with her in matters of religion! It is not surprising, then, that film producers had an extremely difficult time trying to understand Rome's view of "tolerance". It was simply a myth, one shattered by centuries of bloodshed by fanatical Papists.

Breen's Brief Resignation

Breen wrote to Jesuit priest Daniel Lord expressing his frustration with the Legion of Decency, which wanted more restrictions on films than he did; and in May 1941 he actually resigned as Hollywood censor – and, astoundingly, announced that he was going to be working for RKO studio as general manager. He gave assurances that RKO would conform to the Code. However, not even a year later he was fired, and again became Hollywood censor in 1942. Why was this done? Well, "the industry was unable to find a person on which Martin Quigley, the producers, the Catholic church, and Will Hays could agree. The Legion pressured Hays to agree that any replacement must be a Catholic; but which Catholic?"²⁶⁹ The movie studios themselves were in favour of Breen's return, and so it came about that he was re-appointed to his old post. But his brief attempt at moviemaking had publicly humiliated him.

***Guadalcanal Diary* (1943): a Huge Propaganda Boost for Rome's Supposedly Anti-Nazi Stance**

Two decades before the ecumenical movement proper would get off the ground in a big way, Hollywood films of the war era were promoting the concept of Roman Catholic-Protestant "unity": that it did not matter whether an Allied soldier was Roman Catholic or Protestant – both were Christians and both were fighting on God's side. In *Guadalcanal Diary*, within minutes of the film's beginning it is made clear that there are Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish sailors all fighting side by side; the crew on deck sing the Protestant hymn, "Rock of Ages"; and then the Romish priest celebrates mass. And this was to be standard fare in war film after war film. "Almost every film featured a platoon

or squad or barracks with WASPS, ethnic Catholics, and Jews”; but there was something more – a constant glorification of the Romish priest-chaplain, in particular: “The chaplains assigned to these units were frequently Irish Catholic giants with hearts of gold, dazzlingly fine psychological insights, and an encyclopedic grasp of moral theology. Hollywood glorified an almost endless parade of courageous [Papist] chaplains dragging men to safety, hearing last confessions, mending broken hearts, curing battle jitters, and anointing the dead. The heroic padre became a leading icon in Second World War films.... Master sergeants may have aided in teaching the manual of arms, but Irish Catholic priests in uniform were the drill instructors of the soul.” “Father Donnelly in *Guadalcanal Diary*, one of the most fully developed examples of this convention, can stand as a token of literally dozens of other Hollywood portraits of Catholic chaplains.... wherever the boys were, Father Donnelly or some other surrogate of Catholicism was there. Much was made of the Irish side of their priesthood. Irish chaplains tolerated drinking, dancing, and even wenching well enough; they even countenanced doubts, fears, and tears rather well. What they couldn’t stand, however, was cowardice or indecision; the lukewarm had no place in this holy war.”²⁷⁰

Was this all just coincidental? By no means. It was a very deliberate strategy of the Romish hierarchy. And in typical Papist fashion, as shown from the quotation just given, various sins were tolerated as long as the Roman Catholic boys continued fighting bravely. Nothing new in this: Rome has always been very willing to overlook all kinds of sins as long as her soldiers have fought her wars so as to obtain the desired results. In the case of Romish American soldiers fighting Nazism, the desired result was to convince Protestant America that Romish soldiers were loyal Americans. It was also to have a back-up strategy in case Hitler lost the war: Rome could then claim to have been against Hitler all the time. Rome always backs both sides in a conflict, so as to cover all bases.

***The Song of Bernadette* (1943): Jewish Collaboration in Promoting a Papist “Saint”**

In 1943 *The Song of Bernadette* was released and became extremely popular. This was a Roman Catholic epic about a nineteenth-century

French peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, who claimed to have had visions of the virgin Mary. What was very significant about this movie was that it was a collaborative effort between Roman Catholics *and Jews*. How did this come about?

The movie was based on a novel, published the year before. But the author was not a Papist, he was a Jew! His name was Franz Werfel, and he had fled Nazi Czechoslovakia. Roman Catholics had sheltered him in Lourdes, which had been the home of Bernadette, and it had a famous Marian shrine where it was claimed that miracles happened. As a result, Werfel made a vow to tell the story of the “miracle” of the shrine of Lourdes. He vowed “that I would evermore and everywhere in all I wrote magnify the divine mystery and the holiness of man.” This in itself was a very Popish thing to do, of course, for Papists are fond of performing vows in return for what they believe to be answers to their prayers. This naturally then struck a cord with Papists. Accordingly, soon after he arrived in New York Werfel wrote *The Song of Bernadette*. It became a bestseller, and both Werfel’s escape from the Nazis *and* his writing of the novel were viewed by Papists as yet two more of Bernadette’s miracles.

It turns out, however, that Werfel’s authorship of the book was not so miraculous as Papists liked to believe. After all, his wife, who escaped with him, was a devout Papist! Furthermore, she was the widow of the composer Gustav Mahler, who, although born a Jew, had been baptized as a Roman Catholic in 1897. With such a devout Papist for a wife, doubtless relentlessly whispering about Lourdes “miracles” and other Popish mumbo-jumbo into his ear, Werfel’s reverence for Bernadette was not at all surprising.

And Papists were thrilled to be able to take this book, written by a Jew yet praising a Papist “saint”, and promote it to largely Jewish-controlled Hollywood.

Roman Catholic and Jewish collaboration on the film was prominent from the start. The director was a devout Romish mystic, Henry King. The lead actress, Jennifer Jones (née Phyllis Isley), had had convent schooling. The film’s musical score was by Alfred Newman, who, although he was a secular Jew, researched Romish choral, convent and liturgical music so as to produce the score. Checking on the accuracy of

the movie's religious details was a Romish priest, Cyrill Fischer, who had himself fled Europe after criticising Hitler and who had become Werfel's friend, instructing him in detail about Romish rituals.²⁷¹

This working alliance between Jews and Romanists in the making of this film “illustrates how the ethical concerns and cultural position of Hollywood's Jews could be articulated through the religious images of Catholics, another minority American religion.”²⁷² In other words, this film brought Jews and Papists together precisely because they were both religious minorities at the time, and shared a number of common concerns in Protestant America.

Jennifer Jones was praised by the Jesuit magazine, *America*, as the ideal choice for the lead role. It called her “an exemplary Catholic girl”, who had been “Prefect of her Sodality” and stated that she had “never missed a retreat while in school, and would absolutely not attend movies during Lent.” This gives us a good insight into Rome's warped sense of what constitutes a “Christian”. But as it turned out, their “exemplary Catholic girl” was not so exemplary after all: her marriage was falling apart and she was having an affair with the married producer, David O. Selznick.²⁷³

When the film was released, the Roman Catholic hierarchy went all out to see to it that it had massive exposure, including amongst influential leaders in politics and industry.²⁷⁴ Director King was very happy with this. But an incident that occurred during the making of the film showed just how devout – and naive – this man was. The cinematographer, Arthur Miller, used a spotlight on Jennifer Jones to suggest the aura of sanctity that supposedly surrounded her character. But in an interview Miller said that King, the Papist mystic, did not know of the special spotlight, and actually took the halo which he saw around Jones to be (in Miller's words) “something spiritual that had crept into the picture from heaven.”²⁷⁵

And now, as David O. Selznick had done with *Gone With the Wind*, another maverick producer of this era, millionaire Howard Hughes, decided to challenge the Code and its enforcers. And the challenge he mounted would be a huge one.

***The Outlaw* (1943): Howard Hughes Challenges the Code**

The super-wealthy Howard Hughes was fiercely opposed to the censorship stranglehold over the industry. In 1943 he released his film, *The Outlaw*, a western about Billy the Kid. “It was condemned by the Catholic Legion of Decency for almost a decade, denounced in pulpits from coast to coast, and banned by state and municipal censorship boards – and it broke box-office records wherever it was allowed to play.”²⁷⁶

For the female lead, Hughes found 19-year-old Ernestine Jane Geraldine Russell, and this movie turned her into the Hollywood star Jane Russell. It also “generated more publicity for an unknown actress (Jane Russell) than any other film in history.”²⁷⁷ The script was certainly not historically accurate, and was (for its time) full of sexual material, including an implied rape of Russell’s character, a casual sexual relationship between Russell’s character and the two main male characters and no condemnation of it as being wrong, and Russell’s low-cut blouse. In addition the sheriff was killed and the criminal went unpunished. The Production Code Administration not surprisingly condemned the script, ordering Hughes to remove such things from it and saying that Russell’s body must not be exposed.

Now normally, whenever a studio received a PCA condemnation, it would rewrite the script to bring it into line with the Code. But Hughes refused to do so and went ahead with making the movie. After it was completed in 1941 it was reviewed by the PCA, which found it utterly unacceptable and refused to give it the seal of approval until offensive scenes were corrected. But Joseph Breen knew that Howard Hughes would probably not listen to him, and he told his boss Will Hays that Hughes would appeal. Breen said that *The Outlaw* went beyond any previous film in exposing or emphasising the female form. He sent a letter to every Hollywood studio letting them know that the PCA would not issue a seal of approval to any film which exposed or emphasised a woman’s body. Nevertheless, even without the Code seal, the film was shown – not by studio-affiliated theatres but by independent ones. And it raked in the bucks.

While launching a massive publicity campaign which successfully turned Jane Russell into a “star” even before she had been seen on the screen – billboards and magazine photo spreads were provocative in

their exposure of her, all in preparation for the film's release – Hughes demanded that the MPPDA board of directors hear his case. The end result was that the board upheld the PCA ruling, but told Hughes the seal of approval would be granted if he deleted about twenty-five feet of film (about a minute) in which Jane Russell's cleavage was exposed. This amounted to something of a victory for Hughes, and Joseph Breen was unhappy about it. Hughes did as required, and the seal was issued. Hughes had in fact stared down the censors and won.

But instead of immediately releasing the film, Hughes stalled. Although the seal had been issued, state censorship boards insisted that more cuts be made to the film, and Twentieth Century-Fox grew nervous about distributing it. Hughes waited two years, releasing the film in 1943.

Breen was fuming, especially because Hughes took delight in rubbing Breen's nose in the dirt, with such advertising for the film as, "The Picture That Couldn't be Stopped!" Also, Hughes was claiming his film had been released with no cuts at all, which was untrue.

Roman Catholics wanted to know if their "Church" had approved the movie, and how the Legion of Decency had rated it. But the Legion's National Office had not reviewed it, so the task was given to its San Francisco branch, which condemned it as immoral. And yet even so, when the film opened the public flocked to see it in huge numbers, and it made a fortune for Hughes. Clearly, Roman Catholics made up a very large proportion of those who went to see it, regardless of what their "Church" or their Legion said about it.

But Hughes again pulled the film, re-releasing it three years later in 1946, believing that it would do well even if he did not have Roman Catholic approval. The Legion condemnation of the film was still in force, but this did not concern him, and to make a point he deliberately opened the film in Chicago, the second most powerful Roman Catholic diocese in the United States and a place of solid support for the Legion of Decency. And he again made the claim that the film was screened "exactly as filmed". Breen and the MPPDA (which had now been renamed the MPAA – the Motion Picture Association of America) were furious, and Hughes was held in violation of the Advertising Code. Breen demanded that Hughes surrender the film's certificate of approval issued in 1941. Hughes refused and also sued the MPAA

for millions of dollars, claiming it interfered with his ability to market the film, and an injunction prohibited the MPAA from acting against the film until the court had resolved matters. Knowing this would take months, Hughes continued to promote the film in the meantime. When it opened in Chicago, Roman Catholic protesters and picketers made a hue and cry, but the crowds flocked to see it and it did extremely well at the box office. And in a city such as Chicago, so very Papist, there can be no doubt that despite condemnation from the Legion, priests, picketers and protesters, huge numbers of those who went to see the film were Roman Catholics.

The film broke records in Los Angeles, and then opened in St. Louis, which was the diocese of Jesuit priest Daniel Lord. Protesters, mainly Roman Catholic children, marched with banners urging people to boycott the film, but when the police department's Morality Squad decided there was nothing objectionable about it, police chased the child protesters away. Once again *The Outlaw* broke all box office records. And it did so in many other parts of the country as well.

And then, in 1949, after the film had already grossed over \$3 000 000 for Hughes, he resubmitted *The Outlaw* to the MPAA, and the Code seal was re-issued. And both sides – Hughes and the MPAA – claimed victory.

But it was not all smooth sailing, for Popish pressure was immense. Nationwide, Roman Catholic groups protested against the movie, and did so for several years. Bishops blasted the film as corrupting and destructive of morals. A bishop in Galveston, Texas, called for a year-long boycott of Loew's theatres in Houston, and in Philadelphia the cardinal, Dennis Dougherty, threatened theatre owner William Goldman with a year-long boycott by Roman Catholics of any of his theatres that showed the movie. Dougherty also forbade Roman Catholics from seeing it, and declared that any newspaper advertising it would be condemned from the pulpit. According to *Variety* magazine, "roving bands of Catholics" threatened theatre owners. Local officials in heavily Roman Catholic areas supported the Romish leadership's opposition to the film. Hughes even attempted to bribe priest Devlin, film advisor to Cantwell the bishop, to get the film reclassified.

The Legion's priest McClafferty suggested the changes that would

need to be made to the film before the Legion could reconsider, and Hughes agreed to comply with at least some of these. But William Scully, the bishop of Albany, when approached by McClafferty, said that the film should be pulled from circulation for some time and then re-issued once the cuts and changes had been made. Hughes then said he would revise the film's ending, and publicly state that he had made changes to the film at the Legion's request, in exchange for a lifting of the Legion's condemnation. He also said that in future, all his films would first have to receive Legion approval before he would release them. But the Episcopal Committee decided not to negotiate further with him.

Hughes then approached Martin Quigley and asked for his advice on what should be changed in the film to make it receive Legion approval. Quigley told him, and Hughes accepted and made most of the changes Quigley recommended. But this time Hughes warned Quigley that if the Legion still refused to reclassify his film, he would use advertisements in the press to charge the Roman Catholic "Church" with acting as an extra-legal national censorship board.

Quigley accepted the new version of the film and approached the Legion, which for various reasons very reluctantly agreed to re-open negotiations with Hughes. Hughes, for his part, said he would substitute the new version for the old; he eliminated the idea of rape in one scene; he shortened a bedroom scene; and he added an epilogue which was meant to convey the message that crime does not pay. The Legion, still reluctantly, reclassified it with a "B" rating in 1949. But a number of Romish leaders were very unhappy with the decision.

It was now obvious that times were slowly beginning to change. No longer would a film necessarily bomb at the box office if it did not have a PCA seal of approval, or if it had been condemned by the Legion of Decency. Howard Hughes had proved that a film-maker could ignore both the Legion and Joseph Breen himself, and still make a popular film. "*The Outlaw* demonstrated that there was a huge market for movies that stepped outside the restrictive codes that had determined movie content for close to two decades.... Howard Hughes proved that the public would go to movies rejected by the PCA and the Legion."²⁷⁸

The immense success of this movie showed two things. First,

that the moral standards of the American public in general were deteriorating rapidly from what they had been; and second, that despite intense resistance from the Romish hierarchy, the Legion of Decency, etc., Roman Catholics were no longer as subservient to their bishops and priests as they had been, no longer as willing to pay attention to what their leaders said when it came to movies. There were priests who did not even know much about the Legion and who did not consult it regarding films.²⁷⁹ In this sense, Romanists in America were being influenced by the American way of life, which was so opposed to Rome's authoritarian, rigid, top-down system that for centuries had held so many millions of Papists in subjection in Europe. That kind of authoritarianism was the very opposite of what the American people, as a whole, cherished and sought to defend.

Americans were increasingly interpreting the "liberty" enshrined in their laws as liberty to sin, which was never the intention of the founding fathers of that great nation. America's moral foundation was under immense strain, and Hollywood was contributing greatly to that. And so the irony is that something that was bad for America as a whole – increasingly unrestrained "liberty" – was at the very same time making it difficult for the Roman Catholic institution to successfully apply the kind of heavy-handed tactics to get its own way that it was able to use so successfully in other parts of the world. Roman Catholic Americans were greatly influenced by the same American spirit that influenced their fellow-countrymen, and increasingly resented any restraints placed upon them, even when such restraints originated from the hierarchy and organs of their "Church", which they believed was necessary to their salvation. It is a dilemma Rome has always faced in America, and one which drives it to work so tirelessly for the overthrow of America's freedoms, both the good ones and the bad. If Rome had its way, America would be a religious dictatorship, just as so many countries in Europe have always been.

A war was under way: a war between a rigid, autocratic "Church" and a society in transition, losing its moral foundation and beginning to rebel against the moral standards of previous generations. Which would emerge victorious in the end?

Or would they end up merging, with the "Church" of Rome slackening its rigidity in order to accommodate a changing society and

thereby keep its members? We shall see.

Rome's Almost-Total Domination of Hollywood At This Time

Mavericks like Hughes notwithstanding, at this time Hollywood was under almost-total Roman Catholic domination and influence, via the Breen Office and the Legion of Decency; and one pro-Papist film followed another, which moved the *Protestant Digest* to say, “A visitor from Mars, popping into a dozen cinemas at random, would be convinced that the United States is a Catholic nation. If Roman Catholic domination of censorship continues, the film screens of most of the world will be flooded with pictures such as *Going My Way* [1944], *The Song of Bernadette* [1945], and *The Bells of St. Mary's* [1945].” Breen’s biographer, after giving this quote, went further by adding: “The Protestant gripe list was too short. A preacher seeking to rid the screen of meddlesome priests might also have mentioned *San Francisco* (1936), *Angels with Dirty Faces* (1938), *Boys Town* (1938), *Knute Rockne, All American* (1940), *The Fighting 69th* (1940), *Men of Boys Town* (1941), and *The Keys of the Kingdom* (1944), in addition to dozens of prison and combat films where Catholic priests were the chaplains chosen to take the long walk to the chair with convicted killers or lend spiritual comfort to GIs in foxholes.” Film-makers, he added, “took care not to get [Breen’s] Irish up with a depiction of Catholicism that was anything less than worshipful.”²⁸⁰

This near-total control was not to last. But for now, and for a good many years to come, the religion of Hollywood was Roman Catholicism.

***Going My Way* (1944): Making Roman Catholicism Acceptable in Protestant America**

In 1944 a movie was made that would do wonders for the acceptance of Romanism in mainstream America. It was called *Going My Way*, and it starred the popular singer and actor Bing Crosby in the lead role as an Irish Roman Catholic priest, Chuck O'Malley. The film was a smash hit. The Jesuit magazine, *America*, declared it to be “the freshest, most original material that has recently been brought to life on celluloid.” *Life* magazine said that Crosby’s performance was “one of the few satisfying interpretations of the priesthood to emerge from Hollywood.”²⁸¹ And a

Romish cardinal said that it did more for the Roman Catholic “Church” than a dozen bishops could have done in a year.²⁸²

Some Roman Catholics were not happy with the film, but they were in the minority. Priest Paul J. Glenn in Columbus, Ohio, wrote that it was “un-Catholic” and even “anti-Catholic”. One of the worst things in the film, Glenn felt, was when the two priests shared a nightcap and the younger one then sang an Irish lullaby to the older one to lull him to sleep. Glenn said that viewers would conclude “that to be Catholic is to be Irish, and to be Irish is to be a whiskey drinker.” There were those Romanists who agreed with him, but when the pope himself, Pius XII, discussed the film with its director, he said, “Don’t you love that scene where the priest takes a little drink?”²⁸³ Naturally, the vast majority of Romanists sided with their pope, and the film was a huge hit.

Ironic, is it not, that in the midst of World War Two – a war to such a large extent instigated by the Vatican and its Jesuits²⁸⁴ – a film about a Popish priest would become such a hit in Protestant America?

Bing Crosby’s mother was a strict Irish Romanist, and his father had converted to Romanism in order to marry her. As a teenager Crosby served as an altar boy and attended a Jesuit-run high school. The film’s director, Leo McCarey, was a Romanist of Irish-French stock. His aunt was a nun who by his own admission influenced him greatly. And the film’s songwriter, Johnny Burke, was also a Papist. It is no wonder that the film was so pro-Papist.

“*Going My Way* marked a key moment in the cultural history of Catholics in America.”²⁸⁵ How so? Well, up until then Romish priests had been portrayed in a sombre way, and this was how they were perceived in the popular imagination. But Bing Crosby created a new kind of priest for the screen, one who was jovial, worldly-wise, easy-going, very American, even heroic. This priest sang, played the piano, lived in a light and airy rectory with a peaceful garden, went to the movies and played golf. He knew all about love and romance and was happy singing about it. He even wore a straw boater hat, perched rakishly on his head! Roman Catholics liked it because there was such a decided contrast, in the film, between O’Malley’s character and the stiff, older priest, who was unable to fit in with the daily life of his parishioners, and who represented the kind of pre-war Romanism which now seemed to them old-fashioned and out of touch. O’Malley’s character represented

a new kind of Romanism, and it was immediately popular – and not just with Papists but many Protestants as well, for in so many ways priest O'Malley's world looked just like that of ordinary Americans, including American Protestants. It was all so *familiar*; and it revolutionised the way people viewed the Popish priesthood. In so doing, it gave a huge thrust forward to Roman Catholicism in the United States, and in time throughout the Protestant world.

The film was “an imagining of the Catholic parish priest as a sign of modern American cultural vitality. For Catholics Leo McCarey and Bing Crosby... the parish can be nothing other than the backdrop for a tolerant, progressive, sports-loving Catholicism.”²⁸⁶ Precisely the image of Romanism that the hierarchy wanted to convey! No wonder Romish nun, poet, and president of St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, Mary Madeleva, wrote to director McCarey, “*Going My Way* is synonymous with the Catholic way and can become, if it is not already in essence, the American way. You have been rarely intuitive in understanding and expressing this.”²⁸⁷ How the Popish hierarchy in the USA must have been rejoicing! The film presented a Roman Catholicism far removed from the dark, sordid, secretive, sinister Romanism with which Protestants were familiar. This film's Romanism was cheery, light, happy, easy-going, fun even. In addition, it showed the Romish priest at the very centre of all aspects of American life, moving effortlessly from working-class neighbourhoods to upper-class circles. “The enclosed and protected sacred spaces of the Catholic tradition – convents, monasteries, cathedrals, shrines – were construed by Protestants to be spaces of entrapment, bondage, and superstition. In those semi-secret places, many nineteenth-century Americans imagined a powerful and corrupt Roman church reigning against the purifying influence of reason and individual freedom.”²⁸⁸ Sadly, the dark, sinister Romanism was the reality; but such is the power of the movies that a single film could do so much to change Protestant attitudes to this religious system, the very religious system branded in the Bible as “the Great Whore” (Revelation 17), the religion of Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2).

The Bells of St. Mary's (1945): Sequel to Going My Way

The sequel saw Bing Crosby return as the loveable priest, along with Ingrid Bergman as a beautiful nun. Again there was light-hearted

singing, comedy, and the relationship between the two main characters, the priest and the nun, who, although both sworn to vows of chastity, are obviously attracted to each other. Nothing sinful occurs between them – that would never have passed the Romish censors – and the film was another huge hit with audiences. The two films together did wonders for Rome.

***The Fighting Sullivans* (1944): a Pro-Papist War Film**

As mentioned previously, in the midst of World War Two films portraying Roman Catholic Americans as loyal Americans fighting Nazism were very popular. The hierarchy of the “Church” knew well enough that Rome was actually on the side of Hitler and Nazism, but this was not the kind of information they wanted Protestant America to know, and thus men like the immensely influential cardinal, Francis Spellman, assured American Roman Catholic soldiers that they were fighting God’s battles against the Nazis. There was a concerted effort to portray American Papists as loyal patriots.

The Fighting Sullivans was a film aimed at doing just that. It was based on a real Irish-American Roman Catholic family from Iowa whose five sons were killed in combat when the cruiser they were on went down in the South Pacific. Director Lloyd Bacon focused on the Romish sacraments in his film: what are called Baptism, Penance, Holy Communion, and Matrimony. This sentimental movie really played up the religion of the five young men, uniting their Romanism to their Americanism and sending the strong message that Romanism in America was on an equal footing with Protestantism and Judaism, and that Roman Catholic lads were just as loyal to America as anyone else.

The tragedy is that these and countless other young Roman Catholic men died fighting a foe that was supported by their own “Church”. Roman Catholic soldiers were fighting Roman Catholic soldiers, and millions were slaughtered on both sides to advance the goals of the Papacy.

***The Sign of the Cross* (1944): Depicting Papists and Protestants as United Christians Under the Cross**

Many of Hollywood’s war films promoted the concept of the unity of Roman Catholic and Protestant soldiers fighting the Nazis, that both

were Christians, both were fighting under the cross of Christ, and both were fighting on God's side. Cecil B. DeMille re-released his film, *The Sign of the Cross*, in 1944, in which a prologue was added which connected the martyrs who died under Nero Caesar in the first century AD with the "Christian soldiers" dying in the war with Nazism. In the film two chaplains, one a Papist and the other a Protestant, affably chat together and display their unity, and agree that the soldiers, whether Papist or Protestant, are united by the sign of the cross.

***The Keys of the Kingdom* (1944): Acceptable to Jesuit Advisors After Major Revision**

The script for this film was based on a book by A.J. Cronin. It was the story of a liberal priest, Francis Chisolm, who was often at odds with his conservative priestly colleagues. In the book Chisolm was made to say things like, "religious belief is such an accident of birth God can't have set an exclusive value on it." And: "there are many gates to heaven. We enter by one, these new [Methodist] preachers by another." In other words, he believed (contrary to Romish theology) that there were "many ways to God." His best friend was an atheist who, when he was dying, said that he still could not believe in God, but Chisolm told him that God believed in him.

Chisolm's beliefs were certainly contrary to the *true* Gospel, which states categorically that *only Christ* is the way to heaven (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12). But such statements were anathema to the Roman Catholic institution as well, although for a different reason: Rome believed then, as it had for centuries and as it continues to believe to this day, that "outside of the Church [of Rome] there is no salvation."²⁸⁹ So when producer David Selznick wanted to turn the book into a movie, he anticipated problems with the Romish hierarchy. He met with priest Devlin to try to work something out, but Devlin was adamant that before the film could be made the script would require massive editing. Not surprisingly, what particularly angered the priest was the priest-character Chisolm's statements regarding there being many ways to heaven, so contrary to Popish teaching.

When Selznick approached Breen, he got no encouragement from that quarter either. Breen told him that some of the priests in the story might violate the Code's prohibition against priests being depicted

negatively in films, and that Protestants might take umbrage at the treatment of the story's Methodist missionaries. Other prominent Papists advised Selznick to hire Jesuit priest Wilfred Parsons as the technical consultant on the film, which he did. Another Jesuit, Albert O'Hara, was signed on as an advisor as well.

Parsons' major headache was with the "broad-mindedness" of the story's priest-character. He and Selznick clashed over how best to alter these things in a way acceptable to the "Church". Parsons wanted the character's words to be so drastically altered that they no longer said anything like what they had originally, and Selznick could not accept that. To make matters worse for Parsons, his Jesuit superior in Washington warned him that neither his name, nor that of the Jesuit Order, could be used as a defence against future criticism that could lead to them being censured. The superior told Parsons that he would have to end his involvement with the production of the film unless he was able to persuade Selznick to "eliminate all indifferentism and off-color Catholicism with which Father Chisolm is saturated".²⁹⁰

Selznick, meanwhile, had reached the point where he was no longer keen to begin production on the film, so he sold it to Twentieth Century-Fox. Fox agreed to a number of Parsons' suggested changes. For example, when Chisolm had originally spoken of "many gates to heaven", this had now been altered to, "Each of us travels his own road to the Kingdom of Heaven. Though I know another's to be wrong, still I have no right to interfere with his choice." Parsons was only partially satisfied with this change, feeling it could be misunderstood.

When Parsons learned that the Legion of Decency was considering a "B" rating for the film (objectionable in part), he was very troubled. He managed finally to get the studio to remove the "different roads" line from the film.

He may have feared the worst from the Romish press and others, but when the film was released Romish reaction was far more positive than he thought it would be, with major Romish publications stating that the film was a big improvement over the book. And the Legion actually classified it "A-I" (suitable for general audiences). How ridiculous to be happy over the greatly-altered film version of a story which, in its printed version, remained intact!

God Is My Co-Pilot (1945): Another Pro-Papist War Film

This was yet another war film which strongly promoted the Roman Catholic chaplain. Again, the chaplain was a big Irishman, intensely patriotic, who gets the film's atheistic pilot-hero to trust in him. The priest preaches to him, and reads him a prayer written by a British pilot killed in the war, a prayer about believing in God and how God gave him strength. And by the end of the film, the hero piously repeats the prayer.

Will Hays Replaced by Eric Johnston, but Joe Breen Still the Real Power

Will Hays resigned in 1945. He was known as “the Little General” and “the Presbyterian pope”. He had been at his work since 1922, a period of twenty-three years. But Hollywood no longer felt he was effective.

In his place came Eric Johnston: Republican, anti-Communist, successful businessman – and Episcopalian. His job was to promote the movie industry and to deal with movie censors. And as mentioned previously, the MPPDA was now renamed the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).

This change worried the Legion. As one author put it, “Quigley and the church leaders had never really trusted Hays, but he was the devil they knew. The devil they didn't know was his replacement, Eric Johnston... who, in his first press interview, remarked that the ‘Hays job has to be remodeled and changed.’”²⁹¹

But Johnston's Episcopalianism notwithstanding, the “Breen Office” was still predominantly and vehemently Roman Catholic, and promoting a Roman Catholic version of morality. And Hollywood was still astoundingly pro-Papist. The *Protestant Digest* declared: “For years now, the custom has been to work Catholic churches, sacraments, charitable institutions, hospitals, schools, madonnas, altars, doctrine, and priests into pictures with or without a pretext.”²⁹²

PCA officer, Eugene “Doc” Dougherty, told Albert Van Schmus, a Congregationalist seeking a job at the PCA in 1949, “You know, I don't want to discourage you, but in a way you should be a Catholic to be a member of the Code staff.” Later, when he got the job, Van Schmus said of Dougherty, “He was very encouraging, but he said, ‘I have to be honest with you, I think that's what a member of the staff

needs to have. They've got to understand that kind of morality."²⁹³ Yes, the PCA may have hired non-Roman Catholics, but at heart it was a *Roman Catholic* organisation through and through, promoting a decidedly Roman Catholic morality.

Breen himself, when Johnston took office, was promoted to vice president of the MPAA. And he retained the same autonomy he had enjoyed under Hays, to preside over the PCA "without any interference or outside influence."



CHAPTER EIGHT

THE 1940s: CHALLENGES TO THE CODE AND TO ROMAN CATHOLIC DOMINATION

Hollywood's "Golden Age" Begins to End, and Breen's Iron Grip Begins to Loosen

When the Second World War ended in 1945, Hollywood's "Golden Age" began to end as well. The war itself played a large part in this, for the wartime movies had exposed audiences to much more combat and bloodshed than had ever been seen before in films, not to mention other issues, and once the war was over it was found virtually impossible to return to the pre-war Hollywood morality. The world had changed, and Hollywood was beginning to change as well. Joseph Breen's Roman Catholic morality was still dominant, but it would not be what it once was. And eventually it would be overturned completely.

Also, although Hollywood had enjoyed a virtual monopoly over American entertainment during the war, this changed after the war, due in large measure to the fact that, as soldiers returned home, started families and moved to suburbia, there were other entertainment options available to them, such as sports and, in particular, television, as more and more households started to own a TV set. Hollywood was struggling against this new household idol called TV, and it was losing the battle, with attendance at movies dropping by the millions. As a result, it kept up its steady attempts to whittle away at the restrictions placed upon it by the Code. Breen knew it, and in early 1946 he met with a number of priests, who all agreed to continue to resist Hollywood's attempts to lower moral standards by introducing such themes as rape, homosexuality and abortion into the movies.

After the war, Hollywood was no longer merely churning out films with entertainment value. Increasingly, films also now contained messages: religious messages, racial messages, social messages of all types. This

was what audiences wanted. With the end of the war, Americans now wanted movies to say something to them about the domestic issues their country faced; they wanted movies to make them think, not just to entertain them. But this was not a good thing: Hollywood should never have become the nation's teacher. Sadly, however, it did.

For example, various films began to portray the newly popular evil of "psychoanalysis". And although the Code did not specifically mention psychiatry, psychoses, etc., moviemakers thought they could get around certain Code provisions by introducing the themes the Code denied them under the guise of psychiatric and psychoanalytic themes. How wrong they were. Reporter William Weaver, on behalf of the Breen Office, issued the following warning: "writers who interpret this fact as a swell new way to 'get around the Code' are in for enlightenment to the contrary, for the policy of the PCA with respect to this new variety of material is to be the same as that applied to the old, exacting of the psychiatrically motivated wrongdoer the same penalties that would be exacted of him if he weren't nuts"; and, "There'll be no Trojan horse of contraband under [a] Freudian banner."²⁹⁴ There were no flies on Joe Breen.

And yet, despite his vigilance, times had changed and the psychologist was beginning to rival the Romish priest in post-war America, with Hollywood jumping on the bandwagon. This, too, played a part in the undermining, over time, of Breen's – and Rome's – dominance of Hollywood morality. The Roman Catholic doctrines of sin and free will and human responsibility were gradually being replaced, in movies, by the new psychological doctrines of "mental illness", the "unconscious" and "compulsive behaviour".

And then there were what were called the film noirs. These dark films proliferated after World War Two, and were often very violent and sadistic, graphically so. They were aimed at a male audience, whereas more traditional Hollywood fare was aimed at women first and foremost, for the studios knew that if women could be enticed to watch a movie, they always brought their men along and thus the studios made more money. But film noirs, because of their realistic violence, attracted a male audience and held little attraction for women. These films were desensitising men to violence and were another sign of the

changing morality of America after the brutality of the war.

The Breen Office was appalled by the sadistic nature of film noir, and determined to act against this genre. It was an uphill struggle, however. The times had changed and were still changing, and the rising tide of film noirs was becoming extremely difficult to stem, as censorship was being increasingly challenged in court. The once-absolute authority of the Breen Office was beginning to totter.

The Revival of the House Committee on Un-American Activities

After the war, and despite the fact that Martin Dies was no longer in charge of the HUAC, it was revived, thanks to the efforts of a congressman, John Rankin, who saw to it that it became a standing committee of the House. In 1947 the HUAC began the first hearings into alleged Communist infiltration of the film industry. The Legion of Decency remained convinced that Communists were infiltrating Hollywood, and in 1945, soon after the war ended, priest John Devlin, who headed the Los Angeles Legion, let priest McClafferty know by letter that as far as he was concerned the Communist menace was growing in Hollywood, especially among screenwriters. He believed they would attempt to remove all references to God and spiritual values from movies, undermine the Legion, and insert Communist teaching. The Jesuit magazine *America*, also, claimed that a number of films were serving the interests of Communists. It is no surprise, then, that when in 1947 the HUAC began its investigations of the film industry, most Roman Catholic leaders were fully supportive of it.

The new chairman was Edward Hart, but Rankin was very influential within it. The latter believed there were strong links between Judaism and Communism, but unfortunately he showed that he was anti-Jewish on racial grounds as well, which certainly did not help his case. For example, he once said of a women's delegation that opposed a bill of his, "If I am any judge, they are Communists, pure and simple. They looked like foreigners to me. I never saw such a wilderness of noses in my life." This was clearly an unnecessary derogatory remark about Jewish features. On another occasion he called a columnist who attacked him a "slime mongering —". Another Jewish writer was branded "that little Communist —". Thus Rankin often revealed that he hated Jews merely because they were Jews, and was not solely against

the pro-Communist position of many of them. To make all this even worse, he professed to be a Christian. He once told the House, “I have no quarrel with any man about his religion. Any man who believes in the fundamental principles of Christianity and lives up to them, whether he is Catholic or Protestant, certainly deserves the respect and confidence of mankind.”²⁹⁵ Apart from the fact that this statement revealed his ignorance of the heathenish nature of Roman Catholicism, it also revealed that, to him, only his concept of “Christianity” was real religion. Even though true Christians reject all other religions as false, they believe in the doctrine of religious toleration as taught in the New Testament. Rankin clearly did not.

Rankin cast his eyes upon Hollywood and the Jews who dominated it. When Edward Hart resigned as chairman in mid-1945, Rankin became acting chairman and lost no time. He claimed that he was about to reveal “one of the most dangerous plots ever instigated for the overthrow of the government.... The information we get is that [Hollywood] is the greatest hotbed of subversive activities in the United States. We’re on the trail of the tarantula now, and we’re going to follow through.” Not long afterwards he also stated: “we are out to expose those elements [in Hollywood] that are insidiously trying to spread subversive propaganda, poison the minds of your children, distort the history of our country, and discredit Christianity.”²⁹⁶ Again, he was mostly right: Hollywood was an immoral, dangerous place, and was indeed doing much of what Rankin accused it of doing. Unfortunately, though, he severely weakened his case, not only by his hatred for Jews just because they were Jews, but also by making outlandish statements so obviously false that he often came across as a raving fool – such as this one: “Communism is older than Christianity. It is the curse of the ages. It hounded and persecuted the Savior during his earthly ministry, inspired his crucifixion, derided him in his dying agony, and then gambled for his garments at the foot of the cross; and has spent more than 1,900 years trying to destroy Christianity and everything based on Christian principles.”²⁹⁷

And it emerged that Rankin’s rantings against Communism, as accurate as they often were, nevertheless had originated, some months before him, in the rantings of anti-Jewish Nazi sympathisers and “far-right” extremists. One of them was a “Reverend” Gerald L.K. Smith,

a man once jailed for using obscenity and disturbing the peace, and described as “America’s most raucous purveyor of anti-Semitism and of racial and religious bigotry.” Opposed to America joining the war against Nazi Germany, he was influential in establishing the America First Party, calling for a negotiated peace with Germany and a solution to the “Jewish problem.” He described himself as a “Christian Nationalist”, a term so often used by extremists full of hatred and pro-Nazi sympathy, bent on attacking Jews in the name of “Christianity”.

Smith ranted against Hollywood as the enemy of the Church and the Christian home. In a six-part series in *The Cross and the Flag*, the organ of Smith’s party, entitled “The Rape of America by Hollywood”, an anonymous writer declared: “Controlled by foreign-born, unassimilative upstarts, many of whose records smell to high heaven, Hollywood has been raping American decency, national honesty and financial well-being. Christ was crucified on Calvary; and the same despisers of Christ are still busy in this world, especially in Hollywood, crucifying all of the Savior’s fine principles.” As is so often the case, there was much truth in this, but it was spoiled by the extremist position of the organ and the party, dressed up in a “Christian” guise. Fighting Communism cannot be effectively or honestly done by pro-Nazis. One cannot lambast one evil while supporting another.

Smith and Rankin were working together, with Smith openly declaring his support for Rankin’s investigation into Hollywood and saying, “We Christian Nationalists must give this investigation our full support, because the anti-Christians and anti-Americans are doing all in their power to smear Mr. Rankin and the committee with which he is associated.”

A one-day hearing was held in Los Angeles, conducted by the new chairman of the HUAC, John S. Wood, and HUAC investigator Ernie Adamson. They then declared that Communists were certainly aiming to control the film industry, and that further investigations would be conducted. The committee began its hearings in Washington, and called as a witness none other than the “Rev.” Gerald L.K. Smith. He told the committee, “There is a general belief that Russian Jews control too much of Hollywood propaganda, and they are trying to popularize Russian Communism in America through that instrumentality.

Personally I believe that is the case.” Once again, there was truth in what he said, but his own anti-Jewish stance on racial grounds made his motives highly questionable. Not all within the committee supported Smith, however, and some congressmen were angry when denied the opportunity to interrogate him.

Jews themselves were frightened by the support granted to Smith by Rankin. In 1946 a Columbia University professor had been issued this warning by an HUAC investigator: “You should tell your Jewish friends that the Jews in Germany stuck their necks out too far and Hitler took care of them and that the same thing will happen here unless they watch their steps.”²⁹⁸ No wonder they were afraid. The HUAC might have been anti-Communist and yes, many Hollywood Jews were Communists; but statements like this one showed that the HUAC appeared to be on a racial Jewish witch-hunt.

Senator McCarthy’s Investigations into Communist Subversion of Hollywood

When in 1946 the election brought the Republicans into control of both the House and the Senate, the HUAC was strengthened. Its new chairman was John Parnell Thomas, a Republican congressman and an Irish-American Roman Catholic. But although a Papist, he also attended Baptist services and sometimes publicly said he was an Episcopalian!

Thomas was a staunch anti-Communist (as many Papists at that time were), and a staunch supporter of Rankin. Once in charge of the HUAC, he lost no time in getting down to business. In May 1947 he and some other HUAC members set themselves up in Los Angeles to investigate Communist infiltration of the movie industry.

Senator Joe McCarthy, a Roman Catholic, was at the centre of the investigations into Communist subversion of Hollywood, the U.S. government and labour unions. In early 1947 McCarthy was presented with an FBI report detailing Soviet espionage activities in the United States government – a report that had been previously ignored by the State Department. McCarthy chose not to ignore it but to act upon it. What he uncovered revealed, as one investigator put it, “the most successful secret war ever waged by one government against another. We know now that the Roosevelt Administration was quite literally crawling with Soviet agents.”²⁹⁹ And not just the U.S. government,

but Hollywood was riddled with Soviet agents as well! The studios were under Jewish control, and a large percentage of Communists in the USA were Jewish; and when one examines how they used their films to undermine and destroy America's (and the West's) morals and the Protestant faith, one can clearly see the Red agenda at work. Furthermore, KGB documents recovered from Soviet archives in the 1990s revealed just how extensive the Soviet penetration and subversion of Hollywood really was. Many powerful people in Hollywood were fully prepared to betray their own country and advance Stalin's foreign policy objectives of undermining America.

The truth is that Stalin, the monster-dictator of Soviet Russia and a mass murderer, had identified Hollywood as one of his top five U.S. targets. He knew the power of film to promote the Soviet/Communist message to the masses. Shortly after coming to power he stated: "If I could control the medium of the American motion picture, I would need nothing else to convert the entire world to Communism." In saying this, he was merely elaborating on Lenin's statement before him: "Of all the arts, for us, the most important is the cinema."³⁰⁰ These men could clearly see the massive propaganda power of the movies. And Stalin went about taking control of Hollywood via Red double agents within the industry. "Countless producers, writers and stars all proved willing to combine and connive at brain-washing the world about the marvels of the Soviet system. 'Message' films such as *Mission to Moscow*, *Song of Russia*, *North Star* and scores of other productions did more to glorify the USSR than the Moscow propaganda machine had any hope of doing."³⁰¹

McCarthy, for daring to expose the Soviet subversion of America's film industry and thereby doing an extremely valuable service for his country, became the target of a massive, Communist-orchestrated character assassination. Liberal U.S. newspapers were at the forefront of this intense smear campaign, including the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. He was accused of everything under the sun, including "Red-baiting", political witch-hunts, unsubstantiated charges, conservative fanaticism, and much more. He was vilified and ridiculed. "The real story about McCarthy is that he was hated and vilified, not because he attacked the innocent, but because he successfully exposed the guilty."³⁰² Tragically, top U.S. politicians did nothing to help him, even though they knew he was right.

It emerged that one of the most important Communists working in Hollywood was Ella Winter, wife of screenwriter and fellow Communist, Donald Ogden Stewart. Winter recruited various film stars for the Communist cause, including Charlie Chaplin, Humphrey Bogart, Katherine Hepburn, Lauren Bacall and Marlon Brando. She made use of them to promote various Red causes, one of the most important being the campaign to keep the United States out of World War Two. She and Stewart threw lavish parties which were paid for by Moscow's trade mission in San Francisco, and at these parties the Hollywood elite were coaxed to make donations. In this way, the likes of James Cagney, Bing Crosby, and Humphrey Bogart helped to hinder Britain's efforts to defeat Nazism, as these fundraising parties sponsored strikes in armaments factories which made weapons for British troops.³⁰³

Dalton Trumbo, the highest-paid screenwriter in Hollywood at the time, was a card-carrying member of the Communist Party, a frequent guest at the Ella Winter parties, and a close friend of William Holden, Bogart, Hepburn and Chaplin. His 1941 film, *The Remarkable Andrew*, was a deliberate propaganda film for the Soviets, its objective being to keep the U.S. from siding with Britain against Nazi Germany.

However, the Soviet Union's use of Hollywood to do what it could to prevent the USA from entering the war in support of Britain did an about-turn when Hitler attacked Russia in June 1941. When this happened, Stalin instructed his agents in Hollywood to now do all they could to force the USA *into* the war on Britain's side, to help defeat Hitler! It is known that by 1943, the KGB Bureau in San Francisco was providing the Communists in Hollywood with \$2 million a month.³⁰⁴

In the McCarthy hearings into Communist subversion of Hollywood, some 400 actors, actresses, screenwriters, producers, directors and agents were identified as members of the Communist Party or fellow-travellers. The actual figure was certainly much higher.

Fourteen anti-Communist witnesses testified, one of them stating that Hollywood was "the hub of Red propaganda in the United States." But virtually all of them were members of an organisation called the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals. This had been formed by Sam Wood, a Hollywood director who was a friend of the Roman Catholic media magnate, William Randolph Hearst, and

a staunch anti-Communist. It aimed to remove Communist influence in Hollywood.

The conclusion reached by the HUAC after it had heard the testimony of these fourteen witnesses was that “up until recently there has been no concerted effort on the part of the studio heads to remove the communists from the industry, but that in fact they have been permitted to gain influence and power which has been reflected in the propaganda which they have been successful in injecting in numerous pictures which have been produced in the last eight years.”

Once again it must be said: it is very true that many in Hollywood were seeking to use the movie industry to promote Communism in the United States and the western world. But the HUAC had relied heavily on the evidence for this fact that had been provided by neo-Nazi, anti-Jewish organisations. This caused many to view the HUAC findings with deep suspicion.

Many of the Hollywood Jewish writers, directors, actors, etc., *were* very pro-Communist and *were* certainly seeking to make use of Hollywood to promote Communism. But at the same time, many of the Hollywood Jewish elite – the top Jewish executives – were actually anti-Communist, at least for pragmatic reasons, as we have shown previously. But it did not help their case that during the war they had produced so many films opposing Nazism – this just made them look doubly suspicious in the eyes of neo-Nazis and indeed of other Americans as well, because everyone knew that Hitler hated Jews, so surely the support of Hollywood for anti-Nazi films just proved the Hollywood Jews were pro-Communist? This is how many reasoned. And then too, it *really* did not help their case at all that President Franklin D. Roosevelt – a notorious leftwinger and Communist sympathiser – had encouraged the Hollywood Jews in their anti-Nazi stance and thanked them often enough for it! It is truly tragic that many anti-Communists in America could not see that being anti-Nazi did not automatically make one pro-Communist. They simply could not keep the two issues separate. And this was because so many conservative anti-Communists at that time *were Roman Catholics and decidedly pro-Nazi*.

The Hearings, the Testimonies, the Resistance

The HUAC wanted the Jewish executives to suspend all suspected Communists in their studios. FBI agents worked with the HUAC as well. Jack Warner, who was a friend of FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover, was the first Jewish executive to provide the investigators with the names of those he thought might be Communists.

In September 1947 John Parnell Thomas announced that the hearings on Hollywood would begin soon, and that he would expose 79 prominent Communists or Communist sympathisers within the film industry. 43 people were subpoenaed to appear. Nineteen of these were viewed as leftwingers who had been pointed out by the Motion Picture Alliance. And ten of those nineteen were Jewish. This just strengthened the feeling inside and outside Hollywood that anti-Semitism was a powerful motivating factor in the hearings. It filled the Jewish executives with fear. They decided to co-operate with the HUAC and admit that Communists were at work in Hollywood, but at the same time to deny that the films they made contained subversive Communistic content.

Jack Warner testified first, and in doing so stated that he had been too emotional in naming the names of radicals during the previous session, and retracted some of the charges. He added that although subversive writers had attempted to use his films to push a radical message, he had removed them. Yet when asked who they were, Warner said he did not know, saying, "I had never seen a Communist and wouldn't know one if I saw one."³⁰⁵

When Louis B. Mayer testified, he said he held Communism in contempt; and although he spoke strongly against Communist writers, he added that he knew of no Communists working for his studio. According to at least one pro-Communist MGM writer, Mayer was not being honest, for he certainly did know of Communist writers working for him.

But some within the film industry decided to fight back. Various liberal Hollywood writers, directors and actors came together to form the Committee for the First Amendment, its purpose being to go to Washington to protest against the attack on freedom of political association. This liberal group included such famous names as Humphrey Bogart, Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra, Kirk Douglas,

Katharine Hepburn, Henry Fonda, Groucho Marx and Gene Kelly. In a deliberately highly publicised trip, nineteen alleged Communists were flown, in Katherine Hepburn's own plane, to Washington to testify, including the likes of Lauren Bacall, Gary Cooper, Humphrey Bogart, Robert Taylor and Burt Lancaster. At least one of them, Bogart, afterwards admitted that the trip was "ill-advised, even foolish... I am sorry I did it and now see that I was duped, that I was victim to the Communist conspiracy. It won't happen again."³⁰⁶

The promised purge of Hollywood got underway. The very first hearing, at which the HUAC questioned John Howard Lawson, rapidly degenerated into a slanging match between the two sides, and Lawson was eventually removed by police. As one witness after another was called up, they denounced the HUAC for its illegitimacy and its implicit anti-Semitism in no uncertain terms. Rick Lardner, Jr., told the committee, "Under the kind of censorship this inquisition threatens, a leading man wouldn't even be able to blurt out the words 'I love you' unless he had first secured a notarized affidavit proving she was a pure, white Protestant gentile of old Confederate stock."³⁰⁷

At the hearings, nine of the nineteen co-operated, but the other ten refused to answer questions about their membership in the Communist Party, appealing to their First Amendment rights. They were defiant and abusive. They became known as the "Hollywood Ten." According to the evidence unearthed from the Soviet archives, those named by McCarthy *were* indeed Communists and radicals, receiving their instructions from Moscow. They actually surrendered on instructions of the *KGB*, which stated that it would in the meantime turn them into martyrs in the outside world and continue to insist on their innocence.

The unco-operative witnesses were all held in contempt by the House. Rankin said the HUAC was attempting to "protect the American people against those things in which these people are now engaged who want to undermine and destroy this Republic, to destroy American institutions, and to bring to the Christian people of America the murder and plunder that has taken place in the Communist-dominated countries of Europe." Referring to the Committee for the First Amendment, he pointed out the names of those who had signed the petition: "One of the names is June Havoc. We found out from the motion-picture almanac that her

real name is June Hovick. Another one was Danny Kaye, and we found out that his real name was David Daniel Kaminsky. Another one here is John Beal, whose real name is J. Alexander Bliedung. Another one is Cy Bartlett, whose real name is Sacha Baraniev. Another one is Eddie Cantor, whose real name is Edward Iskowitz. There is one who calls himself Edward Robinson. His real name is Emmanuel Goldenberg. There is another one here who calls himself Melvyn Douglas, whose real name is Melvyn Hesselberg.³⁰⁸

Rankin was right. A very large percentage of leftists in Hollywood were Jews who had changed their names so as to hide their Jewishness. There can be no doubt that many of these were seeking, by their involvement in Hollywood, to push for leftist change within American society.

Eric Johnston, the president of the MPAA, under pressure to produce a plan of action to take care of the alleged radicals within Hollywood, brought the top movie executives together to come up with something. He stated categorically that the executives had to fire those uncooperative witnesses or they would never be respected by American society. Being accepted into mainstream America was what the older generation of the Jewish Hollywood elite had spent their whole lives working to achieve, and Johnston's words hit home. A committee was chosen to issue a public statement, known as the Waldorf Statement. The ten witnesses were to be discharged from their employment until they renounced Communism under oath, and the movie producers agreed that they would not knowingly employ Communists. Of the fifteen producers who signed the statement, ten were Jews.

The ten witnesses were fired, and large numbers of other Communists and liberals were dealt with at the same time. The Hollywood Ten were sentenced to prison. Even those Jewish studio executives who did not agree with the HUAC, believing it was wrong to fire men because of their political beliefs, nevertheless went along with the purge to save their studios and their own necks. In doing so, they earned themselves a lot of good publicity and a lot of goodwill from the public.

As for John Parnell Thomas himself, the HUAC chairman, despite his staunch anti-Communism he had not been above reproach. In 1948 he was indicted for conspiracy to defraud the government, having

billed the U.S. Treasury for people who had not actually worked for him. He was eventually sentenced to prison for eighteen months. But oh what irony! Thomas was incarcerated in the very same prison in which two of the Hollywood Ten, Rick Lardner, Jr., and Lester Cole, were incarcerated – and at the very same time! The man who tried to cleanse Hollywood of leftists found himself in the same prison as two of those very leftists.

Overall the hearings were a failure. “Unfortunately... the Congressional interrogators and FBI investigators failed to penetrate the real depth of communist subversion in the film capital. Basically, not much was learnt about party operations in Hollywood, largely because none of the co-operative witnesses had ever been in the party. Misled by double agents in their midst and false information peddled by the KGB, McCarthy left many Soviet sympathisers in key positions in Hollywood, with a far-reaching influence that affects the industry to this day.”³⁰⁹ Very true. For to this day, the Communists, liberals, and their fellow-travellers in Hollywood always scream “McCarthyism!” whenever it becomes necessary to hide their true colours, and the subversive pro-Communist work they are doing in and via Hollywood. “Today McCarthyism is still a scarlet ‘M’ word used by the left as a trump card to terminate debate and intimidate adversaries. Used as a spear to paralyse all opposition to communism, it has become communism’s best friend.”³¹⁰

Romanism at War with Communism in Hollywood

Many within the U.S. government were, thus, very rightly deeply concerned about Hollywood’s immense power over the masses, its ability to promote Communism to Americans and the world via its movies. What a pity, however, that Congress, in its commendable zeal to crush Communism in Hollywood, totally failed to discern the threat to America, via Hollywood, of another great evil: Roman Catholicism. *Its* immense influence within Hollywood was ignored. “Neither the Production Code Administration nor Joseph I. Breen came under scrutiny during the investigations, a measure of the depth of ignorance in the halls of Congress about the true nature of the ideological apparatus dictating the party line in Hollywood.”³¹¹ And, furthermore, the fact is that “the forces behind much of what was happening were

the soldiers of American Catholicism marshalled by Senator Joseph McCarthy [a Roman Catholic], the darling of Holy Name societies, sodalities, and first communion breakfasts.”³¹²

McCarthy was right in seeing the influence of Communists in American society; but even so he was a Roman Catholic, with a Roman Catholic agenda. And in the Cold War period, under the pontificate of Pius XII, that Romish agenda was very much an anti-Communist, anti-Jewish one.

And so it is not surprising that Hollywood during this period produced a rash of movies with themes of conservative Romanists waging war against Communists: movies such as *Guilty of Treason* (1949), *The Red Danube* (1949), *The Red Menace* (1949), *My Son John* (1952), and *The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima* (1952).

The poster advertising *The Red Menace*, for example, stated of the Romish priest portrayed in the film, “the fearless, fighting priest, who conquered evil with faith!”³¹³ As for *My Son John*, this movie, in particular, portrayed the confrontation between the evil of Communism and the supposed good of Romanism. It was Leo McCarey’s creation, the same man who brought *Going My Way* and *The Bells of St. Mary’s* into being. He was a staunch anti-Communist, and the film reflects this strongly, but it also lays out a very strong pro-Roman Catholic message.

The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima was another very pro-Papist film, centred around the supposed apparition of Mary to some Portuguese children in 1917, during which (it was claimed) she promised the conversion of Russia to Roman Catholicism if Russia was consecrated to her. The film shows Communists terribly mistreating priests and nuns. It depicts an all-out Marxist war against the visions claimed by the children. Of course, there was historical truth in what was portrayed, and there can be no doubt at all of Communism’s sadistic evil. But in its portrayal of “Mary”, etc., it pushed an obvious pro-Papist message as the answer to godless Communism.

***Duel in the Sun* (1947): Another Challenge to the Code and the Legion Stranglehold**

Producer David O. Selznick continued his fight with the Papist censors. In 1944 RKO bought the film rights to a novel entitled *Duel in the Sun*.

The studio requested Selznick to loan them an actress and a director, who were under contract to him, for the film. The actress was Jennifer Jones, who had previously played the part of the virgin Mary in *The Song of Bernadette*. She was very popular with filmgoers. Selznick also bought the screen rights from RKO.

The PCA deemed it unacceptable when it reviewed the script, because it contained illicit sex, murder for revenge, and lacked the full “compensating moral values” which were required by the Production Code. There was an implied rape in the film, and a hint of nude swimming. It also featured a vulgar religious figure, known as the “Sin Killer”, and the PCA demanded that RKO emphasise this man was not an ordained minister, and he was not to be depicted in the film as a “travesty on religion.” Portraying negative images of “clergy” was a violation of the Code.

Selznick had no time for Breen or the Code and threatened to go to court if necessary. But despite his fighting words, in order to make the film acceptable to the PCA and to the Legion of Decency he decided to include what he considered enough “moral values” to make the film acceptable, including severe punishment for the criminals, and he agreed to make various changes to the original script. In this way he hoped that the things deemed objectionable in the film would be overlooked by the censors. The PCA people were still uncertain, but as Selznick kept rewriting the script for them, they found it difficult to condemn it outright, and so in 1945 approval was given to the working script, and work on the film began. PCA officials visited the set at times to make sure that the costumes were not too revealing and that the swimming scenes were not too explicit. Cuts to suggestive scenes were insisted upon, and made, although Selznick was enraged. And in December 1946 the PCA issued its seal of approval. This was surprising, given the fact that, as *Variety* magazine stated, “rarely has a film made such frank use of lust”. But the film actually opened on the west coast without first being submitted to the Legion for approval.

But if the PCA had been lenient this time, many influential Roman Catholics were having none of it. *Tidings*, the Romish weekly of the Los Angeles diocese, branded the film as “plush pornography”, and Roman Catholic film critic William Mooring told Romanists that this

film was more dangerous morally than *The Outcast*, and that it violated the Production Code by creating sympathy for sinners, detailing seduction, and mocking religion. It certainly did this. Moreover, because Jennifer Jones had previously played a religious role in *The Song of Bernadette*, Mooring was angry that she now played such a seductive one.

Selznick's choice in his casting of the leading roles, in fact, appeared to be a deliberate thumbing of his nose at the Roman Catholic institution. Not only had Jennifer Jones previously played Mary, but Gregory Peck had previously played the part of a Roman Catholic priest in *Keys of the Kingdom*. Peck himself later said that Selznick took a kind of "perverse delight" in casting him as the male lead in *Duel in the Sun*, adding: "He took two saintly characters and made us into kind of sex fiends." A reviewer in the *Los Angeles Times* wrote that the film "is sex rampant. Jennifer Jones is no Bernadette. Gregory Peck... is no 'Father Chisolm.' But these two are hotter than a gunman's pistol."³¹⁴ Protests against the movie poured into the Legion.

The Papist archbishop, John Cantwell, warned all Romanists in Los Angeles that, "pending classification by the Legion of Decency they may not, with a free conscience, attend the motion picture *Duel in the Sun*", for it "appears to be morally offensive and spiritually depressing." Then Martin Quigley, the Legion's unofficial spokesman, stated that the film would definitely be placed in the "Condemned" classification, telling Selznick that unless he greatly altered it (and he suggested many cuts), the "outcome would be disastrous".³¹⁵

Selznick wrote to the editor of *Tidings*, the Popish weekly which had branded the movie "plush pornography", saying that the reviewer had a "callous and diseased mind" for casting "a wicked and wanton slur upon Miss Jones... a distinguished artist... a Catholic who has received her education in a convent."³¹⁶ He conveniently overlooked the fact that this Roman Catholic actress was perfectly content to be having an extramarital affair with him!

Selznick considered ignoring the Legion, having reason to believe that the film, which was already doing extremely well at the box office, would continue to do so even if the Legion condemned it. But first he wanted to make certain that Eric Johnston and Joseph Breen supported him. His film had been approved by the PCA, after all; but would they

and Hollywood studios support him against the Legion? As it turned out, the studios would not help him fight the Legion, even though they themselves were sick and tired of the Legion's interference. They were simply too afraid of the financial consequences of being at odds with Rome's powerful Legion of Decency! In Selznick's own words, they were "completely yellow".

Selznick, hung out to dry and doubtless gnashing his teeth in rage, came to the conclusion that it would be best for him to edit the film in the ways Quigley had suggested. It was hoped, by both Selznick and Quigley, that these changes would move the Legion to give the film a "B" classification (i.e. containing some objectionable material). Selznick therefore made the cuts and submitted the film to priest Patrick Masterson at the Legion, and Quigley himself told Masterson that Selznick had fully co-operated with him and with Breen. But the priest was far from satisfied. After reviewing the film he let Breen know by letter that it should never have received the PCA seal. It was far too explicit in the Legion's opinion. And even Breen admitted he had made a "serious error" in granting it a seal.

Meanwhile the protests increased. In Los Angeles, Roman Catholic sodality groups threatened a possible month-long boycott of all films, because films like *Duel in the Sun* were so immoral; in Houston, the Catholic Youth Organization requested that the mayor ban what it called "this masterpiece of filth [which] glorifies drunkenness, adultery, rape and other forms of lowest immorality"; priest John Sheehy in Boston said that this film would result in "thousands of priests [being] detained years longer in confessionals seeking to dispel the evil images born of witnessing this alleged entertainment."³¹⁷ Significantly, though, and a sign of changing times, thousands of letters were written in *support* of the film as well, even from Roman Catholics.

Selznick was incensed with the Legion and wrote that if it gave his film a "C" classification, well then, so be it. "We have suffered enough from the shenanigans of [the Legion]," he wrote.³¹⁸ He also said, "Reverend Masterson has not been designated by God as the final word in what is seriously offensive and we are... sure that the non-Catholics of America, and a goodly percentage of Catholics as well, do not accept him."³¹⁹ The film had received the PCA seal of approval,

Selznick fumed, but of what good was such an approval if a film then had to be submitted to *religious* censors at the Legion of Decency?

Even though Selznick was a man who had no qualms about making a morally offensive movie and thus his desire to want to release this movie cannot be condoned at all, he was absolutely right in his comments about Masterson: the priest was not appointed by God, and the Roman Catholic institution's arrogance in setting itself up as the moral guardian of America was repugnant, for this religious system has never had a leg to stand on when it comes to matters of morality. Selznick was also right when he said that Masterson's views were not acceptable to non-Papists, nor even to a large percentage of Papists. Still, Americans permitted the Legion to act as their moral guardian.

Selznick raged against the Legion, and threatened to release the film anyway and then take out full-page advertisements, and make use of radio and other means to tell his side of the story. He believed this would end the Code and result in federal censorship, but he did not care.

This protracted battle between an independent producer and the powerful Roman Catholic Legion finally ended with a Legion victory. Selznick had fought to retain the film's ending even though the Legion had considered it immoral, but he was now permitted to retain it as long as he added a prologue and an epilogue to the film, making it clear that sin is sin. This was done, with the prologue speaking of the "forces of evil" in battle with "deeper morality", and the "grim fate" awaiting "the transgressor upon the laws of God and man", and the "Sin Killer's" character being based on "bogus unordained evangelists" who were "recognized as charlatans by the intelligent and God-fearing." The epilogue, too, written by the Legion's monsignor, John McClafferty, spoke of the "moral weakness" of Jennifer Jones' character that led to "transgressions against the law of God."³²⁰ The film received the "B" classification Selznick had been hoping for.

But the truth is, such prologues and epilogues had little effect on audiences. Most people walk out of a movie without watching the credits at the end, and therefore would miss the epilogue; but more than that, they were watching the film precisely because they were attracted by the provocative nature of the scenes, and no amount of moralising either before or after the film would make an impression on them! The

Roman Catholic censors may have eased their own consciences by insisting on these inclusions, but if they really believed these somehow sanctified the film, they were naive in the extreme. The only possible response to films of an immoral nature is for the people not to view them – not attempt to clean up an immoral movie by cutting this and that and pasting prologues and epilogues. People are not fools. They can see through such inconsistency.

The film broke box office records as people nationwide flocked in droves to see it. And some of these places were Legion strongholds. Clearly Roman Catholics were rushing to the theatres just like so many others. A Roman Catholic university, the University of Santa Clara, California, even used the film as a fundraiser, with a Jesuit priest telling Selznick that he was very grateful the film had raised thousands of dollars for under-privileged youth!

“The refusal of Breen, Johnston, and industry leaders to defend Selznick, and themselves, from Legion attacks simply encouraged the Legion to continue to demand that it be given the right of final approval of all films produced in Hollywood. It was a decision the industry would soon regret, and it would be another twenty years before the Legion stranglehold on Hollywood was broken.”³²¹

***Forever Amber* (1947): a Major Studio Challenges Roman Catholic Censorship**

In 1947 another movie made huge waves as well, with Papist censorship being challenged by a major Hollywood studio this time. The movie was *Forever Amber*.

The 1944 novel on which the movie was based was described by the *Saturday Review of Literature* as “the bawdiest novel...in years”, a story of multiple illicit affairs and more. The morals of Americans being now in rapid collapse, the book became a bestseller, and this attracted the attention of Hollywood, in particular of Twentieth Century-Fox. Joseph Breen naturally rejected the first synopsis of the proposed film when it was sent to him for review, saying it was “a saga of illicit sex... bastardy, perversion, impotency, pregnancy, abortion, murder and marriage without even the slightest suggestion of compensating moral values.”³²²

Darryl F. Zanuck was head of Twentieth Century-Fox's studio production, and he was given the task of producing an acceptable script. He knew that if he worked closely with Breen from the outset, this would save all the cuts that would have to be made to the film later. He told Breen that the film was a tragic tale of a girl who sins repeatedly and ends up losing all she sought to obtain by her sins. And he was successful in winning Breen over! Breen asked Zanuck to include a voice of morality in the film, which Zanuck did – and Breen was satisfied. He approved the basic script, priding himself on the fact that the PCA had the power to remove offensive material in such stories and keep only the good in them. This was so, even though, as *Variety* reported at the time, the “expurgated screenplay...has made the original story hardly recognizable.”³²³

Again this shows the foolishness of this approach of the censors. The book remained intact; the filmed version was altered. The movie might be sanitised to some extent, but the unsanitised version of the story was still available for anyone to read.

Zanuck went ahead and made the film, a lavish and hugely expensive production, expecting no trouble from the Legion. It was scheduled for preview by the Legion just ten days before its release in October 1947. But he had miscalculated: priest Patrick Masterson, the Legion's assistant executive secretary who was in temporary charge, was against it even before he saw it. However, the Legion reviewers themselves, those IFCA ladies as well as professional “lay” Roman Catholics, were far less offended than the priest was, and voted to classify the film as “A2” (i.e. unobjectionable for adults) or “B” (objectionable in part for all). Yes, even those staunch Roman Catholic Legionaries were softening morally as the years went by!

Masterson, however, was made of sterner stuff. He wanted the film condemned. He wrote to Francis Spellman, New York's Romish cardinal, saying the film was immoral, and that the PCA was becoming increasingly lax in enforcing its own Code as time went by. Spellman agreed with him. He wrote a letter to all priests in his archdiocese, to be read out by them at all masses, in which he said that *Forever Amber* glorified immorality and licentiousness, and that Roman Catholics could not view the film with a safe conscience.

But this time – and it was the first time since 1936 – a major Hollywood studio (Twentieth Century-Fox) went on the offensive and threw down the gauntlet to the Legion of Decency. It pointed out that the film had been approved by the PCA. Priest Masterson told priest Devlin, “This time the chips are really down”,³²⁴ and the mighty Roman Catholic hierarchical machine in the United States went into action. Philadelphia’s Romish cardinal, Dennis Dougherty, threatened that if the film was not removed, a year-long boycott would be imposed on all Fox theatres in his archdiocese by himself, just as he had threatened over *The Outlaw* previously. Romish bishops in Providence and in New York took a strong stand against it as well, with calls for a boycott in New York. But Fox did not buckle under this threat, so the Catholic War Veterans rallied to the cause, picketing theatres in Philadelphia and at a theatre in Rochester, New York. The dioceses of Buffalo, New York, and Rochester, New York, echoed Dougherty’s call for a boycott. Chicago’s Romish cardinal urged his people to avoid it, and Romanists in St. Louis were asked to avoid it as well. The protests spread further afield. The Legion got the mayor and city council of Grand Rapids, Michigan, to block the showing of the film. Protests by Roman Catholics got the film cancelled in Illinois.

But did the Roman Catholics of these and other great cities heed these calls, one and all, and boycott the film? Certainly not initially. *Variety* reported that, “Oddly enough, in cities like Philadelphia, Boston and St. Louis where [Roman Catholic] church influence is strongest, *Amber* is doing best”, noting that in St. Louis it was a big hit “despite... a blast from the Archbishop.”³²⁵ Countrywide, including where the Papal hierarchy had called for boycotts, there were lines of people stretching for blocks to get into theatres and standing-room-only crowds inside.

But it did not last: although the film continued to do very well in urban areas, rural and independent exhibitors wanted Twentieth Century-Fox to conform to the Legion. Zanuck claimed that these exhibitors were themselves under threat from the Roman Catholics who wanted to see the film stopped. But there was also another reason: in the country’s capital, the hearings by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) were well under way, and the Hollywood Ten were

accused of inserting Communist propaganda into films coming out of Hollywood. The screenwriter for *Forever Amber*, Ring Lardner Jr., was subpoenaed to appear before the HUAC regarding his association with the Communist Party in America. His collaborator, Philip Dunne, was a founder of the pro-Communist Committee for the First Amendment.

Twentieth Century-Fox decided to give in to the Legion. It was agreed that some lines of dialogue in the film would be cut, and a prologue and epilogue would be added which would clarify the guilt of the sinners in the film as far as the Legion was concerned. The prologue spoke of “the wages of sin” and of the heroine’s sins. And at the film’s end a voice-over by a main male character implored God to have mercy on both him and the heroine for their sins. With these changes, the film was given a “B” rating by the Legion, and the pickets and protests ended, except in Philadelphia where Romish cardinal, Dougherty, kept his boycott in place.

Ultimately, *Forever Amber* made a great deal less than its production costs. Yes, the Legion campaign had greatly contributed to this, but the original PCA censorship had done so even more, for it had changed the story so much from the novel that audiences, hankering after the sex that was a major part of the book, simply found the film boring when so much of the sexual content had been removed. This again shows how Americans’ morals had changed for the worse. They *wanted* sexual scenes, and were not prepared to financially support a film that had been purged of much of its originally-intended immorality.

***Captain from Castille* (1947): Whitewashing the Inquisition**

Although various Roman Catholics, including Jesuit priests such as Daniel Lord and Wilfred Parsons, served as film consultants, advising studios on how to handle Romish themes in movies, it was announced back in 1933 by John J. Cantwell, bishop of Los Angeles, that all Roman Catholic film advising must fall under his authority because the film industry was situated in his diocese. He appointed one of his own priests as the official Romish film advisor. This was the Irish-born priest, John Devlin, who was the head of the Los Angeles Legion of Decency. Devlin threw himself into the work, reviewing a large number of scripts annually. He became the recognised Roman Catholic authority on all things to do with the film industry, and was

feared by screenwriters and directors. But he also overstepped his mandate: instead of concentrating solely on how films treated the Roman Catholic religion, he also tried to influence them if the Irish were treated poorly in a film (in his opinion).

The script for *Captain from Castille* was based on a novel that revolved around the conquest of Mexico by Cortez. In the story, the Grand Inquisitor in Spain charges a man named Pedro De Vargas with heresy, and his sister is tortured to death by the Inquisition. Da Vargas goes to Mexico with Cortez, where the Grand Inquisitor is killed by the Aztecs.

Priest Devlin was not at all happy with the script, considering it to be a “deliberate attempt to discredit Christianity in general, and the Catholic church in particular.”³²⁶ He claimed that the Inquisition had actually accomplished *great good*, and that the script exaggerated its evils! The Inquisition was, in truth, one of the greatest evils ever created, and – *it was a Roman Catholic evil*. This is the historical reality, and there is no escaping it. Millions of people were tortured and put to death by the Inquisition, which was serving the interests of the Roman Papacy. To claim that it accomplished great good was a shocking misrepresentation of the plain truth! But very typical of priests of Rome, who will go to any lengths to hide the truth about the Inquisition’s horrors from the world.

Devlin’s stance greatly troubled Darryl Zanuck, who asked the man who had worked on the script, John Tucker Battle, what could be done about it. Battle suggested that the Inquisition be downplayed, and that it not be tied to the Roman Catholic “Church” at all in the film. He also suggested that Cortez’s Roman Catholic motivation for conquering Mexico be removed from the film. And to cap it all, he suggested that a friendly priest should be worked into the film, who would represent “the true church”. True to form, “Hollywood never let the historical record get in the way of a good story”.³²⁷ A film in which the Inquisition was divorced from Roman Catholicism was nothing but a fantasy. But at all costs the “Church” of Rome was not to be offended, for that would mean losses at the box office.

Zanuck himself was reluctant to make the changes, and in the end he added the “good priest” and downplayed the “Church” of Rome’s role in the Inquisition to some extent. But further than that he would

not go. Devlin was satisfied for the most part, and the Legion gave the film an “A2” classification.

The Foreign Film Challenge to the Censorship System

The Roman Catholic-controlled censorship system in the United States film industry was now also being challenged from another source: film directors – often Roman Catholic directors – from Europe, where they were not bound by a Production Code and were consequently able to make movies which frequently contained far more immorality than anything Hollywood could belch out. European films were frequently more sexually explicit than Hollywood productions, as well as containing such things as murder, drugs, suicide, etc., and naturally many of them were rejected by the PCA, not to mention the Legion. After World War Two Martin Quigley was very concerned that European films would deteriorate even further morally, and if they were permitted into the U.S. this could undermine the authority of the PCA and the Legion.

Joseph Burstyn was at the heart of this challenge initially. A Jewish-Polish immigrant to the United States, he devoted himself to bringing foreign films to his adopted country. After World War Two he and his business partner, Arthur L. Mayer, imported a number of Italian films into the U.S., including *The Bicycle Thief*, which the Legion of Decency declared to be sacrilegious. The irony here was that such films were coming from Italy, an intensely Roman Catholic country where many of the directors were Roman Catholics, and yet being condemned as sacrilegious by the Roman Catholic Legion in New York!

By the end of the Second World War Hollywood was the undisputed capital of celluloid entertainment worldwide, with some 90 million people flocking to movie theatres every week. The film industries of European countries such as France, Italy and Germany were decimated by the war; and yet from 1945 to 1952, Hollywood, also, took a battering economically, in large part due to the House Committee on Un-American Activities branding it a hotbed of Communism, but also for various other reasons which it is not necessary to go into here. By 1950 movie attendance had plummeted to 60 million, and profits were falling rapidly too.

There was not much of a market for foreign films in the U.S., however, and in addition only a handful got passed by Breen's PCA.

***Open City* (1946 but Shown in America in 1946/7): the Hypocrisy and Selective "Morality" of Papist Censorship**

Now we will see an example of the selective "morality" of the Papists in control of Hollywood censorship (and thus of the selective "morality" of Rome itself), and of just how much of a sham their supposed "moral indignation" over immoral movies was. Papist censorship had far more to do with *exerting control over Hollywood for Rome's own purposes* than over keeping America's morals intact:

A film coming out of Italy at this time was entitled *Open City*. It was directed by Roberto Rossellini, who claimed that he was neither a Fascist nor a supporter of Mussolini, and yet who, during the war, had made war propaganda films. Italian audiences had disliked the film; but it was smuggled into America and released by Mayer and Burstyn, and did extremely well in 1946. It seriously violated the standards of both the PCA and the Legion, covering as it did such themes as pregnancy out of wedlock, lesbianism, murder, drug addiction, graphic torture scenes, and a priest who helped the Communist-led Italian underground during the war. And yet, incredibly, the Legion did not find it offensive, giving it a "B" classification, and the PCA, also, made few objections when it was submitted! Burstyn was informed by Arthur DeBra of the PCA's New York office (who reported to Joseph Breen) that the film was essentially acceptable, although a few scenes needed to be cut and trimmed. Burstyn did not make any changes, and the film played without a PCA seal for a year. In July 1947 Burstyn made the cuts and the seal was issued.

Why this astounding attitude, from both the Legion and the PCA, to this film? Normally a film such as this would have been automatically condemned and rejected by both, and in fact it was far more explicit than *The Outlaw*, *Duel in the Sun*, or *Forever Amber*. But it was passed with hardly a whimper.

Here is the reason: *the Vatican* loved the film! The Vatican's "Central Catholic Committee" approved it, and a copy was even requested for the Vatican's film library! And why did the Vatican love it? Why

were the highest officials of the Roman Catholic institution prepared to overlook its sexual explicitness and graphic brutality? Firstly because at heart, these men were, and still are, like men everywhere else in the world: unregenerate, worldly, fleshly, sensual, attracted by such things. As we have said, all this censorship power over Hollywood had far more to do with exerting control over the industry than over any real desire to keep Hollywood morally clean anyway. And this would become even clearer in the coming decades, when censorship was abolished and yet various Roman Catholics, including Jesuit priests, would wholeheartedly endorse, and even be deeply involved in the making of, films that were *full* of sexual immorality, gratuitous violence, and even grotesque demon possession.

But there was also a second and very important reason why the Vatican loved *Open City*: the film presented “one of the most sympathetic portrayals of the Catholic church ever seen on screen. The typical Hollywood Catholic priest of the time... spun out pieties with moral absoluteness that allowed little thought for the other characters or audience members. In *Open City* the moral choices the [pro-Communist Italian] partisans have to make are anything but clear-cut, and the church... is tolerant and understanding when war forces [the characters in the film] to violate normal conventions. [The priest] is unalterably opposed to fascism and determined to fight for a better life for the people. In the film, the church has the total support of the people: Even the communists, who hate religion, turn to the church for help and support; what is more, the church is willing to help them because they are fighting fascism.”³²⁸

It must be remembered that for centuries the Jesuits had made use of theatre to promote Roman Catholicism; and film was simply the modern equivalent of theatre. This is why they always wanted a controlling hand in Hollywood and in film media the world over. So when *Open City* depicted the Roman Catholic religion in such extremely positive light, the Vatican was fully supportive of it! And this is the reason for the willingness of Joseph Breen and his PCA, as well as the Legion of Decency, to pass the film with no condemnation! What utter hypocrisy.

And when one understands the role played in the Second World War by the Roman Catholic “Church”, one will be able to understand,

even more clearly, why the Vatican viewed *Open City* as a wonderful propaganda tool to cover up the Vatican's own involvement in the war. For the truth is that both Nazism and Fascism were given immense support by the Vatican! Hitler and Mussolini – both Roman Catholics – were hugely *encouraged* by the Vatican in their diabolical schemes,³²⁹ the evidence for which is simply overwhelming and is so vast that to this very day Rome is doing its utmost to rewrite history. But now the war was over, and the Nazis and the Fascists had lost; and the Vatican was desperate to appear *anti-Nazi* and *anti-Fascist* to the world. This film was seen as a great help to the Vatican in getting the world to believe this.

This role of Rome in the war was recognised by Gregory D. Black, author of *The Catholic Crusade Against the Movies, 1940-1975*, when he wrote: “*Open City* presented a church that few in 1946 would recognize. The role of the Catholic church in Germany had been one of conciliation toward Hitler, with no bishop taking to his pulpit to denounce the campaign against the Jews. Moreover, Pope Pius XII had not spoken out against the Holocaust, and this silence on Nazi atrocities subjected him to severe criticism soon after the war. *Open City* offered a refreshing tonic for a church so stung.” He went on: “American Catholics were not unaware of the controversy surrounding the pope. Given the position of the Vatican, it would certainly have been embarrassing for the American Catholic Legion of Decency to issue the film a condemned rating: The bishops would have been ridiculed in the American press and would not have relished explaining to Vatican officials why a film so favourable to Catholicism had been condemned in America.”³³⁰

The film rewrote history. No wonder the Papist censors passed it. It depicted the Italians as being unitedly anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist during the war, which was simply not the case in fact. Italy was allied to Hitler, but this is not mentioned in the film. Nor, of course, does it come out in the film that Italian film-makers willingly produced Fascist propaganda films during the war years.

And there was something else as well: even though the priest in the film supports the underground Communist resistance movement in Italy, and at this time the Vatican (under Pius XII) was still very anti-Communist, yet already things were changing, and there were

a great many priests who were becoming increasingly supportive of Communism. And just a few years later, a very pro-Communist pope would come to power, John XXIII.³³¹ So this film was depicting a shifting of alliances within the Vatican itself, a re-orientation towards Communism, that would define the Vatican's political affairs for decades to come.

***Paisan* (1946) and *Germany, Year Zero* (1948): the PCA in Conflict with Itself and with the Legion**

Rossellini followed up with another film set in Italy during the war years, *Paisan*. This movie contained very controversial scenes, including prostitution, which would usually have earned any Hollywood movie a condemned rating. Arthur DeBra of the PCA's New York office reviewed it and approved it, which greatly angered Joseph Breen at the Los Angeles office, who felt that it was sexually immoral. He correctly felt that if a foreign film depicting such scenes could be passed, then Hollywood film-makers would begin to demand the same treatment for their movies. And so he decided that from then on, all foreign films would have to be reviewed at the Los Angeles office – his office.

Next came a third film by Rossellini, entitled *Germany, Year Zero*, set in post-war Germany. This film contained scenes of child prostitution, child sexual abuse by a homosexual, child suicide, and the murder of a father by his son. Breen and the PCA were horrified by the film, with Breen branding it “thoroughly and completely unacceptable”, and moreover that it could not be made acceptable no matter how many cuts were made to it. The Legion of Decency declared it was “unfit for general movie audiences”, and that it would only give the film a “B” category if the scenes of paedophilia and child prostitution were cut and an epilogue was added, which the Legion itself wrote. These changes were made, the Legion gave it a “B” – but Breen was adamant: the film could not be made acceptable. It was a shock to the Papist Breen, having the Papist Legion approve a film he had condemned. It did not help him when a number of state censorship boards also approved it, either with minor cuts or none at all.

The film did not do well at the box office. But even so, the times had changed, and Joseph Breen was striving to maintain a form of Roman Catholic censorship that was no longer fully supported either

by the general public or even by fellow-Roman Catholics. The Legion believed that he had become increasingly liberal (although in the case of this film it was the *Legion* that was more liberal than Breen), and McClafferty and Quigley had lost faith in him, although they still believed in the Code. Their problem was with the *administration* of the Code by the Breen Office.

In addition, there was some protest from Protestant groups about the PCA's domination by Roman Catholics. They were convinced that Hollywood was churning out one pro-Papist religious film after another – and they were right. Furthermore, there was concern over the fact that priests of Rome were depicted as heroes, but Protestant ministers were depicted as weak and often comic.

A Protestant Film Council was established after World War Two for the purpose of advising Hollywood on Protestant issues, but it never became as influential as the Legion of Decency. In the words of Geoff Shurlock, who was later to replace Breen, the studios did not want “the Catholics running the industry, but [the Protestants] never showed themselves...capable.”³³²

1948 Supreme Court Ruling Erodes PCA Power

It was a huge blow for Hollywood when, in May 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that the movie industry was an illegal monopoly. It ordered a separation of exhibition from production. And what interests us at this point is that an important component of this monopoly was censorship, because the major studios had agreed to never produce nor play a film in their theatres that had not received a PCA seal of approval. But once the Supreme Court ruled, the power of the PCA was affected adversely. No longer was PCA power almost total, for now film theatres were independent of film production, and they could choose to play films that did not have a PCA seal. Moreover, if the Legion of Decency condemned a film, the theatres were no longer as concerned about it. This was a huge step in the direction of eventual termination of movie censorship, and a huge blow to both the PCA and the Legion, Rome's twin pincers for controlling what Hollywood churned out.

Films, in the same way as newspapers and radio, were now deemed to be part of the press; and freedom of the press was guaranteed by

the First Amendment in the U.S. Constitution. Films, therefore, could now be made under the same “press freedom” guarantees – with catastrophic results to Americans’ morality, and to the morality of the entire western world.

Miracle of the Bells (1948): Rome Turns a Blind Eye When Money is Flowing Romeward

When Frank Sinatra was cast as a priest in this film, this caused something of a stir, for he had become a somewhat notorious personality. The Romish cardinal, Francis Spellman, alarmed at the casting, asked Los Angeles auxilliary bishop, Joseph McGucken, to try to get RKO studio to drop Sinatra from the part. Although McGucken felt this could not be done, he contacted Joseph Breen regarding the rumours that Sinatra was involved with the Communist Party and that he was a womaniser. Breen admitted that in addition to having a problem with alcohol, Sinatra had kept “bad company”, notably leftists who had used him as a front; but he told McGucken that the actor had remained faithful to his wife. This was not true, although it is possible Breen did not know it. McGucken was able to pass on this information to Spellman, with the additional news that Sinatra’s managers had decided, for purposes of publicity, that Sinatra would become a benefactor of the Catholic Youth Organization.³³³

Such has ever been Rome’s way: it can make a lot of noise about a person’s morals, political leanings, etc., but all that noise is silenced when there is money heading in Rome’s direction, even from the person concerned. Frank Sinatra, a notorious womaniser, unacceptable at first to Rome to play a priest in a film, became Frank Sinatra the good benefactor to the “Church” – and Rome turned a blind eye to what it had been opposed to before. Ah, the love of money (1 Tim. 6:10). How it can talk!

Joan of Arc (1948): a Screen “Saint” Causes Breen Pain

In 1948 the actress Ingrid Bergman appeared as the lead character in the Hollywood film, *Joan of Arc*. It had not been easy to persuade influential Papists that the film was a good one (from their perspective). In addition to priest John J. Devlin, Breen found three other priests (two of them Jesuits) to work with him on watching over the film’s

production. This irked Devlin, who felt they were not needed and he was more than up to the task himself. And, giving away Rome's real attitude to historical truth in movies, he told one of the priests that what was more important than historical accuracy was that the film should "carefully and sympathetically" put across the Roman Catholic viewpoint! Priest Patrick Masterson, himself deeply troubled that one of the Jesuit advisors was insisting on historical accuracy, said to Devlin, "After all, history is one thing, movies another."³³⁴ In other words, historical accuracy could go out the window – all that mattered was that the film was pro-Papist!

Ingrid Bergman was extremely popular and the film was expected to be a massive hit, especially as it was particularly aimed at pious Roman Catholic moviegoers, being about one of their famous "saints". Joe Breen himself was ecstatic about the making of the film because of its pro-Roman Catholic message. And indeed, when it was released it played to capacity crowds. Breen could hardly contain his excitement, joy and praise for the film. Until...

Until Ingrid Bergman, a wife and a mother, went the way of virtually all Hollywood actors and actresses and started having an extramarital affair with Italian director Roberto Rossellini. Here was a woman playing the part of a Papist "saint", and yet embroiled in a decidedly unsaintly affair. And it certainly affected the box-office success of *Joan of Arc* very negatively.

Breen, devout Papist that he was, was aghast. Writing to a Jesuit friend in France, he said her affair ranked as "possibly, the most shocking scandal which even Hollywood had had to contend with in many years. Miss Bergman, from the first day of her arrival here, has always conducted herself in a most commendable manner. There has never been even the slightest breath of scandal about her. She was regarded as a fine lady of unimpeachable character, a good wife, and a good mother."³³⁵ Perhaps so – but Hollywood has always been a cesspool, and sooner or later most actors and actresses succumb and dive into that pool.

Breen went further – he actually urged his Jesuit friend to try to intervene in the business, perhaps even by the Jesuits persuading the Vatican to somehow put pressure on the Italian government itself! As Breen's biographer wrote, "to do what? deport Bergman to Hollywood escorted by papal guards?"³³⁶ Breen also wrote to the lady herself,

without success.

The Ingrid Bergman business gives us a glimpse into the devoutness of Breen's Roman Catholic faith. He genuinely believed that he – assisted by the Jesuits and other powerful Romish allies – had been put on the earth not only to keep Hollywood morally clean but also to keep it as *Roman Catholic* as possible; and Bergman's fall from grace was a severe blow to that objective.

***The Bicycle Thief* (1948): PCA and Breen's Authority Undermined Still Further**

An Italian movie called *The Bicycle Thief* was released in 1948 and directed by Vittorio De Sica. The Legion could not see anything immoral in it. Breen, however, was of a different mind, and said there were two scenes which had to be cut, one of which involved a boy urinating and the other, a chase through a bordello. But both Joseph Burstyn, the distributor, and De Sica refused to make any changes to it. They decided to appeal Breen's ruling.

Burstyn went to the press, who ridiculed Breen and the MPAA for banning the movie. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) came out in favour of the film and against Breen, with its head branding Breen's decision a "shocking demonstration of censorship power and must be condemned as a violation of free thought and expression."

Martin Quigley supported Breen, not because the film was immoral but because the foreign film-makers, De Sica and Rossellini, were pro-Communist. "*The Bicycle Thief* comes from that sector of the European production which leans distinctly to the left," his magazine, *The Motion Picture Herald*, stated. He said both men were members of "the pro-Communist Italian Film Congress."³³⁷ There was truth in this: European Communists were making left-leaning films and naturally their purpose was to indoctrinate. And so once again, we have the strange scene of powerful, conservative Roman Catholics in America seeking to stamp their own mark on an industry dominated by Communists or pro-Communists. For the true Christian, *both* are hostile to morality and biblical Christianity.

In March 1950 the MPAA board of directors assembled to listen to Breen and Burstyn state their cases, and Burstyn's appeal was denied.

It was a determined effort to prevent foreign films from having an American distribution, as these films were far more sexually explicit and it was believed (rightly) that they would lower the moral standards of Americans. Foreign film-makers could make such films because they did not have the censorship American films had. Breen knew that if foreign films containing such scenes and themes were to be allowed into America, the purpose for the PCA and for the Legion would essentially cease to exist. He wanted to maintain firm control over the films Americans were allowed to see. He wanted Rome in general, and himself in particular, to exercise this control.

A few months later, three major national circuits booked *The Bicycle Thief*, despite the MPAA ruling. This was a big blow to the authority of Breen's PCA, for up until then major exhibitors had pledged not to book films that did not carry the PCA seal of approval; and now, for the first time, this pledge had been broken. No longer was it a given that exhibitors would automatically reject films with no PCA seal. The PCA and the Legion were losing power, step by step.

***Beyond the Forest* (1949): Abortion in Film**

In 1949 Breen rejected a script for *The Doctor and the Girl*, a film involving abortion; but Eric Johnston, MPAA president, ordered Breen to negotiate with MGM studios about it. He did, despite reservations and a warning to Johnston that if the film was passed, other studios would start making films about abortion as well. The film was indeed passed, but, as Breen had predicted, almost immediately afterwards another script for a film involving abortion crossed his desk: Warner Brothers' *Beyond the Forest*. The task of bringing the film into conformity with the Breen Office standards was given by Breen to Jack Vizzard. Vizzard had been studying for the Jesuit priesthood but had dropped out and joined the PCA. After Vizzard had made some changes Breen reluctantly gave the film a seal.

But priest Masterson was having none of it, and the film was condemned by the Legion of Decency. The film began to take a pounding from reviewers, and theatres discontinued showing it. Jack Warner asked Breen to try to get the Legion to back off – after all, Breen had approved the film. Vizzard was sent to Masterson, but the latter was not impressed with an ex-Jesuit seminarian who had approved

such a film. Changes were made to the film, however, and the Legion reclassified it with a “B” rating.

Vizzard was then chastised by Martin Quigley as well, and Quigley also told Breen that the PCA had lowered its moral standards. Breen, for his part, said the scripts had become worse than ever. He was certainly correct when he told Quigley: “There is some sinister force at work hereabouts. I just can’t put my finger on it, but I am satisfied in my own mind that this condition, which has come about in recent months, did not just ‘happen.’ There is an African in the woodpile!”³³⁸ Yes, he was right, as the studios pushed the boundaries in their efforts to get people away from their TV sets and back to the movie theatres; but what Breen did not grasp was that the Roman Catholic religion, which he so enthusiastically adhered to, was a major part of the problem, as it shoved hypocritical Papist morality down the throats of the movie bosses, who only swallowed it very, very reluctantly and vomited it out whenever they could.

The Legion of Decency Still Powerful, But...

As the decade of the 1940s drew to a close, it appeared that the Legion was still very powerful. Certainly most of Hollywood was reluctant to challenge it. As one participant in *Life* magazine’s 1949 “movie roundtable” put it: “the Legion holds the whip hand over Hollywood and nothing can be done about it.”³³⁹

However, the evidence showed that the Legion, although still powerful, was in fact being supported less and less by Roman Catholics themselves. Huge numbers of them were simply ignoring their hierarchy and going to see the films they wanted to see. The situation, then, was as follows: a powerful Roman Catholic hierarchy in America determined to impose its authority on its subjects in the same way as it did in other, less democratic, more subservient and more Papist countries; a Roman Catholic population increasingly influenced by the American spirit of false moral “liberty” and to that extent less influenced than in previous generations by its religious leaders; and a movie industry where the studios were dominated by Jews and frequently strongly influenced by Communism, and yet still at this time lacking the willpower to stand up to the Papist Legion of Decency or the Papist-controlled Production Code Administration. For the time

being at any rate, the Romish hierarchy was still on top and getting its way; but for how long?

The Code – and Breen – Come Under Increasing Criticism and Ridicule

In addition, the Code itself was coming under increasing criticism. Morally, times had changed after the war, and many wanted films to reflect those changes. Sam Goldwyn, the Jewish mogul of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer fame, condemned state censors in an address in 1949, branding them as “petty, single-minded, single-tracked dirt-sniffers who feel they have to justify their official existence by using their scissors instead of their heads”. As regards the Code itself, he was almost equally as blunt: “It is my firm belief the time has come to bring the Code up to date, to conform to the changes that have taken place during the 19 years since it was first adopted. It needs overhauling, revamping, renovating.”³⁴⁰ But Breen was adamant that the Code had to stay as it was, so that Hollywood would continue to provide “clean and wholesome entertainment” (at least in his judgment). It must be remembered that, for him and others, the Code was viewed as almost a divine document, based solidly on the Ten Commandments. Indeed, *Motion Picture Herald* at the time stated bluntly, “One does not consider it probable that even the dynamic Mr. Goldwyn would be trying to bring the Ten Commandments ‘up to date.’ Also, he can probably settle with his friend Mr. Joseph I. Breen easier than with Moses.”³⁴¹

The attitude of many within Hollywood to the Code which they felt was outdated was expressed in an advertisement that appeared in the *Screen Writer*: “Wanted, an idea: Established writer would like a good updated idea for a motion picture which avoids politics, sex, religion, divorce, double beds, drugs, disease, poverty, liquor, senators, bankers, wealth, cigarettes, congress, race, economics, art, death, crime, childbirth and accidents (whether by airplane or public carrier); also the villain must not be an American, European, South American, African, Asiatic, Australian, New Zealander or Eskimo.”³⁴²

The calls for changes became louder, more insistent. The Code was attacked, questioned, even ignored by many. Breen himself was increasingly being ridiculed, viewed as a relic of an earlier, more rigid

era, no longer in tune with the changing times. And the opposition was not just coming from within Hollywood itself, but from the general public. Breen wrote to Daniel Lord in 1950 as follows: “In recent years... there has been a growing disposition to seek to destroy the Code, to do away with it... I have noticed since the war, a very positive development that suggests paganism. This manifests itself by the disposition to throw off all standards of decency, of honesty, of honor.”³⁴³

He was correct, of course. This is precisely what was happening. The battle was now on between Roman Catholicism and the anything-should-go immorality of an ever-growing number of people across America and the West, throwing off the moral restraints of their parents’ and grandparents’ generations, and insisting that entertainment should “change with the times” and pander to the lower moral standards.



CHAPTER NINE

THE 1950s: ROMAN CATHOLIC MOVIE CENSORSHIP TAKES A BEATING

By the 1950s, Roman Catholic Americans were no longer a minority community on the edge of mainstream American society. They now numbered a quarter of the U.S. population, and occupied professional and managerial positions throughout the country. No longer were they bound to the “old neighbourhood” by their economic situation. And as they moved up the social ladder, so too the descendants of those Roman Catholic immigrants who had run the nickelodeons and movie theatres became directors of movies themselves.

Furthermore, during this time (the immediate post-war years) American Romanism not only blossomed, but became far less “European” and far more “American” than it had been before. American Romanists themselves, having supported American anti-Communist nationalism, were now widely accepted, both in mainstream America with its newly wealthy Roman Catholic middle class, and in American politics. Wherever one looked in the United States of the late 1950s and early 1960s, one saw Roman Catholics dominating popular culture, epitomised by Frank Sinatra in the music industry. On TV, Papist Monsignor, Fulton J. Sheen, had a programme entitled *Life Is Worth Living*. “After a century or more in urban ghettos, suddenly Catholics were everywhere.”³⁴⁴

And this Romanist dominance of society was not by accident. The “Church” of Rome works tirelessly for world domination; and it was well aware that if it could conquer the United States of America, it would conquer the western world. And control of the mass media, in particular films and television, would ensure manipulation and indoctrination of the public in general, devoted as they were to their visual entertainment and visual news sources.

But this domination was to be constantly challenged in 1950s Hollywood.

***Bitter Rice* (1950): the Undermining Continues**

The erosion of PCA and Legion authority was seen again with another film made in Italy, *Bitter Rice*, directed by Giuseppe De Santis, which was released in 1950 and which contained scenes of provocative clothing, seductive dances, nude swimming, illicit sex, and a plot that included abortion, a gruesome murder, suicide, etc. The distributors, Lux Films, did not even ask for a PCA seal, and it had been showing in the United States for some time before Breen and his staff saw it. They were shocked by the immorality and exposure of flesh. Quigley and the Legion condemned it, with the Legion branding it offensive to “Christian and traditional principles of morality.” *The Tidings*, a Romish newspaper in Los Angeles, said it was a Communist-inspired film.

Other leading Papists were worried about the film, too; but the PCA could not deny it a seal because Lux Films had not asked for one! They could not stop it being shown, and indeed large numbers turned out to see it.

As this particular film received wider distribution than was usual for foreign-language films, priest Little, concerned that a national campaign against it would make it still more popular, advised local Legion directors to act against it in whatever way they felt was best in their particular areas. Thus their responses varied, although most dioceses decided to just ignore it, hoping this would cause it to die a natural death in a short time. But this did not happen, and it continued to play.

Nevertheless, eventually Lux Films realised that even more money could be made from the film by making it conform to the Legion’s standards, thereby having the Legion remove the “C” rating. After huge cuts were made, it was finally reclassified as “B”.

***The Miracle* (1950): The Battle Over “Sacrilegious” Censorship**

It was clear that although their power was still very considerable, the PCA and the Legion were not the *all*-powerful organisations they had once been. It was a changing world, and there was a massive battle underway for control of the cinema. This was again brought home, with even more emphasis, with the release in America of yet another foreign film, *The Miracle*.

In 1950 Roberto Rossellini, an ex-Roman Catholic Italian director, made a film called *Il miracolo* (*The Miracle* in English), which was screened at an art theatre in New York City. It had no nudity or crime, but it was “a modern religious parable” and the “Church” of Rome was livid over it.³⁴⁵ It was an imported film about a simple-minded female goatherd who believes she has met “St.” Joseph, and who, when she finds herself mysteriously pregnant, believes the father is Joseph, and is ostracised and jeered at by others, finally giving birth in a local “church” building. When first shown in Italy, an organisation somewhat analogous to the Legion of Decency in that country strongly condemned it as an “abominable profanation”, but the Vatican did not attempt to suppress it. Leading Papists were unsure as to how to interpret the film. It might be an attack on the doctrine of the virgin conception and birth, but then again it might also be simply a commentary on the intolerance found in modern society. Not that it really mattered in the end, because it did not do at all well at the box office in Italy.

In the USA, however, it was a very different matter. Joseph Burstyn, who was in charge of showing it in New York City, was not legally bound to seek a PCA seal of approval for it as it was shown on the art-house circuit, and indeed he did not attempt to get one. But it was condemned as sacrilegious and blasphemous by the Legion, and the New York State board of censorship’s licence commissioner, Edward McCaffrey, a Roman Catholic, banned it from being publicly shown, despite having originally given it a green light. The movie was withdrawn from the circuit, but the distributors challenged the ban legally, and a formal hearing was scheduled for January 1951. This publicity did wonders for the film, which became extremely popular. Roman Catholics picketed the theatre showing it, but the ACLU and various newspapers weighed in, defending the movie and the right of people to see it – which large numbers did. The court ruled that McCaffrey had gone beyond his authority in banning the film.

New York’s cardinal, Francis Spellman, was outraged, and in a letter read out at every mass in the New York archdiocese he made his feelings clear, calling the film “a despicable affront to every Christian” and “a vicious insult to Italian womanhood”, calling for Papists to boycott the movie, and making it clear that he believed the movie was

Communist-inspired for the purpose of ridiculing the “Christian” (i.e. Roman Catholic) religion and promoting the enslavement of America to atheistic Communism. He called on all decent people to join with him to oppose the “minions of Moscow” in their attempts to “enslave this land of liberty”. This religious hypocrite spoke of America in glowing terms as a land of liberty, yet knowing full well that his very “Church” *hated* the liberties enjoyed by Americans, and had always fought against them! Spellman’s call was heeded by Roman Catholic Americans, and picket lines consisting of Roman Catholic war veterans at the theatre showing the movie expanded to over a thousand people. The signs carried by the picketers read: “This Picture is an Insult to Every Decent Woman and Her Mother”; “Don’t be a Communist – All the Communists are Inside” and “Don’t Enter that Cesspool”. The picketers insulted those who tried to buy tickets. Counter-pickets also formed outside the theatre, and Protestant ministers complained about the Papists imposing their will on everyone else. Attitudes hardened on both sides of the issue. Bomb threats were even made against the theatre, followed by bomb threats made against St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Cathedral!

Yet despite all Rome’s efforts, still the crowds came to see it.

Then Martin Quigley weighed in, with an editorial which, like Spellman, labelled the film as Communist: “With Americans dying daily in Korea, and the nation girding for total war if necessary to preserve our way of life, which is based on belief in God and the inalienable rights of man, it is intolerable that a film such as *The Miracle* should be shown in an American theater. Its logical birthplace in the modern world is the Soviet Union.”³⁴⁶

It was utterly hypocritical of this Roman Catholic to speak of defending the American way of life, when Rome had been working to destroy that very way of life and turn America into a Papist nation. But of course this was the period before the pro-Communist pope, John XXIII, and the Papacy was still very anti-Communist. This would change in just a few short years. It was ironic, too, that he spoke of America’s belief in “the rights of man”, a concept born out of the very humanistic/Communitistic system he was condemning, and which, at this time, Rome was strongly opposed to anyway.

And the greatest irony of all? “Quigley may or may not have known that the Soviet Union rejected the film because it was, in their view, ‘pro-Catholic propaganda.’”³⁴⁷ There were undoubtedly pro-Communist, anti-Roman Catholic films coming into America, and these most definitely had, as their purpose, the undermining of the United States; but it does not appear as if *The Miracle* was one of them. But to brand it as such was an easy way for the Romish hierarchy to raise the ire of anti-Communist American Romanists. It was a perfect way to kill two birds with one stone: to exert Rome’s power over what could or could not be shown on American screens, and to deal another hard knock to Communism, which was still Rome’s bitter enemy at this time.

And so, “Catholics from Cardinal Spellman on down freely tossed the charge of communism at all who favoured showing the film; picket lines and bomb threats were used in attempts to prevent audiences from seeing the film; those brave enough to run the gauntlet were accused of being communist or communist sympathizers; Protestant and Catholic representatives argued over what was and was not sacrilegious; and the professional film critics awarded *The Miracle*, at best a mildly curious picture, the Best Foreign Film of the year.”³⁴⁸

The New York State censorship board now found itself under huge pressure to revoke its earlier decision to permit the film to be shown. Burstyn and his lawyers argued that this dislike of the film was pretty much limited to Roman Catholics, and submitted as evidence hundreds of letters from Protestant ministers who saw nothing wrong with the film at all. This is not to say that there really was nothing wrong with it, for by this time (the mid-twentieth century) many Protestant denominations and churches were already liberal in both doctrine and practice. But Burstyn was correct in stating that it was mainly Roman Catholics who were angered over the film.

Nevertheless, under extreme pressure from the Papal machine in America, the censorship board in New York revoked the licence to screen the film, stating as its reason that New York law insisted that “men and women of all faiths respect the religious beliefs held by others” and that the film associated the Roman Catholic and Protestant versions of the Bible with “drunkenness, seduction and lewdness” and was therefore sacrilegious.

But things were changing in Roman Catholic circles. Some Romish publications criticised their own “Church” for its picketing and its dictatorial style. An editorial in *Commonweal* said: “We are burdened with an ancient siege complex”. It went on to state that the Romish “Church”’s use of threats rather than persuasion may have caused those who were not Roman Catholics to “feel as if they were being treated like children by an alien force that didn’t give two cents for their personal liberty.” This was strong criticism from a Papist publication in those times. And there were Roman Catholics who criticised their “Church” over its handling of this film, and lost their jobs. One was Frank Getlein, the film reviewer for the *Catholic Messenger* of Davenport, Iowa, who lost his job at Fairfield University, a Roman Catholic college in Connecticut, for his criticism. Another was William Clancy, a teacher of English at the University of Notre Dame, whose article, “The Catholic as Philistine”, in which he called the Roman Catholic campaign against the film “semi-ecclesiastic McCarthyism”, cost him his job as well.³⁴⁹

Burstyn was down but not out. He appealed the ruling, but when the New York State Court of Appeals upheld it he filed a petition with the United States Supreme Court in December 1951. Oral arguments for *Burstyn v. Wilson* were set for April 1952. Burstyn was challenging the Supreme Court decision of 1915 in *Mutual v. Ohio* (examined earlier in this book) which had upheld the constitutionality of state censorship boards.

Ephraim London, who represented Burstyn, argued that film was entitled to the freedom which the U.S. Constitution guaranteed to the press, as it communicated ideas just like the press did. Citing hundreds of letters and petitions from Protestant ministers and people that *The Miracle* was not viewed as sacrilegious by them, London argued that the state exceeded the constitution when it upheld the religious views of one group (in this case, the views of the “Church” of Rome) above all others.

London was correct: in the United States, no religion’s views could be upheld above any others; a very sensible and wise law. It is what prevented the United States from persecuting people for their religion, as had happened so often in so many other countries of the

world at one time or another, where such a law was lacking. For it is not the government's place to interfere in religious matters. Whenever governments have done so, persecution has inevitably followed. The duty of the State is limited to matters of the physical world, not the spiritual. If citizens are threatened physically, or harmed physically, then the State must intervene; but in religious matters it has no jurisdiction from God, and should ideally have none in practice.

The end result was that on May 26, 1952, the Supreme Court reversed the decision of the New York Court of Appeals. And in writing the unanimous decision for the court, Justice Tom Clark essentially stated precisely what has just been set out as the proper approach, if only governments would follow it: he said that the State has "no legitimate interest in protecting any or all religions from views distasteful to them" and that it was not the business of government "to suppress real or imagined attacks upon a particular religious doctrine, whether they appear in publications, speeches, or motion pictures."³⁵⁰

This wise and sensible position could justifiably be dubbed the *Gallio principle*: when "the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law", then Gallio, the deputy of Achaia, replied, "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if it be a question of words and names, and of your [religious] law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters" (Acts 18:12-15). He did not practice what he preached, of course, for when the Greeks then proceeded to beat up the ruler of the synagogue, we are told that "Gallio cared for none of those things" (v.17), even though this was now most definitely "a matter of wrong"; but he was right in his stance that it was not his business, as a political leader, to get embroiled in religious matters. If only governments had held the same sentiments through the centuries, there would have been far less religious persecution in the world! The government's business is to maintain law and order, to punish evildoers, etc.; it is *not* its business to regulate religion, to say what may or may not be said in matters of religion, or to stick its nose into spiritual matters of any kind. The United States, more than any other nation in the history of the world, sought to separate the State's authority from that of religious authority of any kind, refusing

to get embroiled in religious controversies, leaving such matters to the religions themselves to deal with. This prevented persecution on religious grounds, for it is a fact of history that wherever a government involves itself in such matters, persecution inevitably follows.

When it comes to religious matters, would that the whole world adopted the Gallio principle! Tragically, today, even America is rapidly moving away from it, increasingly interfering in religious affairs and attacking those who oppose, on religious grounds, such religions as Roman Catholicism and Islam.

And here a word must be said, also, to those *Christians* who think a government should be involved in upholding the true Christian faith. This is just as wrong when it concerns the *true* faith as when it concerns false religions! Some professing Evangelical Christians believe that if the majority of the population professes to be Christian, the government should outlaw all publications, films, etc., which attack the Christian faith. In this they greatly err. The followers of Christ must proclaim the Gospel of Christ by the method of preaching, of persuasion (2 Cor. 5:11), and it will be received by all those ordained to eternal life (Acts 13:48). We do not need, nor should we ever seek, the legislation of Christianity.

Just as the 1915 Supreme Court ruling had been a defining moment in movie history, when (as seen earlier) movies were declared to be a “business, pure and simple”, which could be regulated, so the 1952 ruling was another such defining moment. The 1915 ruling was now reversed, with the court arguing that movies were expressions of ideas and as such, were covered under the freedom of speech clause of the U.S. Constitution and could not be censored.

However, it stated that it had not ruled “whether a state may censor motion pictures under a clearly drawn statute designed and applied to prevent the showing of obscene films. That is a very different question from the one now before us. We hold only that under the First and Fourteenth Amendments a state may not ban a film on the basis of a censor’s conclusion that it is ‘sacrilegious.’” Thus, according to the Supreme Court, it might have been legal for a censorship law to prevent obscene films.

The Supreme Court decision was a major blow to censorship

boards across America, and over the next few years they would cease to function, for the majority of them contained statements prohibiting films on sacrilegious grounds, and to do so was now unconstitutional. In addition, this ruling severely restricted the power of Joseph Breen and the PCA to demand that material which violated the Production Code be removed from films. Censorship was still in place after this ruling, but it was now greatly weakened legally.

The Legion of Decency was affected most of all. While professing to only rate films for Roman Catholic audiences, not censor them, the Legion had done its best to prevent all Americans from seeing *The Miracle*, regardless of their religious beliefs. And it had done so in a particularly vicious manner, with boycotts, pickets, threats of bombings, etc. “In essence, the Catholic church through the Legion, had demanded that the state declare Catholic theology as official dogma. Protestant organizations rightly opposed giving that kind of sanction to the Catholic church, as did the U.S. Supreme Court. The boundaries of separation between church and state remained firmly defined.”³⁵¹ It was a major setback for Rome’s attempts to increase its power over the life of all the people of the United States. If it had succeeded, the “Church” of Rome would have vastly expanded its influence over this country it had sought to conquer for so long. It would have been one giant step closer to becoming the official “State Church” in the USA, something utterly alien to the U.S. Constitution and to all that America had stood for since its founding. But the sovereign Lord had decreed otherwise, and providentially this bold plot was overturned at this time. Rome would not give up, however.

The Legion of Decency, as a result of its actions against this film, suffered a huge blow. Even many Roman Catholics turned against it. After all, many of them could not help but imbibe much of the spirit of *Americanism*: of such concepts as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press. This has always been Rome’s dilemma in the USA – how to keep American Romanists faithful to Rome when they live in a country that is at its very heart the very antithesis of what Rome stands for. For example, the Roman Catholic publication, *Commonweal*, the only major Romish publication to support the Supreme Court decision, stated that when Romanists “obey the voice of the Church, it is a free act; to pressure or force, even indirectly,

others who do not believe, into the same kind of obedience is to ask for servility.”³⁵² This was an excellent statement in favour of religious liberty and liberty of conscience, and as such very American; but it certainly was not in line with the “Church” of Rome, which demands the very servility condemned in the statement, and has always used pressure and force against those who oppose it.

Never again would the Legion of Decency be the all-powerful institution it once was. It was concerned, but continued on, applying Roman Catholic standards to the films it examined. This in itself would have been perfectly fine if it did so solely as a watchdog for Roman Catholic Americans, but it continued to act as if it had a divine right to act on behalf of all Americans, Roman Catholic or otherwise.

There could be no doubt, however, that both PCA and Legion influence and authority had been much weakened by these things. Oh, they were still extremely strong, but things were not looking quite so rosy, quite so certain, for them anymore. And Hollywood film-makers were becoming bolder in their desire to challenge PCA and Legion interference.

***A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951): Yet Another Challenge to the Breen Office and the Legion**

The assault on film censorship (which meant the assault on Roman Catholic-controlled film censorship) continued. The script for a film entitled *A Streetcar Named Desire* arrived on Joseph Breen’s desk in 1950. The Broadway play had been running since 1947, and contained themes of sexuality, homosexuality, suicide, adult-adolescent sex, rape, etc. It was a smash hit, which was why Hollywood showed interest in making a movie of it. But it was obvious it would fall foul of the PCA.

Breen objected to the homosexuality, nymphomania and rape in the story, and would never grant a seal if these themes remained. By various editings they were toned down, but not completely removed. Nevertheless the PCA seal was granted, quite surprisingly, after compromises were reached: Breen said he would accept the rape if it was done “by suggestion and delicacy”, and director Elia Kazan agreed that the film’s ending would provide “compensating moral values”.³⁵³ But when priest Patrick J. Masterson of the Legion, and Martin Quigley, viewed the film, they were enraged, and Warner

Brothers were informed by the Legion that it would condemn the film unless major cuts and alterations were made. Such was the Legion's power, still, in Hollywood at this time that Warner Brothers actually hired Martin Quigley himself to do the editing, in 1951.

When director Kazan heard of the massive cuts being made in the editing room, he tried to stop the Legion. This same director would shortly appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He was later to write in his memoirs, "It was at this time that I became aware of the similarity of the Catholic Church to the Communist Party, particularly in the 'underground' nature of their operation."³⁵⁴ In this he was more correct than he could ever have known. It is a fact (but outside the scope of this book to demonstrate) that agents of Rome were involved behind the scenes in the very creation of Communism, that Communism had borrowed much from the Roman Catholic institution, and that in the years to come the two would develop an increasingly cosy and symbiotic relationship.

When Kazan confronted Quigley over the cuts to his film, Quigley emphasised the importance of "the moral order over artistic considerations." All true Christians would agree that morality must always be paramount, and that this film was blatantly immoral; but of course when Quigley spoke of "the moral order" he meant as understood and interpreted by Rome. He denied it, of course: Kazan was outraged that the Roman Catholic "Church" was forcing its moral values on all Americans, but Quigley's rejoinder was that the Legion censored according to the Ten Commandments. This sounded so much broader, and so much more innocuous, than claiming the Legion was acting according to the moral values of the "Church" of Rome. But it was not true.

Kazan was furious, and he did not remain silent. In a *New York Times* article he made it clear that "a prominent Catholic layman" had forced him to accept the changes to the film, and he wrote: "My picture has been cut to fit the specifications of a code which is not my code, is not the recognized code of the picture industry, and is not the code of the great majority of the audience." He also wrote, "I was the victim of a hostile conspiracy." He branded Francis Spellman, the Popish cardinal, "the gluttonous Pope of Fifth Avenue" who had humiliated him.³⁵⁵

We have no sympathy for the Kazans of the world. They deliberately

seek to make filthy, immoral movies, a flagrant attack on decency and morality. We include his complaints here simply to show the power of Rome in Hollywood at that time. Immoral films, like immoral books, do no good whatsoever and an immense amount of harm. But the “Church” of Rome has no business being the moral watchdog of society, given its polluted and degraded history. And yet for decades the movie industry was essentially controlled by this false “Church.”

The Resumption of the House Committee on Un-American Activities in Hollywood

While all this was going on, in 1951 the HUAC hearings resumed suddenly again – after a few years of silence and inactivity. This time around, large numbers of witnesses gave the HUAC the names of political associates. Once again, the Jewish moguls in Hollywood were frightened. They knew that if they did not fire all radicals, liberals and Communists in their studios, they would face pickets and boycotts of their movies and the hatred and rejection of American society. So they acted. In their panic they even fired people who were *not* Communists or Communist sympathisers, but whose names appeared on the blacklist. The story is told of a Hollywood writer whose name was on the list, who worked for Harry Warner. Warner fired him. The man said, “This is a mistake,” producing documents which showed he was anti-Communist. “The plain fact is that I am an *anti*-Communist.” To which Warner replied, “I don’t [care] what kind of Communist you are, get out of here.”³⁵⁶

***The Greatest Show on Earth* (1952): Legion Authority Weakened Further**

As was seen, the U.S. Supreme Court had come to the decision that it was necessary for films to be included under the protection of freedom of speech, and that states should not be permitted to censor them. The protection given by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution was now extended to movies. Not only that, but film-makers themselves were now emboldened to challenge the Roman Catholic influence on Hollywood exerted for so long by the PCA and the Legion. In 1953 Hollywood’s Samuel Goldwyn called for the Production Code to be reviewed and brought “reasonably up

to date.”³⁵⁷ Others were more blatant and called for the Code and all censorship to be scrapped. Even the Papist *Commonweal* publication, whose film critic was a consultant to the Legion, now called for the Code to be revised.³⁵⁸

One of the Hollywood film-makers who was emboldened to challenge PCA and Legion authority after the Supreme Court’s 1952 ruling was Cecil B. DeMille, maker of various so-called “biblical epic” films that were neither doctrinally sound nor morally decent. He now decided to make a film about the circus – the result being *The Greatest Show on Earth*. The PCA did not object to the film, but the Legion gave it a “B” rating (objectionable in part for all) because of the costumes worn by the women and the lustful characterisation of one of the male characters, as well as the fact that another character had performed so-called “assisted suicide” on his dying wife (even though in the end he was arrested). The “B” rating meant that the film was off-limits to children, and DeMille was angry and refused to make any cuts. He also pointed out to Thomas Little, the monsignor of the Legion, that the costumes worn by the actresses in the movie were the same ones as were worn by Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey circus, which was ritually blessed by a priest of Rome every year.

DeMille was supported by many Papists who could see nothing wrong with the film, including many priests. Romish disapproval of the Legion’s rating was voiced by many. One monsignor, J. B. Lux, arranged for four monsignors and a number of Roman Catholic “laypeople” to see the film. All loved it. Lux said the Legion’s concern about the “euthanasia” was “sheer nonsense”, and added that if the Legion objected to this film, Roman Catholics would not take the Legion seriously anymore. He went still further, saying, “we are not behind the iron curtain and we have a right to disagree [with] the Legion.”³⁵⁹ Clearly, Legion authority was gradually waning in Roman Catholic circles.

The Legion rating was not removed, despite criticism from such Romish leaders. Nevertheless, the film did extremely well at the box office, and large numbers of Roman Catholics took their children to see it, as evidenced by the turnout in such Papist strongholds as New York City, Chicago, Baltimore and Pittsburgh. It had become obvious that a film-maker could challenge the Legion and still make a lot of money.

***The Moon is Blue* (1953): the PCA is Ignored and Cracks Appear in the Legion**

The Moon is Blue was a Broadway play that had been running for three years without much complaint from religious institutions, including the Romish institution, despite the fact that the play was full of sexual innuendo in a comedy setting. A film version was planned, and United Artists agreed to distribute it even if the PCA refused to provide a seal and the Legion condemned it. The script was sent to the PCA, and of course it was found to violate the Code. And when the film itself was submitted to the PCA in 1953, Breen found it unacceptable. The MPAA agreed with Breen and a seal was denied, but this was because, if the MPAA gave a seal to the film, Breen's authority, or what was left of it by this time, would have been severely undermined. The MPAA's Eric Johnston said in a statement: "There has been a feeling in some areas both within and without the industry that the Code or some parts of it are out of 'style.' It is a living and vibrant document that deals with principles of morality and good taste. These are ageless."³⁶⁰

True to its word, United Artists distributed the film even without the seal. But the studio had to resign from the MPAA because membership was only permitted to those who upheld the Code.

Martin Quigley agreed with Breen and told the studio that the Legion would condemn the film if it was not revised. But the two priests in charge of the Legion, Patrick J. Masterson and Thomas F. Little, were shocked to discover that a committee of Legion reviewers from the IFCA were not much offended by the film, and recommended a mere "B" rating. There was not much about a "B" rating to put people off, including Roman Catholics. Times had changed; Romanists themselves had changed, and were no longer as morally shocked by such things as they once would have been. The movie industry had succeeded in wearing their morals down.

But the two priests, Masterson and Little, over-ruled the women of the IFCA and condemned the film. They did so not only because they disagreed with the IFCA's recommendation of a "B" ruling, but also because Quigley put pressure on Masterson to make sure that the film was condemned by the Legion. Quigley did this because his own credibility would have taken a knock if a "B" rating was granted after he himself had told the studio that the Legion would condemn the film outright.

When Masterson died suddenly, Little took over the Legion. He urged Roman Catholics to avoid *The Moon is Blue* because “the strength of the Legion is going to be tested by the commercial success or non-success of this film.”³⁶¹ He could see the handwriting on the wall: the Legion’s authority was in real trouble by this stage. He called on Papists to unitedly protest against the film, and bishops were provided with a sermon, to be given to the priests under them. He was supported by New York’s cardinal, Spellman, who called for a boycott, by Papists, of any theatre which showed the film. Bishops in Los Angeles and Philadelphia echoed Spellman’s call, although the majority of bishops in the United States did not – which was significant in itself. The Roman Catholic “Church” in the United States was no longer speaking with a united voice when it came to the movies. The film critic of *St. Joseph’s Magazine*, which was “America’s Catholic Family Monthly”, came out in praise of *The Moon is Blue*, even calling it “wholesome”. Still, Roman Catholic pressure paid dividends in some parts of America.³⁶² A priest in El Paso, Texas, informed the Legion that he had “put the hate” on the local chain which was exhibiting the film. The San Francisco Junior Chamber of Commerce cancelled its sponsorship of the film’s premiere. It was banned in Kansas, Ohio, and Maryland. Police in Jersey City arrested the theatre manager and took possession of two prints of the film. Upon being released the theatre manager showed a reserve print, and “was threatened by some local hoods.”³⁶³ So much for Romanism being a loving, “Christian” church.

But ultimately the Legion did not succeed. Otto Preminger, the film’s director, stood firm, refusing to alter anything in it. Stanley Warner and United Paramount, two of the largest distributors, ignored the Legion and booked the movie. Although some state censorship boards banned it, others approved it. And eventually the courts overturned all decisions to ban the movie as being unconstitutional. Little even had to reluctantly admit that ticket sales had actually been given a huge boost by the Legion’s condemnation. The movie was a smash hit all over the country, playing to large audiences even in staunchly Roman Catholic cities, much to the disgust of Martin Quigley, who had helped to create the Legion back in 1934.³⁶⁴

It was, in fact, the first time that Roman Catholics, in large numbers,

had objected to a Legion condemnation. Priests joined people in speaking out against the Legion, voicing the once virtually heretical thought that the Legion had outlived its usefulness.

And Joe Breen's authority suffered as a result of the furore over *The Moon is Blue*, as well. What is more, the Legion became increasingly concerned that Breen's standards were dropping. In 1953, in fact, the Legion criticised Breen for his handling of sexually related matters in a number of films.

***Martin Luther* (1953): the Legion's Agenda Exposed**

In 1953 a low-budget film on the life of the German Reformer, Martin Luther, was released, and to the surprise of many it became a box-office hit. The film's production was financed by six Lutheran organisations in the United States, and contained no sexual themes, no immorality of any sort, no violence. Joe Breen approved it, even though the PCA was dominated by Roman Catholics. But the Legion of Decency condemned it.

Although many were very surprised at this, no one who understood Romanism should have been. Martin Luther, the sixteenth-century German monk who defied the Roman Catholic "Church", had sparked the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation was the greatest blow Rome had ever suffered. In the eyes of Rome, Luther was a heretic and he was deeply hated. There was no way the American Papist hierarchy was going to approve of the film.

But the Legion had a problem. It had always claimed that its purpose was to keep films moral by keeping immorality out of them. But there was nothing immoral about *Martin Luther*. Not only that, but the Legion had always claimed that it was broader in its mandate than simply condemning movies that offended Roman Catholic morals. It claimed to defend what it termed Christian morals in general. It desperately wanted to condemn this film because it presented Rome in such a poor light, but the only thing it could condemn about it *was that* it presented Rome in such a poor light! And it knew this would never fly, because condemning a perfectly moral film merely because it showed up the errors of Rome was outside the Legion's mandate, and would result in a countrywide condemnation of the Legion from Protestant institutions. And the danger of *that* was that many would

then see the truth – that the Legion of Decency was condemning it solely because it was a Protestant film. In Protestant America, despite the by-now huge influence of Romanism in politics and society, this was a massive risk to take. Rome’s power was immense and growing, but the United States was still a Protestant land. This was not Europe in the Dark Ages.

Realising this, Little, although longing to condemn the film as heretical and a danger to Roman Catholics, had no choice but to issue some other classification than a “Condemned” one. And so, even though many Papists urged him to condemn it, he called for it to be placed under the “Separate Classification” category, which was innocuous enough. This was eventually done, with the Legion issuing the warning to Roman Catholics that the film “offers a sympathetic and approving representation of the life and times of Martin Luther, the 15th century figure of religious controversy [actually he was a 16th century figure]. It contains theological and historical references and interpretations which are unacceptable to Roman Catholics.”³⁶⁵

The Legion could not condemn the film, but Roman Catholic publications were free to do so, and they did with a vengeance, blasting it as inaccurate, unfair, unbiblical, and so on. The strongest condemnation came from *The Wanderer*, which charged the film’s director, Irving Pichel, with having connections with Communist front organisations and activities. Other Romish publications also claimed that the film had been made by Communists. This was a rather common tactic used by Romanists in those days, when the USA was facing down the Soviet menace and the Romish institution was still strongly anti-Communist. This would change in a few short years with the accession of the very pro-Communist John XXIII as pope of Rome, but in the early 1950s that was how things stood. The Papists’ case was strengthened, however, at least in their own eyes, when Allan E. Stone, the man who wrote the screenplay, appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and admitted that he had once belonged to the Communist Party. Ah, now Romish publications could condemn *Martin Luther* as being un-American. And they did, vociferously.

However, such strong Legion opposition to the film did not help

its cause at all, because the entire idea of censorship was under assault at that time in the U.S., and this kind of Legion vitriol only served to strengthen the case of those opposed to censorship. Moreover, although many Protestant institutions had often supported the Legion's condemnation of various immoral movies, they now saw this Roman Catholic organisation coming out with guns blazing against a film for no other reason than that it was Protestant. The Legion's cause was not helped, furthermore, by slamming the film as part of the international Communist conspiracy. This just made it look foolish.³⁶⁶ It was obvious now, to more people than ever, that the Legion of Decency was *not* only concerned with matters of morality, but with advancing the Roman Catholic agenda. This was the period prior to the Second Vatican Council and the ecumenical movement – Protestants still very rightly viewed Romanism with deep suspicion, and many more Protestants than today were well aware of Rome's desire for domination of the United States. The Legion's hysterical reaction to *Martin Luther* only proved that they were right.

***I Confess* (1953): Pro-Papist Movie by a Jesuit-Educated Director**

Nevertheless, although change was in the air, influential Roman Catholics in Hollywood still did much to promote their religion through film. One such was the Jesuit-educated Roman Catholic director, Alfred Hitchcock, whose movie *I Confess* was an attempt to glorify the Romish sacrament of confession and of a priest's attempts to never violate the secrecy of the confessional, and even to sacrifice his own life if necessary. The priest in the film is linked to a crime but cannot clear his name without violating the confidentiality of the confessional. The film certainly glorified both the priesthood and the Popish sacrament.

***The French Line* (1953): Thumbing the Nose at the Censors**

In 1953 the film, *The French Line*, was released by Howard Hughes, starring Jane Russell. Breen had passed the script but warned Hughes that the actresses must be properly covered when the film was shot. When the finished film came out, Breen saw that Hughes had paid no attention to his warning and RKO, Hughes' studio, was denied a seal.

But Hughes did what would once upon a time have been utterly

unthinkable: he simply ignored Breen, ignored the MPAA board of directors as well (RKO was a member of the MPAA so this was a deliberate rebellion), and released the film to the public anyway. Not only that, but he deliberately scheduled the film's world premiere for the city of St. Louis – hometown of Jesuit priest Daniel Lord, the author of the Production Code, and a city with a large Roman Catholic population!

Hughes was deliberately challenging the PCA and MPAA to try to stop him, and they knew it. Breen was able to slap a \$25000 fine on Hughes because RKO belonged to the MPAA, but for a multi-millionaire like Hughes this was an ineffectual slap on the wrist. Breen sent PCA staff member, Jack Vizzard, to plan what to do about it with Romish archbishop, Joseph E. Ritter. They knew very well what was at stake, for Vizzard said it himself: "What was at stake was the survival of the whole system, and even the whole concept, of achieving decency in the movies. A successful breakthrough by Hughes, exploiting the bulge created by Preminger, would spell eventual doom for the entire experiment."³⁶⁷ By "decency in the movies", of course, Vizzard meant, essentially, the imposition of Roman Catholic morality on, and control of, the movies. One must always read such statements by Romanists, especially ones influenced by the Jesuits as Vizzard was, in the sense in which they mean them.

When the archbishop asked Vizzard if he thought a pastoral letter should be issued forbidding Roman Catholics from seeing the film under pain of committing mortal sin, Vizzard replied that this was a good idea, even though he privately felt it was going too far. As for the Legion, priest Little told Hughes that unless he withdrew the film right away, the Legion would condemn it. When Hughes sent a print of the film to the Legion for review, the reviewers condemned it and told Hughes that serious cuts had to be made.

Hughes tried to get Breen to reconsider his condemnation of the film by resubmitting a new version for his evaluation. But Breen refused to budge, and Hughes then told the Legion that he was not going to withdraw his movie, nor make any further major changes to it just to please the Legion.

It had not gone down well with the archbishop, Ritter, when he learned that the president of Hughes' RKO studios, James Grainger, was in fact a Roman Catholic himself, and that Grainger's son Edmund had produced the movie! Ritter was livid that Roman Catholics were

so morally degenerate that they could happily be involved with Hughes in the making of *The French Line*. Spellman, the cardinal, said he would lambaste such Romanists.³⁶⁸ James Grainger told Little that as far as he was concerned, the Legion was not playing fair with Hughes and was being too straight-laced when it came to sexual matters and the exposure of the female form on screen. He pointed out that in Roman Catholic countries like Italy and France, it was acceptable for viewers to see more of the female form than what was permitted in America.³⁶⁹

The Legion went ahead and condemned the film as obscene, suggestive, indecent and offensive; and Little called on bishops to put pressure on their local theatres not to book it.

Vizzard, the Romish archbishop Ritter, and priest John Cody tried to get Protestant and Jewish groups to protest against the film with Roman Catholics, but without success. So they then sent a letter to all priests in the St. Louis diocese, saying this movie would irreparably harm the Legion and the PCA and calling on Papists to make the film a failure at the box office. Then Ritter did what he had asked for Vizzard's advice on – he declared in a letter read out at all masses held in the diocese that viewing the film was a “mortal sin” – the most serious form of sin known to Papists, a sin for which they believe they will go to hell if it is not confessed to a priest.

The Legion had learned from past mistakes, however. It had come to realise that loud pickets by angry Romanists outside theatres would actually generate more publicity for the film, so this time around priests went to theatre owners and simply asked them nicely not to show the movie. If the theatre showed it anyway, then the priests were to make “a temperate and heartfelt appeal” from their pulpits for their people to stay away from it.³⁷⁰ Truly, Rome was realising that changing times meant changing tactics. They knew the days of priests throwing their weight around had ended, at least for the time being. Rome would have to try a more subtle, gentler approach. This was contrary to her nature but she had no choice.

And just in case one is tempted to think that this gentler approach was genuine, consider this: while publicly the priests of Rome acted gently and courteously, in private they found out which theatre owners were Roman Catholic and then tightened the thumbscrews, by (for

example) refusing to administer the sacraments of Rome to the theatre owner. For a Papist, to be denied the sacraments is to be put outside the “Church”, and in danger of eternal damnation. Of course, one accepts that any church or professing “church” has the right to demand of its members that they accept the doctrinal position of the church, or they must leave. But acting in this cloak-and-dagger way, smiling publicly and threatening privately, was hypocritical, sly, sinister and nasty. It was, however, par for the course as far as Rome was concerned.

Furthermore, according to the manager of Lafayette Theater in Buffalo, New York, thousands of letters and phone calls had been received from Roman Catholics objecting to the movie, but these included some of “the most vulgar and obscene and immoral language ever uttered,” he told *Variety* magazine.³⁷¹ Yes, Roman Catholics piously condemned various admittedly immoral movies, yet in their own personal lives they were so often immoral hypocrites.

Although high-ranking prelates continued to fulminate against the movie and declare it to be a mortal sin to watch it, and many theatres and municipalities refused to show it on the grounds of obscenity, large numbers flocked to see it, even in strongly Papist areas. Obviously Roman Catholics were turning out to see it despite the threats of their religious leaders, a fact admitted by priest Little himself in his annual report to the bishops.³⁷² The film made a huge amount of money and was a box-office success. It would have made even more if Hughes had submitted to the PCA and the Legion, but he did not, preferring to thumb his nose at the censors and thereby drive another nail into the coffin of Roman Catholic-controlled film censorship in the United States.

***On the Waterfront* (1954): Social Romanism and Praising Jesuit Worker-Priests**

Nevertheless, in the declining era of Breen’s dominance of Hollywood, there were films which still promoted a positive (albeit changing) image of American Romanism. One such was Elia Kazan’s *On the Waterfront*, described as “a hymn to a socially aware Church”.³⁷³

The script was partly based on a series of stories by Malcolm Johnson, which highlighted the work of two Jesuit priests, Philip A. Carey and John M. Carridan. Scriptwriter Bud Schulberg, a self-described “liberal

freethinker”, nevertheless was deeply impressed with the fiery Jesuit Carridan, a “tall, fast-talking, chain-smoking, hardheaded, sometimes profane Kerryman”. Carridan spoke of revolution, reconstruction, social justice, “Christian” (i.e. Papist) charity, and labour union power. This was the kind of priest Schulberg could relate to, a priest so un-priestlike (for those times) that Kazan at one point pulled Schulberg aside and asked him, “Are you sure he’s a priest?”³⁷⁴ This was the era when the Communist-inspired “worker priests” were gaining ground, and the Jesuits were often in the forefront. It was an era when the “Church” of Rome, still under an anti-Communist pope (Pius XII), was nevertheless beginning to change sides, from being decidedly anti-Communist to becoming increasingly pro-Communist.³⁷⁵ Roman Catholicism was beginning to throw its huge weight behind the “workers of the world”. Worker-priests were agitators, on the side of the “workers”, and were often viewed as “men’s men” themselves, not just worldly-wise but worldly, cussing, hard drinking. All this was done to get the working classes to view the priest as “one of them”. And it worked.

This was how the priest was depicted in this film, modelled on the Jesuit Carridan. And also, another character in the film, a dockyard worker, is represented as a Christ-figure, and there is a very obvious parallel in the film with the crucifixion of Christ.

But despite such films, the times were changing. And Breen saw the writing on the wall.

The Battle is Lost: Joseph Breen Retires

Joseph Breen could no longer face up to the task. He had taken a beating and was feeling it. In 1954 he decided to retire from the Production Code Administration which he had dominated for two decades. He had sought to impose his Roman Catholic morality on Hollywood and had succeeded for years. The following quotation well summarises his influence: “Joseph Breen had more influence on the content and structure of films than any other single person in the long history of Hollywood. From 1934 to 1954, Hollywood’s golden age of studio production, producers had submitted more than seven thousand scripts and films for his inspection. His word was law during this long reign.... Without Breen and his view of the code, the films of this era would

have had a much different look, structure, and feel.”³⁷⁶

He had received various honours from his “Church” through the years. Loyola University of Los Angeles gave him an honorary degree in 1937, and St. Joseph’s University did so in 1954. Especially treasured by him was when he was made a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory by the pope of Rome, Pius XI, in a ceremony at the Vatican itself. “The man who had ridden into the mouth of the dragon in Hollywood had literally been dubbed a knight.”³⁷⁷

He had fought long and hard for Rome, and had been eminently successful. Rome’s domination of Hollywood’s “Golden Age” was primarily attributable to him. But it was now a different era. As *Variety* magazine stated in 1954, “Hollywood is taking a different view of screen ‘morality’ and, as a result, marked changes in [the] interpretation of the Production Code are on the way. In a sense, the picture business is embarking on a new era, for even the symbol of old-guard screen standards – Code administrator Joseph I. Breen – is doing a fade.”³⁷⁸

In March 1954 Breen attended the annual Academy Award ceremony in Los Angeles, and was presented with an honorary Academy Award for “his conscientious, open-minded and dignified management of the Motion Picture Production Code.”³⁷⁹ It was the movie industry’s shallow “tribute” to a man who had fought for years to tightly control the industry. The award was quite obviously given more as an empty gesture than from any sincerely felt gratitude. Hollywood moguls would never have viewed Breen’s censorship as “open-minded” in truth.

The Legion of Decency and Joseph Breen had worked closely together over the years. Although they sometimes differed, he and the Legion generally saw eye to eye and assisted one another in exerting their Roman Catholic influence over Hollywood.

With Breen gone, the Irish Roman Catholic dominance of Hollywood was over.



CHAPTER TEN

THE 1950s: HOLLYWOOD LIBERALISES UNDER JESUIT DIRECTION

Geoffrey Shurlock Replaces Breen; the Code Amended

The old guard was passing from the scene. Will Hays died in 1954, the same year that Breen retired, and Jesuit priest Daniel Lord, author of the Code, died in 1955. Breen was succeeded at the PCA by Geoffrey Shurlock. And in his appointment, too, there was an indication of changing times, for the Papist candidate to replace Breen, Jack Vizzard, did not get the post. Shurlock was not a Papist; he was an Episcopalian.

Although he pledged to stick to “the Breen principle” and, using Breen’s own phrase, “to make pictures reasonably acceptable, morally, to reasonable people”, Shurlock was certainly not as rigid as Breen had been, disagreeing with him on some of his decisions even when Breen had been his boss. Shurlock interpreted the Code far more liberally than Breen ever did, the latter being a strict conformist to the letter of the Code’s law. For this reason Martin Quigley and the Legion had been against Shurlock taking up the reins of the PCA. They wanted the PCA to remain firmly in Roman Catholic hands, but they were unsuccessful. Priest Thomas Little accused Shurlock of granting a seal to more immoral movies than had ever occurred before. Furthermore, under Shurlock the PCA came under ever-increasing pressure from all sides, dying a slow death year by year as it continued to lose ground. The “Shurlock Office” was just not the “Breen Office.” Calls were again being heard for the Code to be modernised. Sam Goldwyn stated, “The world has moved on in the years since the Code was adopted and I believe that, without departing from fundamentals, the motion picture industry should move with it.”³⁸⁰

Inevitably, the MPAA buckled under the pressure and, in September 1954, approved the first really serious amendments to the Code since its adoption in 1930. Breen himself, before his retirement, had proposed

the revisions.

Miscegenation would no longer be banned. If treated “within the careful limits of good taste”, inter-racial romance and marriage would now be permitted. Liquor, too, could be portrayed “within the careful limits of good taste”. Furthermore, certain words and phrases which had been forbidden previously were now permitted, including the words “hell” and “damn”, if their use was “governed by the discretion and the prudent advice of the Code Administration”.

TV Nudges Hollywood to “Spice Up” Movies

When, in 1955, Otto Preminger submitted the script for a film named *The Man with the Golden Arm*, a story about drug addiction, to the PCA, Shurlock rejected it. In addition to the drug theme, the film had suicide as a plot device, women in a strip bar, and was too violent. But Preminger ignored the PCA and made the film.

Shurlock rejected the finished movie. Legion reviewers from the IFCA were divided over it, with some saying it should be condemned but the majority opting for a mere “B” rating. Audiences flocked to see it. By this time drug themes were a regular part of many TV programmes, so audiences were not offended by the drug theme of this Hollywood film. Television, in fact, had far more liberty than the film industry, and this was one of the reasons why film-makers were becoming increasingly willing to challenge the PCA, the Legion, and the MPAA: if they did not make their movies more “spicy”, they argued, they would lose revenues as people would simply stay at home and watch TV.

Morals Plummet and the Legion’s Authority Wanes Still Further

Despite the Supreme Court’s 1952 ruling, the movie industry itself continued to enforce its Production Code for some years. But younger Americans in those post-war years were no longer simply accepting the values and norms of earlier generations. Morality itself was undergoing change, with previous standards now questioned and even increasingly jettisoned. The moral climate was deteriorating, things that had once been frowned upon were now being openly flaunted more and more, and the earlier standards were being mocked. The 1950s and even more so the 1960s experienced a social revolution that

would completely alter the western world. As Bob Dylan, the voice of an entire generation of rebellious young people, was to later put it in a song, “The times they are a-changin.” Indeed they were.

The Legion of Decency continued to fulminate against what it deemed to be objectionable movies after the Supreme Court’s 1952 ruling, the archbishop of Los Angeles called on priests in 1955 to warn young people about the dangers of immoral films, the American bishops announced plans to revitalise a campaign for morality in movies, and the pope of Rome himself, Pius XII, called on Italian film-makers to make moral films;³⁸¹ but it was a different era and it was like trying to stem an unstoppable tide. The public, including a large section of the Roman Catholic public, no longer wanted to be dictated to by a moral watchdog. Morally, people had sunk to a new low in America and the western world, and were now wanting entertainment that was very far removed from that of previous generations.

Martin Quigley, devout Papist that he was, had fought for years through the Legion to keep movies “clean” according to Rome’s view of morality. In 1950 he was awarded the papal Medal of St. Gregory for his work in the Legion. He was extremely influential over Hollywood, the close friend of cardinals and priests. And yet by 1956 he was forced to concede, in a letter to the cardinal, Spellman, that “The Legion of Decency... is able no longer to exert its previous practical influence.”³⁸² Indeed, Roman Catholics, like other Americans, were now “motorized and mobile, and had only to drive to an adjacent city to avoid a glowering parish priest at the corner Bijou. The battalions of obedient parishioners who once fell out of line at the ticket window had dispersed – gone to the suburbs, still observing the faith but refusing to genuflect on command.”³⁸³ The American spirit of liberty of thought and independence had come into conflict with the Roman Catholic spirit of rigidity and top-down authoritarianism, and the latter was taking some serious body blows.

And then came a bombshell. And it was dropped by a Jesuit priest, no less.

Rome's Policy Shift: the Jesuits Come Out Against Censorship

John Courtney Murray, a leading Jesuit theologian and intellectual, published an article on censorship in 1956 in which he questioned whether Roman Catholic adults were in fact obligated to follow the restrictions placed on the media by their religious leaders. He stated that censorship in a democracy was an infringement on freedom of expression and a dangerous one at that, and that only pornography should be restricted or banned. Without naming it, he even criticised the Legion of Decency's power and influence. Boycotting a theatre, he argued, made Roman Catholics look ridiculous. He argued that they should be free to make up their own minds about what was obscene and what was not, and even appealed to Rome's Canon Law, stating that Canon 1399, which established the categories of books which Papists were forbidden to read, appeared to suppose that ordinary Papists could decide for themselves.³⁸⁴

But what had happened? Why had this Jesuit priest written such an article? Why had he even been permitted to by his superiors? What was afoot?

What must be understood is the nature of the Jesuit Order. The Jesuits, those fanatical agents of the Papacy, have also always been the intellectual vanguard of the Papal institution. Their goals are very long-term, their methods often extremely radical and even at variance with usual or traditional Papist policy. They are also far more lenient with Roman Catholics when it comes to sinful practices. For this reason they have often been intensely hated by other Romish religious orders. But they persist in pursuing their goals in their own way, and are not afraid to stand on many toes within the Papal hierarchy. They well know that they have far more power than any other religious order. Plus they have the ear of the pope of Rome, or, if a particular pope's ear is not open to them, they have no scruples about removing him by an "accelerated demise". History is replete with examples.³⁸⁵

The truth is that "Murray's article, published 'with ecclesiastical approval,' signalled an internal shift developing within the Catholic church over the role of movies."³⁸⁶ Let the reader keep in mind what was stated in the chapter on the Jesuit use of the dramatic arts centuries ago: how they lowered the perceived moral standards of the time and

introduced elements and themes considered “borderline”, so as to keep their hold on their audiences. We wrote that it would become clear that the lessons the Jesuits learned centuries ago when producing their theatrical plays would be applied by them to the movie industry. This is precisely what was now happening. A number of intellectually “progressive” Jesuits had surveyed the Hollywood scene, and come to the conclusion that if Rome was to have any influence on the film industry in the world that was taking shape in the 1950s, an entirely different tactic would have to be pursued. The traditional methods, as epitomised by the Legion of Decency, would no longer work; that was self-evident. The world had passed the Legion by. It was a relic of an earlier time. A new world required new methods, and the Jesuits believed they had the solution. The solution was not boycotts, pickets, fulminations about mortal sin, threats against theatre owners, and so on. No; the solution was far more subtle. And the fact that Murray’s article had been published “with ecclesiastical approval” showed that the new Jesuit tactic had won the approval of the Romish hierarchy.

The Jesuits were at the forefront of this new tactic. There was Murray; there was John G. Ford, a professor of Romish theology; Harold C. Gardiner, the author of *The Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship*; and Gerald Kelly, another professor of theology. All were priests, and all were *Jesuit* priests. Another priest was Francis J. Connell. He was not a Jesuit, but he was with them in this internal shift taking place.

These men did not necessarily oppose all censorship. In all likelihood they would not have been in favour of the unrestrained violence, sex, nudity and profanity that is so common in movies today. They believed, however, that censorship at the time was too oppressive. They did not necessarily believe the Legion should be disbanded, but rather that at the very least it should undergo a major overhaul. They believed that Roman Catholics would not necessarily be morally defiled by watching films which dealt with such subjects as adultery, divorce, crime, etc. Perhaps most importantly, they believed that the old tactics employed by the Legion made the Roman Catholic “Church” look foolish and old-fashioned. In the modern world, the Jesuits believed, this was not the way to promote Romanism or to combat Protestantism. Such methods belonged to the Dark Ages. It was time to change.

The arguments were not in fact new. Back in 1946 Francis J.

Connell, one of the intellectual theologian-priests mentioned above, stated that Romanists were not strictly obligated to follow the Legion's decisions. John G. Ford, one of the Jesuits theologians mentioned above, wrote that no Romish ecclesiastical law made the Legion's classifications binding on all American Romanists. He pointed out that most Romanists – including himself – did not understand how something could be a mortal sin in one diocese but not in another. “There is no universal obligation,” he wrote, “binding Catholics in the United States under pain of sin to stay away from pictures classified as condemned by the Legion of Decency.”³⁸⁷ Then in 1957 the Jesuit Murray, assisted by the Jesuit Kelly, published his views as well.

Naturally enough, this policy change was not welcomed by the old guard, such as Spellman, Little and Quigley, who continued to support the Legion's position. Quigley, incensed at Murray's article, branded the Jesuit's view as being of the “Left”. In this he was right, for these “progressive” Jesuits were leftist in their stance. Quigley wrote frantically to Spellman, lamenting the declining influence of the Legion and the fact that large numbers of Papists no longer abode by the Legion's classifications. He pointed out that even in his own diocese, under his own nose so to speak, a Jesuit priest named Joseph M. Moffitt had, in a sermon, asserted that the Legion pledge, taken by Papists annually, was voluntary, and that it was not a sin to go and see a movie that had been condemned by the Legion.

***Baby Doll* (1956): the Roman Catholic Machine Fights Back**

In late 1956 the film *Baby Doll* was released. Described by *Time* magazine as “just possibly the dirtiest American-made motion picture that has ever been legally exhibited”,³⁸⁸ it was about the marriage of a teenaged girl to a middle-aged man. The PCA was unhappy with the script and called for changes. When Jack Vizzard saw the film he was not satisfied, but director Elia Kazan finally convinced him that nothing could be cut from the film without damaging the story, and so a seal of approval was granted.

The Legion, however, was not so accommodating, and condemned the film as “morally repellent”, “grievously offensive”, “replete with sordid details, Freudian symbolism and undertones of perversion.”³⁸⁹

Knowing how this film could weaken the Legion's influence, Little called for local Legion directors to fight the film with everything they had. Quigley and Little got Spellman, known as "America's Pope", to condemn the film from his pulpit, reading a statement that had been prepared for him by Quigley, and describing the film as revolting, immoral, corrupting, evil, and (for good measure) unpatriotic as well – being, as he put it, possibly a greater threat to America than international Communism was.³⁹⁰ On previous occasions when he had condemned films, Spellman had written a letter to be read by all priests during their Sunday masses, but this time he personally condemned it from his pulpit in St Patrick's Cathedral. This was designed to impress Roman Catholics with just how seriously he viewed the whole matter.

This strong condemnation by Spellman was a triumph for Quigley, who thereby sent a clear message to those priests who were questioning the Legion's authority that he was prepared to fight tooth and nail for the Legion to remain conservative, and take a firm stand against immoral movies.

Spellman (or rather, Quigley) was actually right in the sense that the Communists were using, and have continued to use, the movie industry to destroy the morals of the West; so that in very large measure, Hollywood is at least as great a threat as external Communist forces. This one movie, taken on its own, would not have been as serious a threat as he made out, but certainly, taken as a whole, Hollywood's baneful influence was doing incalculable damage to the people of America and indeed, of the West in general. Especially when one bears in mind that Hollywood studios were riddled with Communists or Communist sympathisers. But without in any way condoning the film's overt sexuality, labelling the film "unpatriotic" was without basis. It was a terrible movie for various reasons, but this was not one of them.

Spellman also lambasted the PCA, posing the question as to whether it had fallen into decay and collapse. It had once faithfully served Rome's interests in Hollywood, but this was no longer something that could be taken for granted. He warned Roman Catholics in New York that if they went to see *Baby Doll* it would be "under pain of sin." The Papal machine went into action. A number of bishops supported Spellman's stance. Behind the scenes, the Legion leaned on theatre

owners and distributors. One Papist theatre chain owner, Joseph P. Kennedy, whose son John would one day become the first Papist U.S. president, forbade his theatres from showing the movie. Some cities banned the movie entirely. The powerful Papist organisation, the Knights of Columbus, picketed at some venues, and the Catholic War Veterans took up the cause as well. Papist publications condemned the film in very strong terms. One British Jesuit priest named J.A.V. Burke, director of the Catholic Film Institute in Britain, lost his post as a result of Spellman's mighty influence for saying that *Baby Doll* could be viewed by adults even though it was repellant. A British cardinal removed him from his position. As Burke himself put it: "the long arm of clerical vengeance reached across the Atlantic".³⁹¹

The movie's director, Elia Kazan, fought back. "In this country, judgments on matters of thought and taste are not handed down ironclad from an unchallenged authority," he told Spellman. "People see for themselves and finally judge for themselves. This is as it should be. It's our tradition and our practice."³⁹² Kazan himself would not have dared to even say such things to a cardinal of Rome a mere two decades earlier. But he was less than truthful when he said it was American tradition and practice to see and judge for themselves, because he well knew that for decades Hollywood itself had bowed in submission to the will of the Romish hierarchy, editing its films to meet Roman Catholic requirements.

Others came out against the Legion's stance on the film as well. The leftist American Civil Liberties Union said the Legion's boycott was "contrary to the spirit of free expression in the First Amendment." A number of New York Protestant ministers spoke out against the campaign, saying it was "the efforts of a minority group to impose its wishes on the city." One wonders if they actually approved of the film. Even some Roman Catholics, who had imbibed more of the spirit of Americanism than their "Church" would have approved of, criticised the Legion's campaign. One of these was John Cogley, writing in *Commonweal*. He believed Spellman had the right to issue the warning he did, but what troubled him was what he termed the use of "naked economic pressure". This, he said, was similar to the coercive methods used by the Inquisition (which was Roman Catholic,

be it noted!), and said that the “Church” should only use moral suasion to change people’s hearts. This sounded decidedly un-Papist, and it was. What is more, he was right. Such criticism did not go unnoticed by the Legion and its supporters. Quigley wrote: “The greatest hurt we are suffering is what is written and spoken by various persons who identify themselves as Catholics.”³⁹³

The Spellman/Quigley condemnation of *Baby Doll* had the effect of making Roman Catholics want to see it even more. As Kazan said, “It took Cardinal Spellman to make it famous.”³⁹⁴ Famous, perhaps, but not quite the financial success for which he had hoped; for although it made money, this concerted Papist condemnation did cause the movie to make less money than it would otherwise have done. Kazan was forced to admit that Spellman’s “attack hurt us... I never made a profit.”³⁹⁵ And Ben Kalmenson, Warner Brothers’ executive vice-president, told Quigley after receiving a huge number of letters from people opposed to the film, “It was a terrible experience for our company, and we never want to go through it again.”³⁹⁶ Even though other factors were at play – notably the fact that the film simply was not a “great” film, even by worldly standards – these things showed that, even in 1956, Roman Catholic influence and power over which movies should or should not be seen was still considerable. And in fact eight years were to go by before any other Hollywood studio took on the Legion like that again.

***Tea and Sympathy* (1956): Popish Prelate vs. Popish Publisher**

In 1956 a film containing the themes of adultery and homosexuality was released, entitled *Tea and Sympathy*. It was based on a hit Broadway play of the same name. The PCA and the Legion fought hard to squash it, but in the end were unsuccessful. MGM studios obtained the rights to make the movie version of the play, although it decided to tone down the filmed version. The screenplay indeed contained toned-down homosexuality and a somewhat softened stance on the seduction of boys by grown women. But Geoffrey Shurlock and his assistant Jack Vizzard made it clear that a seal could not be obtained from the PCA for the film. The homosexual theme made it necessary for the PCA to automatically reject it, and the added theme of adultery between a married woman and a schoolboy made it doubly unacceptable.

MGM decided to challenge the PCA decision, calling for the MPAA board of directors to examine the script. The board told MGM and the PCA to work out a compromise, enabling the movie to be made and satisfying the PCA so that a seal could be issued. After some months of changes Shurlock felt satisfied.

It was another matter, however, with the Legion of Decency, which had no intention of approving such a film. But the days when such noises from the Legion would have made moviemakers quake in their boots were over, and MGM made the film. The female Legion reviewers from the IFCA, as well as priest Little and his new assistant, priest Paul Hayes, viewed the film. The IFCA women were not at all happy with it, not because of the homosexual theme but because of the adultery in it. Further changes were demanded by Little, but despite a number of alterations being made, the Legion was poised to condemn the film.

At a yet further screening of the film by Legion officials, Little also invited almost 40 prominent Roman Catholics, including fifteen priests, to pass judgment on *Tea and Sympathy*. Some of the priests were professors of Roman Catholic moral theology, and not all of them supported the Legion. After they had seen the film, Martin Quigley argued that it must be condemned, but not all agreed with him, including a number of the priests. In the end only four priests voted to condemn it, and eleven of them said it deserved either a “B” or an “A2” (unobjectionable for adults) rating. A Romish bishop, William A. Scully, who had been among those who reviewed the film, was the one who took the final decision: he decided that the changes that had been made, disguising the homosexuality and showing remorse for the adultery committed, meant that the film could be given a “B” rating.

The movie, when released, was a box-office hit. But Martin Quigley was a very unhappy man. Scully, the bishop, had over-ruled him. Quigley, however, was not giving up. He wanted the Legion to continue to be the conservative moral watchdog of Hollywood. He had an enemy, though, in Scully, who, along with Little, knew that Quigley was viewed in Hollywood as speaking for the Legion; in fact, he was viewed as pretty much *being* the Legion. Scully commanded Little “to break down the reputation [of Quigley] in the motion picture industry

of being ‘the Legion of Decency.’”³⁹⁷ Yes, the false “Church” of Rome is full of ambitious, jealous men, with their own power politics being played out behind the scenes as they jostle for positions and fame and respect. These are not Christian men, motivated by Christian principles!

And so, “The fight over *Tea and Sympathy* marked the beginning of a curious contest between the Catholic hierarchy and a Catholic layman over what subjects movies would be allowed to present. A significant issue in their growing disagreement over what was acceptable entertainment was which of the two men would control the Legion of Decency: the prelate [Scully] or the publisher [Quigley].”³⁹⁸

The Code Amended Further

In 1956 the MPAA committee met to consider ways to again modernise the Code. One of those on the committee was Daniel O’Shea, president of RKO studios. He was a devout Romanist, and acted as a mole for the Legion, reporting on the committee’s activities to Little and Quigley (Quigley served as a special consultant to the committee), to keep them abreast of what was being decided. He warned the Legion, for example, of Shurlock’s attempts to liberalise the Code.³⁹⁹

In December, after half a year of deliberation, the committee liberalised the Code somewhat. According to Eric Johnston, when he announced that the Code had been revised, it demonstrated that the Code was “intended to be – and has been – a flexible living document – not a dead hand laid on artistic and creative endeavor.”⁴⁰⁰ Certain words that had been deemed profane and had been forbidden were now removed from the list, and a more relaxed stance was adopted towards themes of abortion, drugs, prostitution, scenes with excessive alcohol consumption, etc. The criterion was that such themes had to be handled “in good taste.” But such things as nudity, sexual perversion, comic bedroom scenes, open-mouth kissing, and venereal disease remained off-limits. As for miscegenation, it was simply not mentioned at all in this revision.

In one area, that of “National Feelings”, the Code was made *more* restrictive than before, in that it stated no picture would be granted a seal that tended to incite bigotry or hatred among peoples of different races, religions or national origins, and that offensive words were to

be avoided.

Independent film-makers simply ignored the PCA and the Legion, and the limits were constantly tested and pushed.

***Storm Center* (1956): the Legion's Big Blunder**

Powerful it certainly was; but the Legion was struggling. It objected to the movie *Rebel Without a Cause*, with its youthful questioning of authority, and to the movie *And God Created Woman*, with its overt sexuality. But despite its protests people filled theatres to see both of them.

Then came a big blunder on the Legion's part. It opposed a movie called *Storm Center*; which contained neither sex nor violence but which was about a librarian falsely accused of being a Communist sympathiser for refusing to remove a pro-Communist book from the library. The PCA was satisfied with it, but the Legion said it was leftist propaganda and placed it in its "Separate" category because, as the Legion's assistant director, priest Paul Hayes, explained, it was a film that was morally acceptable but harmful on philosophical or dogmatic grounds, confusing liberty with unrestricted freedom. This argument was foolish, because pro-Communist books need to be read, analysed and exposed by the opponents of Communism. Communism can only be defeated if the public understands it, and knows how to answer it. And the same goes for any false ideology, and any false religion as well.

Besides, the Legion's classification system was created for the purpose of condemning immorality in films, not political propaganda. Thus whenever the Legion attempted to condemn a film for its political message, it ran into trouble.

In the movie the librarian refuses to remove a pro-Communist book from the shelves when the city council orders her to do so, because freedom of speech is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. She is accused of being a Communist, the town turns against her, and the library is burned to the ground. In the end it is clear she was not a Communist sympathiser.

Communists did in fact seek to get their propagandistic literature onto library bookshelves, for the purpose of sowing the seeds of Communism among the people. But again it must be said, in order

for such literature to be answered and exposed for the evil it is, people must be aware of what Communism is, how it works, what arguments it uses, etc. And how can this be done if it is impossible to obtain the information? The problem was that the Legion did have some grounds for concern. Julian Blaustein, the film's producer, had been investigated by the California Senate Tenney Committee for leftist connections (as the Legion discovered).⁴⁰¹ It was indeed possible that the film was an attempt, by leftists and/or Communists, to send out the message that people who wanted to censor Communist literature were fanatical narrow-minded idiots. This would be entirely in keeping with Communist tactics: a subtle, deceptive attempt, by means of a very powerful, visual medium, to indoctrinate people into Communism is certainly not the same thing as a straightforward handbook of Communist principles. The Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, well knowing the immense propagandistic power of films, made great use of them to spread their poison – a fact pointed out by Roman Catholic publications in America, which denounced *Storm Center* as the same kind of propaganda. In this, at least, they may have been right.

Little was supported in his decision to place the film in the “Separate” category by most Romanist publications. *Commonweal*, however, criticised the decision because the Legion had no mandate to condemn films for their political content. And the Legion decision was also condemned by the Motion Picture Industry Council. Also, the MPAA's Community Relations Department supported the film. It was clear that many felt the Legion had become way too arrogant. But Jack Vizzard believed that the Legion was the same – it was Hollywood which was constantly pushing the boundaries that caused the friction. In this of course he was right. Hollywood *was* constantly pushing the boundaries, trying to get away with more and more, whereas the Legion was seeking (albeit more broadly than before) to uphold Roman Catholic standards of morality and politics.

Rome's New, Liberal Approach to Movies: the 1957 OCIC Conference

The Legion continued to fight against the increasing liberalisation of the movies, but the Roman Catholic institution itself was beginning to liberalise, and the Legion was becoming an embarrassing relic of

an earlier, more authoritarian and conservative “Church” to those driving this liberalisation. As their education had improved over what their parents and grandparents had enjoyed, large numbers of Roman Catholics were questioning their “Church’s” stance on many issues, and they felt that an organisation such as the Legion of Decency was treating them like children and idiots.

The Jesuit Order, in particular, was driving the liberalisation of the Papal institution, in order to make it more relevant in a rapidly changing world. Jesuit priest, John Courtney Murray, the religion editor of *America*, was advocating the doctrine that no minority religious institution (and the Papal institution was a minority religion within the United States) could impose its own standards on those of other religious institutions in a pluralistic society. This doctrine was resisted by other priests, such as Francis Connell, dean of the School of Sacred Technology at Catholic University, who stated that as the Roman Catholic “Church” was the only true Church on earth, its sacred duty was to compel all citizens to obey its moral standards even though it was a minority religion within the U.S. He told priest Little that the apostles themselves, despite being a minority group, “had the right to tell any Ruler of the Earth... that he must abolish any type of theatrical production they deemed harmful to morality.”⁴⁰² Precisely which part of the Bible this priest pulled his doctrine out of, we are not told, and not surprisingly, for it is simply not found anywhere in the Scriptures.

More and more voices were being heard, from within the Roman Catholic community itself, against the Legion and its work. This situation was very shocking to Martin Quigley, who had worked for so many years in the Legion’s defence.

Even the Legion’s annual pledge came under fire, with priests themselves criticising it. Things were looking increasingly bleak for the Legion’s work. According to Quigley, ever-growing numbers of priests were actually telling their flocks that the pledge was optional. Roman Catholics were attending condemned films in growing numbers, and many priests were claiming it was not a sin to do so. Quigley was a deeply troubled man.

In January 1957 a Roman Catholic gathering took place at a Jesuit school in Cuba, for the purpose of studying cinema as an international

mode of communication. It was organised by the Office Catholique International du Cinéma (OCIC), which was created as far back as 1928, and delegates from 31 countries in Europe and the Americas attended. It was very interested in the subject of the classification of films.

The pope of Rome, Pius XII, sent a monsignor as his representative to the conference; and a message from Pius was read out in which he spoke of the cinema as “a privileged instrument” that could elevate men if used properly. He also wanted to see Roman Catholics appreciate films even more, via instruction from their ecclesiastical leaders.⁴⁰³ Indeed, the OCIC wanted to see Roman Catholics actually study movies in Romanist colleges, universities and seminaries; to attend good ones; etc.

One can see from this a real sign of the changed attitude of the Romish hierarchy, from the pope of Rome down, to the whole subject of movies. Men like Quigley represented the old school, but, devout Papist though he was, his “Church” was passing him by. A new approach was in the air. Indeed, Quigley was aware of it and although he had been invited to attend by the Legion’s monsignor, Thomas Little, who was there along with the Legion’s Mary Loomam, he did not do so, believing that the OCIC had been taken over by leftists who did not uphold the morals he believed in. In this suspicion he was not far off the mark: the OCIC had supported and praised movies that contained sexual themes, etc. Clearly, although it was a Roman Catholic organisation, it reflected the changed stance of many within Rome towards such subjects in films and in society in general.

What had happened?

Rome, seeing the power of the film industry worldwide, was now prepared to overlook certain moral matters in movies if by doing so a wider, greater objective could be achieved. Not being a true Christian church, Rome, seeing that the morals of the world had changed, realised that in order for it to have influence it would have to lower its own standards along with the rest of the world, turning a blind eye to such things if by so doing it could retain an influence over its multiplied millions of subjects. In this it followed the world, because, unlike the true people of God, it is a part of the world, not separate from it. It was also following Jesuitism in this matter. The true Christian Church

uses nothing but the preaching of the Gospel to win converts; the false “Church” of Rome, however, has to attract the worldly by worldly methods. Thus, while it preached morality, fidelity in marriage, the sin of abortion, etc., it felt that in matters of entertainment it would allow its people to indulge in such things, thereby keeping them happy and enabling Rome to focus on matters it considered more important to the “big picture” it always kept in view.

Instead of criticising or condemning movies that did not come up to its own official moral position, Rome’s new tactic was to rather praise the ones that did, and to be far more liberal in its outlook on the immoral ones. Quigley knew this was going to be the new approach, and he was dead set against it. So he stayed away.

In the very first session of the OCIC meeting, it became crystal-clear that a new brand of priest was loose on the world. Thomas Little gave a presentation in which he described the relationship between the PCA and the Legion of Decency, and said that this relationship meant there was a voice for morality and compensating moral values in American movies. But when he finished there was much anger among the delegates, and a Belgian Dominican priest laid into him, lashing out at his comments. Then Mary Loram, long-time chairwoman of the Motion Picture Department of the IFCA and head of the Legion’s reviewing staff, tried to defend the Legion, but did such a poor job of it that she was publicly derided by the audience. According to Jack Vizzard of the PCA, the meeting concluded that the Legion was “too legalistic and negative”. As for Little, he resigned as chairman of the sub-committee the very day after his presentation.

Considering that this conference had been held under the authority of the Roman pope himself, the public attacks on the American Legion of Decency, by Romish delegates from other Romish countries, confirmed that Rome was now advocating a more liberal approach to the movie industry. And after the conference was over, it was also clear that Rome’s new, more “broad-minded” approach was understood in American Roman Catholic circles as well. The archbishop, William A. Scully, chairman of the Episcopal Committee on Motion Pictures, although calling on Romanists to still support the Legion, nevertheless emphasised that it was not a censoring body, and praised the Cuba

conference for the suggestion that Papists should actually study films.

And meanwhile, Jesuits continued to work for a greater liberalisation of what Roman Catholics could see in the theatres. Two of the “progressive” Jesuit priests, Gerald A. Kelly and John Ford, in an article published in September 1957, said that there were no official “Church” documents stating that viewing a particular category of film was a mortal sin. Individual priests and cardinals may have said so, but there was no *official* policy. In general, the priests said, it was best to refrain from watching films rated as “B” or “C”, but there may be exceptions, and thus to claim that *all* condemned films were almost always an occasion for mortal sin was being too strict. They even criticised the bishops who had originally founded the Legion of Decency.

Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison (1957): Another Pro-Papist War Film

Even though the times were definitely changing, Hollywood still brought out war movies from time to time that exalted Roman Catholicism. In this particular film, very loosely based on a true story, a devout nun and a U.S. marine are lost on a Pacific atoll, and come to see the similarities between her love for her religion and his love for the Marine Corps. The marine assures the nun that Roman Catholics are “good marines, the best”, which makes the nun very happy; and she blesses his fight against the Japanese and assures him that God protects His soldiers.

The film’s director, John Huston, planned all along to make this film a very virtuous one, insofar as the nun’s virginity and her commitment to her religion were concerned. The marine tells her he loves her and asks her not to take her final vows, but she refuses, and he accepts this. And he never forces himself on her. The film strongly promoted Romanism, and the supposed virtue and holiness of a nun’s life.

A Farewell to Arms (1957): Another Firm Nod Towards Priestly Virtue and Courage

This film was the second screen version of a book by Ernest Hemingway. In the first, released way back in 1932, a young couple’s marriage vows are blessed by a Romish priest-chaplain, and in the film’s last scene they

go to heaven. All this, of course, was to please the PCA and the Legion of Decency, for Hemingway, a convert to Romanism himself, did not have these things in his story. In the second film version, released in 1957, yet another scene is added that Hemingway did not have: the martyrdom of a priest and a statement of the greatness of the Romish religion. When, during the war, a hospital has to be evacuated, the doctor, who has been opposed to what the priest-chaplain represents, is under orders to leave even though he (like the priest) does not want to, and now for the first time he is impressed by the priest and his religion, for the priest is staying. He says to the priest, “I am ordered by the military to leave, but you have much better orders to remain, Father. I salute your commanding officer.” The priest and his patients are shown singing the *Ave Maria* as they die in the attack on the hospital.⁴⁰⁴ It was thus yet another war film in which the Papal institution was depicted as the great moral good – even though this very Papal institution had given its immense backing to Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. Such is the power of Hollywood to distort the truth; to rewrite it, in fact.

Thus, even during the protracted and slow death-throes of the PCA and the Legion, and consequently of Romish censorship of Hollywood, there were still films exalting Romanism. And there would be for years to come.

The Papal Encyclical *Miranda Prorsus*

At this point it would be very profitable to pause and examine the papal encyclical entitled *Miranda Prorsus*, which laid out (albeit in couched language) the new approach the Vatican was now pursuing to make use of films, TV and radio for achieving its goals. It was released by the pope of Rome, Pius XII, in September 1957.

In it, Pius called the motion picture one of the “most important discoveries of our times”, which had the potential to be “a worthy instrument by which men can be guided toward salvation.” He stated that it was “essential that the minds and inclinations of the spectators be rightly trained and educated” to understand the film-makers’ art form, and called on Roman Catholics to study the cinema in Romish schools and universities.⁴⁰⁵

Pius was certainly not advocating that the Legion of Decency

be dismantled; far from it. He made it clear that the Legion should continue to classify movies according to Romish moral standards, and that Papists should not attend immoral films. But even so the encyclical was very different from the one issued back in 1936 by his predecessor, Pius XI, entitled *Vigilante Cura*, which called for immoral films to be banned.

We will examine some key paragraphs of the 1957 encyclical:

Para. 34 says: “The Catholic Church is keenly desirous that these means [cinema, sound broadcasting and TV] be converted to the spreading and advancement of everything that can be truly called good. Embracing, as she does, the whole of human society within the orbit of her divinely appointed mission, she is directly concerned with the fostering of civilisation among all peoples.”

Right here the game is given away. Rome desires to “convert” these forms of mass media to her own purposes. Furthermore, as far as she is concerned, she has a divine mission to subjugate the entire human race to the feet of the pope of Rome, who is viewed as God on earth, the King of kings, the true ruler of all mankind. As for advancing “good”, Rome means something very different by this word, as she does by others, as expressed in the following paragraph from the encyclical:

Para. 35: “This, then, must be the principal aim of the cinema, sound broadcasting and television: to serve the cause of truth and virtue...”

“Good”, “truth” and “virtue”: wonderful sounding words, but what does Rome mean by them? One would be very mistaken if one assumes she means what the true Christian means by them! The question must be asked: *whose* “truth” (for example) must be served? The truth of Christ in His holy Word, the Bible? Certainly not, for Rome has never embraced Christ’s truth nor upheld it. She means her *own* version of “truth”, “virtue”, and “good”.

Para. 51: “These new arts which directly affect the eye and ear may give rise to innumerable benefits or innumerable evils and dangers, according to the use which man makes of them. Realising this, the Church has a duty in this regard which she is at pains to perform. Her task is... concerned... with religion and with the direction and control of morals. To facilitate the proper performance of this task, our predecessor of undying memory, Pius XI, declared and proclaimed

that ‘it will be necessary that in each country the Bishops set up a permanent national reviewing office in order to be able to promote good motion pictures, classifying the others, and bring this judgment to the knowledge of priests and faithful.’ He added, too, that it was essential that all Catholic initiative relating to the cinema be directed towards an honourable end. In several countries the Bishops, bearing these directives in mind, have set up offices of this kind...”

Note the words: “control of morals”. Rome desires to control the morals of the whole world, for in her judgment the entire world must be Romanist. Working always towards this end, she knows the immense value of the mass media to enable her to achieve this aim. Roman Catholics are duty-bound to obey their pope in all matters of (Papist) faith and morals; and he directs every sphere of life for them, from birth to the grave. “Catholic freedom is restricted solely to the choice of methods to be used for implementing Catholic social policies and directives. In principle it is identical to Communist freedom. Significantly, both systems have the same aim and both use the same methods”.⁴⁰⁶ Indeed so: both employ such methods as opposition to freedom of thought, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech.

Para. 52: “We desire that the offices referred to be set up without delay in every country where they do not already exist. They are to be entrusted to men who are experienced in these arts, under the guidance of a priest especially chosen by the Bishops.... At the same time we urge that the faithful, and particularly those who are militant in the cause of Catholic Action, be suitably instructed, so that they may appreciate the need for giving to these offices their willing, united and effective support.”

The pope of Rome’s explicit mention of Catholic Action in this paragraph must not go unnoticed.

Let us next consider para. 76 of this encyclical:

“To Catholic film directors and producers we issue a paternal injunction not to allow films to be made which are at variance with the faith and Christian [i.e. Roman Catholic] moral standards. Should this happen – which God forbid – then it is for the Bishops to rebuke them and, if necessary, to impose upon them appropriate sanctions.”

We have already seen how in the United States, the Legion of

Decency exercised precisely the kind of power desired by the Roman pope in this paragraph, for decades. The era following the encyclical's release in 1957 was marked by a number of high-profile, pro-Papist films emanating from Hollywood. This continued till almost the end of the 1960s. Unfortunately for Rome, however, this encyclical came a little too late to have the great effect the Papal hierarchy hoped it would. Certainly it did have a huge effect, but not to the extent it was hoped. And the reason for this, as we have seen and shall yet see, is that the western world, and American Roman Catholicism with it, had changed in those post-war years, rising up against authority and the beliefs and morals of earlier generations, and there was a swing away from authoritarianism, even by young Roman Catholics. For now, let us continue examining this document, for it clearly sets out the papal *agenda*, even if, when it came to Hollywood, it only had a brief period of real application in the years that followed, as the "Golden Age" came to an end.

Para. 96 reads: "Meanwhile we are constrained, Venerable Brethren, to exhort you paternally to make every effort proportionate to the needs and resources of your respective dioceses to increase and render more effective the number of programmes which deal with Catholic interests."

And how to achieve this aim? Obviously by increasing the number of Roman Catholics working in the media, who would then control the flow of information, the type of entertainment seen, etc., etc.

Para.97: "Clearly of great assistance here would be the establishing of training centres and courses of study in those countries where Catholics employ the latest radio equipment and have the added advantage that their day to day experience gives them."

Was this instruction carried out? If the facts from Australia are anything to go by, it most certainly was: there the Roman Catholic institution owned 50% of the largest programming organisation outside of the United States, and through it Rome had an interest in a radio announcers' school, concert promotions, and the programming of other stations.⁴⁰⁷

Television, in particular, which was still fairly new when this encyclical was issued, was of particular importance to the Papacy for spreading its propaganda. In para. 113 the encyclical says:

“We paternally exhort those Catholics who are well qualified by their learning, sound doctrine, and knowledge of these arts, and in particular clerics and members of religious orders and congregations, to turn their attention to this new form of art [TV]. Let them work side by side in support of this cause, so that all the benefits which the past and true progress have contributed to the mind’s development may redound in full measure to the advantage of television.”

How successful was Rome at this? The evidence speaks for itself, as TV programmes were very pro-Papist and pushed the Papist agenda.

Of course, when Pius stated that movies were a noble art which could, potentially, be of benefit to mankind, the growing numbers of American Roman Catholic liberals heard his statement as giving permission now for movies to depict “adult” themes.⁴⁰⁸ These young Papists were not as intensely loyal to the traditional, ultra-conservative Roman “Church” of their parents: unlike earlier generations of American Papists, many of them were now attending universities, where they were coming under all kinds of influences, via literature, art, etc. This has always been Rome’s dilemma in the United States: how to maintain absolute control over its subjects in a country where freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and freedom of access to all kinds of information constantly worked against its purposes. Rome and the USA have always been at odds, for this and many other reasons. The Vatican views the United States as a great prize to be won; but it has never quite been able to use the methods it has employed with such effect in other, less “open” countries. Ironically, the very movie industry which it had used to such great effect in America for decades, was now potentially on the threshold of being one of its greatest threats.

The Legion Outsmarted by the Jesuits; Quigley Cast Aside

Martin Quigley was by now a deeply troubled man. His conservative position on immoral movies had been greatly undermined, even attacked, by the Cuba conference, and by the stance taken on movies by a number of leading liberal Jesuit intellectuals, notably John Courtney Murray, Harold C. Gardiner, John C. Ford, and Gerald Kelly. These men stated that Legion classifications were no more than guidelines for Roman Catholic adults. The Jesuits were very

much behind Rome's new, liberal approach to the movie industry, and Quigley knew it, writing at a later date: "This Jesuit clique, which has dominated the conduct of the Legion office since 1957, is opposed to the condemnation of any motion picture – or any artifact by a Catholic agency – in this 'pluralistic society.'"⁴⁰⁹ He also knew that his own previously unassailable position of influence within the Legion was now far from secure. Something had to be done. Quigley felt the best thing to do was to bring a young Jesuit whom he could control into the organisation. He thought this would silence the Jesuit criticism. But he was very wrong. He plainly had no real understanding of Jesuit techniques or intrigue, nor of Jesuit power and loyalty.

The Jesuit priest he chose was Patrick J. Sullivan. He replaced priest Paul Hayes as assistant to priest Little in September 1957. But Sullivan was a Jesuit first and foremost, and would not bow and scrape to Quigley. In fact, he agreed with fellow-Jesuit John Courtney Murray's belief that Rome could not impose its views on non-Papists. At least, this was what the Jesuits were saying; but they *always* act to advance Romanism, even when *appearing* to be more accommodating. Still, to begin with Quigley thought Sullivan was a good appointment. Sullivan told him that he wanted to "sell" the Legion to his brother-Jesuits.

But Sullivan wanted changes at the Legion. And when *Miranda Prorsus* was released a week after Sullivan came to work at the Legion, the priest saw it as the support he needed to make changes. He was in all likelihood behind the bishops' new statement on censorship, which declared that "good taste will inevitably narrow the field of what is morally objectionable" in movies.

In November 1957, the Episcopal Committee on Motion Pictures held a meeting to discuss the classification system and the encyclical *Miranda Prorsus*. It decided to make changes to the Legion's classifications, and these changes were drafted by Sullivan: the "A2" category would classify films that were acceptable for both adults and adolescents; a new "A3" category was "morally acceptable for adults", and the Legion could now recommend films it believed were particularly good. The "B" category was for those films which could be morally dangerous for viewers, and the "C" category was for entirely bad and harmful films.

So, for the very first time, Roman Catholics would now actually be encouraged to attend films recommended by the Legion, and adults and adolescents were now permitted far more freedom to choose what they wished to see. The Legion stated that the new “A2” category might now include films that were previously rated “B”; it said that adolescents should not be “excessively protected”; and local priests were told to educate Roman Catholic youth so that they could watch more “mature” films. There was no doubt about it: the liberalisation of Rome’s attitude to Hollywood was now well under way. In this way, as it has ever done, Rome hoped to hold onto its youth.

Another change that was implemented was to greatly weaken the women reviewers of the IFCA, who had been the Legion reviewing staff from as far back as the mid-1930s. These Roman Catholic women were generally more conservative and the new liberalisation required that their influence be diluted: the Legion appointed a board of consultors, consisting of priests and “laymen”, who became very influential.⁴¹⁰

Quigley was furious at these changes, and realised he had miscalculated in appointing Sullivan, who had “succeeded in imposing a new and different approach to... the Legion’s function”, as he wrote to the archbishop, William A. Scully. He warned Scully that the changes that had been implemented by Sullivan could greatly undermine the influence of the Legion. He also said that Hollywood studios were rejoicing over the changes. In this he was correct. Sullivan, however, was simply carrying out his orders as a Jesuit when he drafted the new classification system, and Scully, as chairman of the ECMP, had approved them all. The American bishops also endorsed them, and had in fact expressed their appreciation of the work of Jesuits Ford and Kelly for contributing towards “a better understanding” of the Legion’s work; i.e. a more liberal approach.⁴¹¹

Martin Quigley, faithful Papist that he was, was now on the other end of the spectrum from the bishops of Rome with regards to the film industry. No longer was the Legion of Decency’s policy dictated by him. Time had passed him by, his own “Church” had passed him by, and he was cast aside.

Open Season on the Code

One Hollywood mogul after another was now openly defying the Code, so that *Variety* magazine conceded in 1957, “It’s open season on Hollywood’s Production Code and the set of morality standards appears the target of brickbats from various directions. There have been pro and con about its functions in the past, of course, but rarely has there been such a concentration of expressions of concern about its values.”⁴¹² With Breen gone and the Code’s administrators lacking his iron will and style, film-makers increasingly just thumbed their noses at the Code – and got away with it. This included the Roman Catholic, Alfred Hitchcock, who deliberately included endings to his movies, *To Catch a Thief* (1956) and *North by Northwest* (1959), which left no doubt in the audiences’ minds of what was happening sexually between their lead characters.

***Ben-Hur* (1959): the “Religious Epic” Where Religion is Neutered**

As was the usual case when Hollywood tackled supposedly “Christian” themes, doctrine was tossed aside and the focus was on more worldly themes, the making of “a good story” rather than any real interest in anything higher. This was the case with William Wyler’s 1959 epic, *Ben-Hur*. The author of the book on which the film was “based”, General Lew Wallace, wrote in a manner so “Romish” that the book was endorsed by Rome and blessed by the pope, Leo XIII.⁴¹³ But the film was a different kettle of fish: there was no way it was going to “preach” Romanism. The hero, played by Charlton Heston, does not even make an avowal of “the faith” in the film; there is no implied conversion of the hero to “Christianity”. It was a film that pushed no one religious view, and was so ambiguous about such matters that it appealed to people of many religious persuasions, including Roman Catholics, Protestants and Jews. Essentially it was an ecumenical film, but even more than that, it was *so* ambiguous that it could be called an inter-religious film, at least insofar as it would not offend members of any religion.

And this is precisely why it is so naive and foolish for professing Christians to assume that such films as *Ben-Hur* are not only good and inoffensive, but even moral and useful! Rather a film that is an honest rendition of a book, even if it then promotes the same false religion that

the book does, than a film which is so inoffensive that it is attractive to all (even naive Evangelicals). At least the makers of the former are honest and up-front about its motives, and true Christians will not be taken in by it. The latter type of film, however, is dangerous precisely because it appears so harmless and attractive. The book, *Ben-Hur*, has a definite religious message, and it is not one which is acceptable to true Christians; the film has no such message, but how many are induced to go and read the book after watching it, and thus are led from one error into the next?

Furthermore, in films like this one Hollywood actually created gods of its own. “The startling thing about the 1959 *Ben-Hur*, Donald Spoto correctly intuitively in his provocative overview of *Camerado: Hollywood and the American Man* was the transcendental power of the new superstar. As Ben-Hur, Charlton Heston need not cling to Christianity; the miracles of Hollywood technology have elevated his imposing figure ‘to the ranks of a religious savior.’ Spoto perceptively isolates a cosmic shift. In this 1959 *Ben-Hur*, Heston need not go to Christ because Heston himself has become Hollywood’s new Messiah, a savior created by the twentieth century’s marvelous dream machine. Charlton Heston has been transfigured, in Spoto’s words, into ‘our *deus ex machina*, all made up and smiling, come to save us with outstretched arm and dazzling, but somewhat spiritless, glance.’”⁴¹⁴

Christians have therefore a double motive for avoiding such Hollywood epics.

***Suddenly Last Summer* (1959): Papist Praise for a Horror Story**

In 1959 *Suddenly Last Summer* appeared, a horror story with themes of homosexuality and cannibalism, produced by Sam Spiegel. The PCA told him sexual perversion was still not permitted in films, but he countered that if the PCA withheld a seal, he would appeal to the MPAA board of directors. The PCA accordingly withheld the seal, and Spiegel accordingly appealed. “If there ever had been a picture that seemed ripe for condemnation, this was it.”⁴¹⁵ And yet, incredibly, the MPAA granted a certificate! Naturally enough, the Legion’s Thomas Little protested to the MPAA, but the Legion’s new board of consultants was far from being as strict as the old IFCA had been. Although some condemned it, there was no consensus among the consultants. A priest on the board said

Suddenly Last Summer was the finest American film he had ever seen, that no adult would be harmed by watching it, and recommended an “A3” rating. Another priest said it was “powerful” and “excellent”, and yet another described it as “magnificent entertainment”, “thoughtful... adult entertainment.” Another consultor told Little it would be “a mistake to condemn a film of this stature.” It was positively reviewed in the influential Romish publication, *Our Sunday Visitor*: Other Romish publications gave it positive reviews as well.

Finally, the Legion gave the film a Separate Classification, stating it was “judged to be moral in its theme and treatment” but as the subject matter involved sexual perversion it was intended only for “a serious and mature audience.”²⁴¹⁶

Incredibly, while so many *Roman Catholic* reviewers were praising it, *secular* ones often condemned it and even heavily criticised the Legion for giving it the classification it did! One Hollywood gossip columnist even said of the Legion: “it doesn’t seem to be functioning any more.”²⁴¹⁷ How things had changed when a film that included sodomy and cannibalism was now being hailed by the Roman Catholic organisation that would once have condemned such filth outright. “The Legion classification and the supporting reception of the film in the Catholic press shocked many Catholics and industry insiders alike, who did not yet fully appreciate the internal changes that were taking hold of Legion operations and the Catholic attitude toward the movies.”²⁴¹⁸

It was all too much for Martin Quigley. He protested directly to Spellman, who then arranged for a meeting between Quigley and Scully, mediated by James McNulty, bishop of the archdiocese of Paterson, New Jersey. They met in July 1959, and Quigley spoke of the Jesuit conspiracy to control the Legion. In this, of course, he was absolutely right. Nevertheless, he had made the tactical error of appointing a Jesuit, Sullivan, so that when he protested that Sullivan was under the influence of Jesuit intellectuals Murray, Gardiner and Ford, this claim sounded hollow. McNulty’s report not only stated that Quigley’s charges were groundless, but it also sought to damage Quigley’s reputation by accusing him of trying to indoctrinate Sullivan, of threatening Sullivan with removal if he did not toe Quigley’s line, and of being a thorn in the side of the Legion.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE 1960s: THE BEST OF TIMES, THE WORST OF TIMES FOR ROME

The Legion of Decency Largely Irrelevant

The 1960s were years of radicalism and liberalisation in all spheres of society. This was the era of “free love”, drugs, the hippies, pop/rock music, anti-authoritarianism, the “civil rights” movement, race riots, “gay liberation”, draft-dodging campus students and campus riots, the younger generation at war with the older one. And in the light of the papal encyclical *Miranda Prorsus*, Rome had adopted a far more liberal approach to Hollywood, and the Legion of Decency began to reflect this change.

Of course, the Legion’s changed stance was only more liberal in the light of its previous Papist ultra-conservatism. Conservative Romanists viewed it as liberal now, but it was hardly so to the extent that society itself had become liberalised. In fact, the Legion was forced to admit that even most Roman Catholics did not pay any attention to it. In its 1960 annual report it stated that there was “widespread apathy and indifference” among Roman Catholics towards Legion movie classifications. Certainly Americans in general mostly just ignored it as a leftover of a bygone era, even though that era had only just ended. The same was true of the Production Code Administration: Jesuit priest Daniel Lord’s 1930 Code was now viewed by most American moviegoers as an absurdity. They did not want anyone censoring what they could see.

The Legion, however, despite its now more liberal stance, still tried to some extent to stem the rising tide of films with overt sexual and violent content.⁴¹⁹ But its days were numbered.

***Psycho* (1960): Gory Realism from a Romish Film-Maker**

Roman Catholic film-maker, Alfred Hitchcock, again pushed the boundaries with his movie, *Psycho*, in 1960. It had fornication,

voyeurism, and a graphic, brutal bathroom knife murder, described as “a murderous frenzy without precedent in Hollywood cinema.”⁴²⁰ Never had such gory realism been depicted on celluloid before. There was no turning back. Hollywood had moved into new territory.

***Spartacus* (1960): Communist Propaganda**

When the movie *Spartacus* was made, the Legion strongly objected to all the blood and gore in it, as well as the sexuality, nudity, and hints of bisexuality. Cuts were ordered, and when they were made the Legion gave the film an “A3” rating, meaning it was limited to adults. The Legion was also disturbed by the fact that the author of the novel on which the film was based, Howard Fast, had been a member of the Communist Party, and by the fact that scriptwriter Dalton Trumbo was an active member of the Communist Party. Certainly the very message of *Spartacus* – slaves rising in revolt against their masters – was dear to the hearts of Communists. And certainly the slaves were depicted as great people, whereas the masters were depicted in the opposite light. There can be little doubt that there was a not-too-subtle attempt to push Communist propaganda via this “historical” movie. In this the Legion was correct. However, it was restricted to dealing with the moral content of films rather than their possible propaganda messages.⁴²¹

***La Dolce Vita* (1960): Morally Acceptable to Roman Catholics**

In 1960 the Italian film, *La Dolce Vita*, was released, dealing with promiscuity, prostitution, suicide, and homosexuality, among other things. Although director Federico Fellini claimed the film was actually against this kind of hedonistic lifestyle, the fact is that it portrayed these things graphically. The Roman Catholic institution in Italy condemned the film, as did the Italian government itself.

But when the film was submitted to the PCA in 1961, it hardly caused a ripple! Calling it “important, though controversial”, the PCA gave its seal of approval with no cuts having been made. But the Legion took a different view. After all, the Vatican had strongly condemned the movie – which meant it would be extremely difficult for the Legion to then pass it – and also, conservative U.S. Papists were becoming increasingly disturbed by the Legion’s more liberal stance in recent times. Thomas Little knew he had to tread carefully. He wrote

to his superiors saying that since the recent court rulings on the issue of movie censorship, the Legion no longer had the power to prevent the film from being shown. Not only that, he said, but any condemnation of the film would not be supported by the public.

The Roman Catholic consultants who evaluated the movie for Little were not in agreement. Some wanted an “A3” rating, including some priests, with some even calling it a “moral” film that would not harm adults. Others, however, condemned it, wanting a “C” rating, with one saying it was Communist propaganda and certainly not decent entertainment. Still others wanted a “B”, or a Special Classification rating. However, as Little wrote to the bishop, James McNulty, “the majority [76.8 percent] of our reviewers and consultants judged *La Dolce Vita* to be moral in theme and decent in treatment at least for mature audiences.”⁴²²

Little, knowing he could not stop the film being shown, knowing that many Papists would go and see it anyway, and knowing that the majority of the Papist reviewers found it “moral”, tried to exercise damage control. He negotiated with the film’s distributor, Astor Pictures, not to dub the film into English, to put an 18 age restriction on it, and to be careful with the advertising. In return Little agreed to give the film a Separate Classification.

When it was released, the Legion wrote that it was “a bitter attack upon the debauchery and degradation of a hedonistic society of leisure and abundance”, and that it was “animated throughout by a moral spirit.” This was not true. Even if Fellini’s aim was to attack the hedonism of modern society, he did not have to graphically depict sexual scenes in order to do so! Books condemn hedonism without titillating the readers while doing so, and films could do the same. It was thus not animated by a moral spirit at all, and a furious Martin Quigley knew it. He fired off a letter to McNulty, copied to cardinals Spellman and McIntyre, to close associates in the Vatican itself, and to conservative Roman Catholic pressmen. In it, he said *La Dolce Vita* was the most immoral and sacrilegious film he had ever seen. He correctly pointed out that the typical moviegoer would see “no sardonic commentary” on modern society; all he would see would be “vivid images of... adultery, fornication, prostitution”, etc. He also strongly condemned the Jesuits

for being behind the approval of *La Dolce Vita*, referring (as mentioned earlier) to a “Jesuit clique” who were “opposed to any condemnation of any motion picture... in this ‘pluralistic society.’”⁴²³ He said this Jesuit clique was cosyng up to the liberal American Civil Liberties Union rather than protecting people from such filth. And he warned that unless action was taken to reverse the path the Legion was now following, the Code and morality in films would soon be a thing of the past. In all of these accusations he was correct. He branded the Legion a “jungle of amateurism” which displayed “phony sophistication and shocking lack of common sense.”⁴²⁴

McNulty fired back a response: “Mr Quigley, this is unadulterated nonsense.” He said the notion of a Jesuit conspiracy in the Legion was “without foundation.” He was of course utterly incorrect, knowingly or not.

The problem was, however, that Martin Quigley’s strong criticisms sounded more than a little hollow to those who knew that, even if he really did dislike the movie, he had other reasons for speaking out the way he did; financial reasons. For some years prior to this, Quigley Publications began to experience declining revenues, and Quigley began to earn an additional income by working as a consultant to the film-makers who were experiencing difficulties with either the PCA or the Legion. He therefore now had a financial interest in the way the Legion operated. Priest Sullivan was a thorn in Quigley’s side, with the potential to reduce the need for film producers to approach Quigley to help them resolve problems with the Legion.

Indeed, this again merely highlighted the hypocrisy of Quigley. For years he had been accused of double standards, because on the one hand this devout Roman Catholic condemned immoral movies, and yet on the other hand he advertised the movies in his magazines! Back in 1954, for example, the *Catholic Times* had stated that the film advertisements in Quigley’s publication, the *Motion Picture Herald*, violated decency, and accused Quigley of being essentially the same as a pimp. *New World* then said of Quigley that “the champion of decency offends against decency” with his advertising of motion pictures. And the *Catholic Transcript* ran the headline: “Martin Quigley is Rapped for Running Lurid Movie Ads.”⁴²⁵

Sadly, this is precisely the kind of hypocritical moral stance which

Roman Catholicism engenders in its subjects. Touting itself as the champion of morality, Rome has always had double standards, and been perfectly willing to turn a blind eye when necessary to any violations of its moral code if it will further its own aims. So it was not surprising that Martin Quigley's own sense of morality was able to justify (at least to himself) that he was doing nothing two-faced. Roman Catholic "morality" has never been biblical morality. And in actual fact, this Roman Catholic notion of "morality" was shown by those ecclesiastics who came to Quigley's defence and help. One was priest Francis Connell at Catholic University, who agreed with Quigley when the latter defended the advertisements in his publications by saying that his business would go under if he did not accept ads for "B"- and "C"-rated movies, and that if he could not continue his business he would also then be unable to do the good that he had always done within the film industry (a truly Roman Catholic justification if ever there was one!). Another was the cardinal, Spellman, who got priest John T. McClafferty to defend Quigley in letters written to the editors of *Catholic Times* and *New World*.

Priest John Devlin, who viewed *La Dolce Vita* on the orders of McIntyre, the cardinal, agreed with Quigley and told McIntyre that he did not know what standards the Legion was using anymore. He said only the Communists would benefit from the film, and that priests appeared helpless in it. Others went further still, with one magazine stating that the Legion's response to this film showed clearly that Communists had infiltrated the "Church" of Rome.⁴²⁶

There were certainly influential Roman Catholic leaders who supported Quigley and condemned the film, but the Roman Catholic press generally favoured the Legion's position. And despite the lack of English subtitles the film did very well, being seen by far more than the "mature adults" the Legion said would be the only ones it would appeal to. Nor was the age restriction always firmly enforced.

***Splendor in the Grass* (1961): the Legion Not Dead Yet**

The Legion also objected strongly to the movie *Splendor in the Grass*, the message of which was that if young people cannot have premarital sex, this may lead to a mental breakdown! The Legion still had enough

clout to force Warner Brothers to cut a number of scenes and place an age restriction of 16 on it, and then it gave the film a “B” rating, which angered director Elia Kazan.⁴²⁷

The Code Amended Again

In October 1961 the MPAA altered the Production Code’s stance on sodomy, stating that “[i]n keeping with the culture, the mores and the values of our time, homosexuality and other sexual aberrations may now be treated [in movies] with care, discretion and restraint.”⁴²⁸ This was an admission that films were going to be increasingly allowed to mirror society. But in truth they would go further: they would actually go *beyond* even what society found acceptable, pushing the boundaries and thereby lowering the morals of society till they grovelled in the gutter.

***Lolita* (1962): Quigley Approves, the Legion Condemns**

As we have seen, Quigley, the conservative Roman Catholic, was quite the hypocrite. He had begun to act as a paid consultant, charging a large fee (\$25 000) to read scripts so as to assist movie producers to obtain a seal and to get a favourable rating from the Legion. At about this time the film *Lolita* was made, about a twelve-year-old nymphomaniac and a middle-aged man. Director Stanley Kubrick *hired Quigley* to guide him “through the labyrinth of codes and Catholics”⁴²⁹ so as to get approval for the film! “Thus Quigley, during the same period when he was attacking the Legion over the classification of *La Dolce Vita*, was toiling as a paid consultant to secure approval for a film about a pedophile who drugs a 12-year-old child in order to have sex with her and then kidnaps her so he can continue to savour her sexual favours! Quigley’s view of what was acceptable moral entertainment for the masses had undergone a radical – and remunerative – transformation.”⁴³⁰ And his own justification for taking on this job was straight out of the warped Roman Catholic sense of morality: if he did not accept the job, the film would still be made, but without his input to “take this notorious story out of the gutter.”⁴³¹

The PCA’s Shurlock and Vizzard were stunned at Quigley’s double standard, this man who had for so long accused *them* of being too lenient in enforcing the Code. The Code had been Quigley’s baby to such an

extent, and here he was, helping film producers get their film around it! When Shurlock asked Quigley about this, Quigley replied: “Would you just want to turn the producers loose, to make it their way [since, as he pointed out, the film would be made anyway]? Or would you rather settle for a silk purse from a sow’s ear?” To which the stunned Shurlock replied, “[N]ow you’re talking just like us. This’s what we’ve been saying over the years, and you’ve sneered at us for it.... Now that you’re suddenly on the other side of the fence, it’s all right.” Incensed, Shurlock, in conversation with Vizzard immediately afterwards, referred to Quigley as a “pious [obscenity deleted],” and added: “Well, when he comes to us with that picture, it had better be clean or I’m going to rub his nose in it.”⁴³² Shurlock was right about Quigley having a mask of piety, a hypocrite chasing after the money. And it was as transparently obvious as could be to many people.

So now the movie industry was treated to an astounding situation: Martin Quigley at odds with Geoffrey Shurlock – with the non-Papist Shurlock being more conservative over *Lolita* than the Papist Quigley! Shurlock found certain aspects of the film far too explicit, whereas, astoundingly, Quigley did not. He made several suggestions for cuts and changes, some of which the producers paid attention to and some of which they did not. They were reasonably confident, in the light of the recent liberalisation of the Legion, that they would get their film passed. And privately, Shurlock had to reluctantly agree that Quigley had done quite a job (by PCA standards, which were not of course biblical ones!) of cleaning up the film. After some further cuts and alterations to Shurlock’s satisfaction, he issued the seal of approval.

Next, the Legion reviewers viewed the film in order to issue a classification. Once again priests and “laymen” were divided. Some saw it as needing an “A3” rating as it would not harm adults, others believed it should have a “B” rating, but a larger number said it should be condemned. At a subsequent showing, this time to Legion staff, those who saw it were divided again. McNulty, the Romish bishop, cast the determining vote, saying *Lolita* was immoral and ordering Little to condemn it in strong terms. This he did. Quigley, for his part, pointed out that although the film was far from perfect it should not have been condemned, considering the fact that the Legion had not condemned other very objectionable films in recent times.

So here was the situation: a film about paedophilia being approved by devout Papist Quigley, yet condemned by the Papist Legion of Decency! And yet both Quigley and the Legion were utterly hypocritical!

Finally in April 1962, after further relatively minor alterations to the film, the Legion placed it in the Separate Classification, believing it had been modified sufficiently. But it told Romanists that watching it required “caution” and that it was “restricted to a mature audience.” What utter nonsense. It was pornography, plain and simple. But this was becoming a favourite term for permitting pornography: “mature audiences”. Certainly it shows that the morals of the Roman Catholic institution were as low as anyone else’s. Sullivan admitted, in an interview, that a film like *Lolita* would have been condemned ten years previously, but that in 1962 audiences were more “mature” and selective, exercising “more judgment”. Besides, he said, adults did not want censorship of the movies. He said that the Romish institution wanted “some type of voluntary classification by the industry and exhibitors”. The industry itself should rate its own movies.⁴³³

This Jesuit priest had done much to get the Roman Catholic institution in the United States to adopt a more liberal approach to movies with questionable content. He would later, in the mid-1960s, write a new Legion pledge to replace the old one, which had branded movies as “a grave menace to youth, to home life, to country and religion” and called on Papists not to watch movies deemed to be “vile and unwholesome.” Sullivan’s new pledge would urge Papists to promote good movies and work against bad ones “in a responsible and civic-minded manner.” The bishops would vote to adopt the new pledge, a Jesuit creation from start to finish, with Jesuit John Courtney Murray the guiding hand on Jesuit Sullivan’s shoulder.⁴³⁴

Lolita was certainly not acceptable to many Roman Catholic reviewers, but in general it did well at the box office, reflecting how the morals of American society had sunk.

***Boccaccio 70* (1962): “a Legion Rating Means Nothing”**

Although studios, independent producers, and foreign moviemakers continued to submit their films to the Legion for review, it hardly seemed necessary anymore: whether or not the Legion gave its stamp

of approval to a film made little difference to its success or failure with moviegoers. Why, then, did moviemakers continue to submit their movies to it? Only two reasons, really: they believed a Legion approval would cause more people to see the film, and major theatre circuits still did not like to show movies condemned by the Legion. But in 1962 all this changed radically.

In February of that year producer Carlo Ponti brought out *Boccaccio 70*, and this Italian production was imported into the USA by distributor Joseph E. Levine of Embassy Pictures. He submitted it to the Legion for approval. The three separate short films that made up the film, *Boccaccio 70*, contained strongly sexual themes and some nudity. Worse yet, they were directed by Italian Roman Catholics and one of them was an attack on censorship itself. It was all too much for the Legion. The film was shown at art-house theatres in various U.S. cities without having any PCA seal or Legion classification, but Levine wanted it shown by the major movie chains, and felt he needed both PCA and Legion approval for that. The plan was for the Legion to review it, recommend cuts, and then it would go to the PCA for a seal.

Little was not in New York at the time, and Sullivan, after reviewing the film, called for various cuts, insisted that it not be dubbed into English, and demanded an over-18 age restriction. But when Little returned and reviewed the film, he wanted it condemned outright. Levine, however, instead of complying and based on the fact that the film was doing very well in the art-house theatres, signed distribution contracts with major circuits after persuading them that they did not need Legion or PCA approval. This was astounding enough, but for the censors, worse was to come: Little and Sullivan were invited to a dinner conference hosted by the major distribution companies, but instead of the priests winning in the end, this time around Loew's Theaters informed them that it was "no longer interested in Code seals for films which it books", and also that "a Legion Condemned rating or no rating at all from the Legion means nothing."⁴³⁵ It was a huge blow to the Legion. "*Boccaccio 70* was not a smash hit by Hollywood standards, but it did enough business to indicate clearly that most moviegoers by 1962-3 did not much care what the Legion or the PCA thought about a film. This had long been true, but finally it was clear even to those people who ran the movie business. For all intents and

purposes the Legion was finished.”⁴³⁶

Still, the Legion’s priests and bishops found this a very bitter pill to swallow. Once they had been all-powerful in Hollywood; but no longer. They did not go down without a fight. They did their best to get the film industry itself to adopt an age-based classification system; but this was fiercely resisted by Hollywood bosses.

The Code by 1963: “No More Taboos”

Films just continued to batter down the walls of the once-impregnable Code, so much so that by 1963 Shurlock was forced to admit: “There are now no taboos on subject matter. Movies have changed with the changes of civilization.”⁴³⁷ In truth western civilisation was in moral freefall, and the movies had played an immense part in bringing this about.

***The Cardinal* (1963): Rome Depicted as the World’s Salvation from Communism**

Yet even though this was the era of waning support for the Code and the Legion of Decency, it was, paradoxically, an era of some very *pro*-Roman Catholic movies as well.

In many movies during this era, and following the release of the papal encyclical examined earlier, Romanism was now portrayed as a powerful force for good in the world, rather than merely as the religion of underdog immigrants as it had been in the past. In particular, in that Cold War era American Romanism was portrayed as being strongly anti-Communist, in such films as *The Fugitive* (1947), *Satan Never Sleeps* (1962), and *The Cardinal* (1963). Almost always, in fact, when religion fought against Communism in the movies, it was the *Roman Catholic* religion that did so.⁴³⁸ Not surprisingly, considering Papist/Jesuit influence in Hollywood.

The Cardinal showed the rise of a priest to the position of cardinal, as the result of a life of devotion. When John F. Kennedy became the United States’ first Papist president in 1960, this kind of Roman Catholic self-assertiveness and international power was reflected in movies made at the time as well. In *The Cardinal*, the lead character, upon becoming cardinal, says “all men alike are the children of God,

endowed by their Creator with the unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That is America's creed; that is the gospel of the Church."⁴³⁹ Thus the film mirrored what was happening in the world at that time: "an international Catholicism that more closely paralleled the growing American global empire"⁴⁴⁰ of the Kennedy and post-Kennedy era. As author McDannel states in *Catholics in the Movies*, writing of movie fascination with Rome and the Vatican during the Kennedy era: "Catholics had what Protestants lacked (but desired): a centralized and disciplined authority structure that demanded and provided obedience, a sexuality that could be controlled such that it produced both celibate workers and fertile congregants, a powerful history that reached back two thousand years [or so they incorrectly believed, at any rate] and across continents, and a set of rituals that vigorously engaged all of the senses in order to generate spiritual ecstasy and communal solidarity. Moviemakers fully exploited the profoundly sensual, visual, and aural character of the Catholic story. With dramatic flare they presented cardinals and popes in robes and lace who never sacrificed their masculine power for their sartorial splendor. Clergy had intense friendships with other men, but their relationships never sullied their heterosexual orientation. Indeed, in this imaginary world women were inconsequential. Catholic leaders expressed their influence within the male world of politics."⁴⁴¹

It was, therefore, in many ways a good time for Roman Catholicism in the movies, even though the Legion of Decency was on its last legs and films were increasingly immoral. But as McDannel points out, it was most definitely an imaginary world that was being depicted. It was the kind of world Rome desired, the kind that it was as pleased as punch to see presented to both Papist and non-Papist movie audiences for it knew the indoctrinating power of the movies; but it was imaginary. Rome in the 1960s, no less than in any other era, was a cesspool of iniquity. Priests given to fornication and to sodomy were present then as now, Rome's hand in politics was very far from clean, and even the much-loved Papist president turned out to be a lecherous womaniser. But in the movie theatres, all was rosy with Rome. There were those in Hollywood who were depicting the seven-hilled city and its devoted clerical army as the salvation of the free world from Communism.

***Lilies of the Field* (1963): an Ecumenical PR Triumph for Rome**

In 1963 *Lilies of the Field* appeared, a film about East German nuns who escaped Communism, a black Baptist wanderer, and Mexican Roman Catholicism, all thrown together on the American frontier. The Papist John F. Kennedy was president, and the Second Vatican Council was in session in Rome, which, it was hoped by many Papists, would usher in a new era of openness and needed change within the Roman Catholic “Church”. *Lilies of the Field* was thus released in an era when Roman Catholics were being seen as equals to Protestants in the U.S., and when a more tolerant Romanism, more open to Protestantism, was hoped for by many. These themes were embodied in the movie itself. Of course, Kennedy simply showed up the kind of immorality, sexual and political, that Romanism produces in many of its subjects, and Vatican II did not accomplish what many more liberal Romanists hoped it would; but that was still a little in the future. “Out in the Arizona desert, *Lilies of the Field* carves out a space where ecumenical spiritual growth, new institutional identity, and liturgical experimentation can freely occur... An unlikely coterie of Protestants and Catholics in the Arizona desert works out the tensions of religion, race, and gender with the enthusiasm and exuberance of the early 1960s.”⁴⁴²

It certainly was ecumenical, in keeping with the spirit of Vatican II, then in progress in Rome. Throughout the movie, that which supposedly is common between Romanism and Protestantism is emphasised, more than the differences. In this way the film helped to break down Protestant barriers to Romanism. In one scene, the nun beats the Baptist at quoting the Bible. *Protestants* were known as the Bible-lovers, the ones who knew the Bible and could quote it extensively – and yet here was a nun quoting it too, and to such effect that the Baptist was beaten. In truth, of course, this was all fiction rather than fact: the vast majority of Romanists are simply not familiar with the Bible and never have been, for to them it is not the sole rule of faith and practice, as it is to Bible Protestants. But the power of a movie to indoctrinate people cannot be over-emphasised, and a scene such as this had an effect far beyond that of any Protestant minister trying to explain that Roman Catholics do not love or know the Scriptures. In the minds of moviegoers a seed had been planted: the thought that the Bible was, after all, the basis of Romanism as well as of Protestantism.

A fallacy, certainly; but one which moviegoers now had in their minds.

And there were plenty of other indications of this supposed Romanist-Protestant commonality. The film shows the Baptist man teaching the German nuns to sing Baptist “tent-meeting” songs with gusto; the Baptist builds a Romish chapel; and yet despite their growing friendship and understanding of one another, he remains a Baptist and they remain Romanists. The lesson being presented: both are “Christians”, albeit of differing traditions. There is no sense whatsoever of either one being false, the other true. What a victory for ecumenism!

The film was a huge success, and the Papist press loved it. It did wonders for Roman Catholics, making them appear to be enlightened and progressive to non-Roman Catholics. Another triumph for Romanism in Hollywood, and thus in America.

Vatican II’s “Decree on the Means of Social Communication” (1963)

The Second Vatican Council released its “Decree on the Means of Social Communication” (*Inter Mirifica*) in December 1963, another fundamental document on the subject. It is important to study certain aspects of it, to understand Rome’s attitude to the means of social communication, which continues to define and guide it to this very day.

Section 11 of this document states: “A special responsibility for the proper use of the means of social communication rests on journalists, writers, actors, designers, producers, exhibitors, distributors, operators, sellers, critics – all those, in a word, who are involved in the making and transmission of communications in any way whatever. It is clear that a very great responsibility rests on all of these people in today’s world: they have power to direct mankind along a good path or an evil path by the information they impart and the pressure they exert.”

One can imagine the harlot Rome’s jowls slavering at the prospect of what it could do with such powerful means of mass communication! Very obviously it wanted total control over them, and still does, for by means of radio, TV and film Rome can exert immense influence over multiplied millions. Hence its desire to infiltrate its own people into key positions of power within the media.

Still from Sec. 11: “It will be for them to regulate economic, political

and artistic values in a way that will not conflict with the common good. To achieve this result more surely, they will do well to form professional organisations...”

Was this directive carried out in practice? It certainly was. All one has to do is consider the very many professional Roman Catholic organisations which exist for the very purpose of regulating the economic, political and artistic values of their members: for example, the Catholic Stage Guild and the Catholic Writers Guild, both in England, and similar groups worldwide.

In Sec. 13 the following is found: “All the members of the Church should make a concerted effort to ensure that the means of communication are put at the service of the multiple forms of the apostolate without delay and as energetically as possible, where and when they are needed. They should forestall projects likely to prove harmful, especially in those regions where moral and religious progress would require their intervention more urgently.”

This paragraph plainly reveals the Romish hierarchy’s view of where the loyalties of those working in these fields should lie. They are to use their positions and the mass media to serve Rome! – “without delay and as energetically as possible”. But more than that, they are to actually “*forestall*” (dictionary: intercept; cut off; hinder; obstruct) projects “likely to prove harmful”. By this is meant, film, TV or radio projects likely to prove harmful *to the Roman Catholic “Church”*. Should we be surprised, then, that Roman Catholicism, in the years after this document was released, was often portrayed in such good light in movies and on television? No, we should not be surprised at all. Rome’s agents, “energetically” working within the film and TV industries, saw to that.

Sec. 14 states: “The production and screening of films which provide wholesome entertainment and are worthwhile culturally and artistically should be promoted and effectively guaranteed, especially films destined for the young. This is best achieved by supporting and co-ordinating productions and projects by serious producers and distributors, by marking the launching of worthwhile films with favourable criticism or the awarding of prizes, by supporting or co-ordinating cinemas managed by Catholics and men of integrity.”

Sec. 14 continues: “Likewise, decent radio and television programmes should be effectively supported, especially those suited to the family. Ample encouragement should be given to Catholic transmissions which invite listeners and viewers to share in the life of the Church and which convey religious truths. Catholic stations should be established where it is opportune.”

Of course, true Christians would be wholeheartedly in support of films, radio and TV programmes which provide wholesome, decent entertainment. But what must always be understood is that Rome means something different when she uses words like these. *She* means, by “decent” or “wholesome entertainment”, films, radio and TV programmes *which promote Roman Catholicism!* Those which (in the words of this section of the document) “invite listeners and viewers to share in the life of the [Romish] Church and which convey religious [i.e. Roman Catholic] truths”. For to her way of viewing things, there can be nothing more wholesome or decent than this.

The following is a very valuable commentary from an author in New Zealand on why, despite the presence of Roman Catholics in positions of high influence in the mass media at the time when he wrote (1976), extreme violence on children’s programmes shown on TV in New Zealand did not illicit any real condemnation:

“An illustration of the Catholic Action interpretation of ‘decent radio and television programmes’ is given by a short article which appeared in the ‘Evening Post’ of 26-8-76 and which stated that ‘fourteen of the fifteen most violent American television programmes are at present being shown in New Zealand at prime television viewing times when elder children are able to watch.’ There are good reasons for this. With prolonged exposure to violence in the mass media, e.g. television, the younger generation are conditioned into accepting violence as ‘normality’ and their senses of perception become dulled. Consequently, if terrorist groups such as the Australian section of the Croatian Catholic ‘Ustashi’ – ‘Croatian Nationalists’ being half of the truth – decided to extend their training activities into New Zealand, then the non-Catholic population in particular, will be unable to grasp the sinister implications. It is interesting that our self-appointed guardian of community standards, one time Catholic nun Patricia Bartlett, is silent in regard to the continual violence in our TV programmes.

Evidently it is in accordance with her ‘Christian standpoint.’”⁴⁴³

What this author wrote of the situation in New Zealand in 1976 could so easily have been written of almost any country in the western world at that time – *and ever since*. Rome utters very pious-sounding statements about the need for “decent” films and TV programmes, etc.; and yet, even in places where there has been strong Roman Catholic infiltration of the mass media, violence in children’s movies and TV programmes has always continued unchecked.

Again from Sec. 14 of the Vatican II document: “The noble and ancient art of the theatre has been widely popularised by the means of social communication. One should take steps to ensure that it contributes to the human and moral formation of its audience.”

This paragraph takes one back to the Jesuits and their use of the theatre in centuries past, as examined earlier in this book. To Rome, the theatre was only “noble” insofar as it advanced the cause of Roman Catholicism. To Rome, film, TV and radio are merely the modern versions of the theatre of old – and in this she is correct. These modern forms of communication have, as she puts it here, “popularised” the ancient theatre. As for ensuring that these things contribute to “the human and moral formation of” those being entertained by them, Rome means, quite simply, the formation of the audience according to Roman Catholic doctrine and morals, nothing more and nothing less. She well knows the huge potential of the mass media to sway vast audiences in her favour. As the Jesuits once used the stage, so now they sought to use movies, TV and radio programmes for precisely the same purpose: *indoctrination* and *manipulation*. And yet the masses have always been too blind to see it.

Sec. 15 states: “Priests, religious and laity should be trained at once to meet the needs described above. They should acquire the competence needed to use these media for the apostolate.... To this end, schools, institutes or faculties must be provided in sufficient number, where journalists, writers for films, radio and television, and anyone else concerned, may receive a complete formation, imbued with the Christian spirit and especially with the Church’s social teaching. Actors should also be instructed and helped so that their gifts too can benefit society. Lastly, literary critics and critics of films, radio,

television and the rest should be carefully prepared so that they will be fully competent in their respective spheres and will be trained and encouraged to give due consideration to morality in their critiques.”

Rome was certainly not bothering to hide its intentions! As far as she was concerned, all Romanists working in the mass media were to “use these media for the apostolate”. This was re-emphasised in Sec. 17 which states: “For the main aim of all these [Papist newspapers, films, radio and TV programmes, etc.] is to propagate and defend the truth [i.e. the “truth” according to Rome] and to secure the permeation of society by Christian [i.e. Papist] values.” And certainly such schools, faculties, etc., were established in various countries, their purpose being to churn out faithful Roman Catholic servants of their pope to work in film, radio and TV, and tilt these Romeward to the very best of their ability. For example, by 1975 it could be reported in an Australian newspaper that the Sydney radio station 2SM (“SM” standing for “St Mary’s”), which was owned by the Roman Catholic institution, had become so powerful that: “It owns 50% of... the largest programming organisation outside the U.S.A., and through it has an interest in a radio announcers’ school, concert promotions and the programming of other stations”.⁴⁴⁴

***Kiss Me Stupid* (1964): Hammering the Nails into the PCA Casket**

It was very evident that priests Sullivan and Little were now presiding over a far more liberalised Legion; and Shurlock at the PCA was not, as he said in 1963, going to be “holier than the pope” and fail to give a PCA seal to a film the Legion accepted. And so, when *Kiss me Stupid* was shown to the PCA and the Legion in 1964, the producers did not foresee any major problems, even though the film dealt blatantly and favourably with marital infidelity and prostitution. Shurlock said he would pass the film. His words were: “If dogs want to return to their vomit, I’m not going to stop them.” Jack Vizzard said Shurlock’s announcement was akin to “the sound of hammers on casket nails.”⁴⁴⁵

Priest Little at the Legion was not so accommodating, finding much that was offensive in the film. The studio reluctantly agreed to make some changes, but these did not go far enough in Little’s opinion. When United Artists studio dug in its heels, the Legion condemned the film, calling it “morally repulsive” with “crude and suggestive dialogue” and “a leering treatment of marital and extra-marital sex”. And then the

Legion expressed shock that such a film could have been granted a seal by the PCA, with Little saying, “It is difficult to understand how such approval is not the final betrayal of the trust which has been placed by so many in the organized industry’s self-regulation.” Martin Quigley stated that *Kiss Me Stupid* meant that the Code was now history, and “it could be blown away by a gentle zephyr.”⁴⁴⁶

The film did not do well at the box office anyway. But even so, the Code was now, for all practical purposes, a relic of history. The hammers had driven the nails into the casket.

The Legion of Decency Changes Its Name

Martin Quigley died in 1964. By 1965 the Roman Catholic priests and bishops in charge of the Legion were well aware that the organisation was simply unacceptable to most Roman Catholics, who no longer cared much for it at all and viewed it as nothing but a censorship body. And so, in an attempt to still retain some influence, the bishops came up with a plan: they would change the Legion’s name. In November 1965 it was renamed the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (NCOMP). *Time* magazine commended the Legion for the name change, referring to the old name as “arrogant and muscular”. But it was to be expected that a statement would be issued declaring that the new name did not mean that the Roman Catholic institution no longer cared about film decency; and indeed, such a statement was made by the chairman of the Episcopal Committee, John J. Krol, archbishop of Philadelphia.⁴⁴⁷ Thereafter it was still often referred to as “the Legion”, and it still existed for the purpose of censoring movies it found objectionable by trying to get them altered. But its teeth were pulled.

Joseph Breen died in 1965, a few days after Krol announced the Legion’s change of name. And state censorship boards were dying out as well. Furthermore, as we have seen, this was also an era of changes within the Roman Catholic institution itself, including changes in its attitude to the movies.

A Rash of “Nun Movies”, Notably *The Sound of Music* (1965)

Various Roman Catholic or pro-Roman Catholic films, some of which were highly successful and with far-reaching influence, were made during this era as well.

“Nun movies” were particularly popular at this time. In films such as *Heaven Knows, Mr. Alison* (1957), *The Nun’s Story* (1959), *The Sound of Music* (1965), *The Trouble with Angels* (1966), *Where Angels Go, Trouble Follows* (1968), and *Change of Habit* (1969), nuns were portrayed as real human beings, real women, without being ridiculed. But there was more to Roman Catholic movies than nuns, even when they played a prominent part.

The ever-popular movie, *The Sound of Music*, the most commercially-successful depiction of nuns in the history of cinema, came out in 1965, and was used to show that Roman Catholicism had opposed Nazism, for the nuns rescue a family from the Nazis.⁴⁴⁸ It was described this way: “the film is a merry chase across the Alps, full of ‘Edelweiss,’ ‘The Sound of Music,’ and ‘My Favourite Things.’ The von Trapps climb every mountain while buffoonish Nazis bumble around like hapless stooges and errant schoolboys. The whole German high command seems little match for a few giggly nuns who steal the alternator and battery cables from their jeeps and then run to the mother superior to confess their mischief.”⁴⁴⁹ The cold hard truth was very different, as has been stated previously in this book: the Papal institution had *supported* Nazism, from its pope down to priests and nuns! But Hollywood was useful to indoctrinate people away from this reality, and to present a far “nicer” Roman Catholic “Church” to the world.

Of course, as seen previously, even in the final year of World War Two the trend had been set by *The Bells of St. Mary’s*, starring Bing Crosby and Ingrid Bergman. Nun movies were big business in the late 50s and the 60s. This was a time in America where nuns were seen everywhere, running Roman Catholic schools and hospitals, etc., etc. It was good business sense for Hollywood to make films about them at a time when many Americans had constant contact with them in everyday life. But in addition, it kept Romanism in the forefront of movie audiences’ minds.⁴⁵⁰

Paulist Priests Start Making Their Own Films

In the 1960s an order of Roman Catholic priests, the Paulist “Fathers”, established their very own film and TV production company. Known as Paulist Pictures, it went from strength to strength, and in 1989 made

the movie *Romero*, about the murdered archbishop in El Salvador, Oscar Romero. It was distributed by a major Hollywood studio and shown in theatres across America.⁴⁵¹

***The Pawnbroker* (1965): the Legion Tottering on the Edge of Its Grave**

By the mid-1960s one moral issue after another had been challenged by Hollywood; but the bishops of the U.S. Roman Catholic institution decided to draw a line in the sand when it came to nudity. They ordered Little and Sullivan of the NCOMP (the old Legion) to condemn all movies containing nudity. Hypocritically, the bishops in a statement declared that “nudity is not immoral and has long been recognized as a legitimate subject in painting and sculpture”, but that it was unacceptable in movies!⁴⁵² Either something is immoral or it is not. Nudity is certainly immoral, biblically, whether in art or in movies. But the Romish bishops have always had their own set of moral standards, which are not those of the Bible, the Word of God.

Usually, if the Legion objected, nude scenes were still removed by the moviemakers. But this changed in 1965, when Sidney Lumet’s *The Pawnbroker* was released in the USA, and scenes of nudity were deliberately left in the film. The movie was denied a seal by the PCA’s Geoffrey Shurlock, but the producer, Ely Landau, appealed to the MPAA board, which eventually gave the seal to the film after Landau slightly cut the length of the scenes involving nudity. The film was released, and when the Legion reviewed it a few weeks afterwards its reviewers were divided, some approving of it and others condemning it. Little did not believe the film was obscene, but said it had to be condemned because of the nudity – obeying the instructions from his superiors. Yet this was possibly the mildest condemnation of a film by the Legion in its history, according to *Variety* magazine.⁴⁵³ The Legion knew that its authority and influence were almost over.

When the film opened, shockingly, a number of “Protestant” reviewers praised it and had no problem with the nudity!⁴⁵⁴ Roman Catholics were divided over it, and over the Legion’s attitude to it. “There is no place for the ‘Legion’ type of censorship,” stated the editorial of *Film Heritage*, a Roman Catholic-edited film journal. It called for the Legion to abolish the Condemned rating as it was a

“brutalizing form of pressure.”⁴⁵⁵ Certainly pro-Legion reviewer William Mooring was correct when he wrote that the Code had been reduced to “a mere scrap of paper.”⁴⁵⁶

The truth of the matter was that the Legion’s condemnation of *The Pawnbroker* was a further nail in its own coffin. American Roman Catholic audiences, having imbibed the American spirit of “freedom of expression”, no longer wanted the Legion to censor what they could see, and they turned out in large numbers to see the film. Besides, Rome itself was now clearly more broad-minded when it came to scenes previously condemned as “immoral” in movies. This sent conflicting messages to the Papist population. And then too, because the film was about a Jewish Holocaust survivor, and because it was known that the “Church” of Rome had not stood up to Nazi aggression against the Jews and had even, in fact, colluded with Hitler, Rome’s condemnation of the film was seen by many to be yet further evidence of its anti-Semitism. It was plain to see that the Legion was tottering on the edge of its own grave.

Vatican II and Movies

The Second Vatican Council was held from 1962 to 1965, one of its purposes being to “modernise” certain aspects of Roman Catholicism to make it more appealing to the modern age. But in doing so, it actually lost much of its former glory and mystique in the eyes of millions of Romanists. Latin was rejected in favour of the vernacular, priests and nuns became more “user-friendly”, with nuns in particular often casting off their austere dress code and appearing in public as “regular girls”, Papist rituals were downplayed to make Romanism more appealing to Protestants in the ecumenical age, etc. But as a natural consequence, as Romanism in the world lost much of what had made it distinct from other “churches”, it also lost much of its distinctiveness in the movies. Not only that, but now that censorship was virtually dead, moviemakers were free to make movies that *attacked* Roman Catholic beliefs if they liked. And many of them liked – very much so.

As for priest Little himself, he changed with the changes occurring as a result of Vatican II. As has happened to countless other men through the ages, he told Jack Vizzard that in his younger years things

appeared as “stark blacks and whites”, but with age “issues seemed less simple and more complex, and assumed various shades of gray.” After the change of the Legion’s name, he said the Legion had developed a reputation for being a “stubborn, antiquarian, unrealistic defender of Catholic movie goers”, and that this was not how it should function in the aftermath of Vatican II.⁴⁵⁷ In truth, Roman Catholics had changed, and the Papal institution itself now wanted to “move with the times”. Rome speaks haughtily of “defending eternal morals”, but is ever ready to embrace the shifting sands of the times and adjust its “morality” accordingly. The *true* moral law of God is eternal, and does not change; and *true* Christians do not suit their morality to the times they are living in. But Rome will do anything to keep its members.

***Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1965): Priestly Morals in the Gutter with Everyone Else’s**

When it was announced that a film version of the Broadway play, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* would be made, the Legion once again came out with guns blazing, because it was laced with some of the most filthy language and overt sexual dialogue to which audiences had ever been subjected. When Geoffrey Shurlock read the script in October 1965, he told Warner Brothers that a PCA seal would only be given once all profanity and sexual dialogue had been cut. The reason Warner Brothers wanted a seal and Legion approval as well, even though they knew films were now doing very well commercially without them, was that this particular film had been a big-budget one for the studio, and if Warner wanted to make a profit it was felt that the approval of the PCA and the Legion were still needed. The studio stated that it would make the film an “adults only” one, and that it would submit it to the NCOMP (the Legion) ahead of the MPAA appeal.

The film was shot, however, with the language pretty much intact, and the PCA, after reviewing it in May 1966, did not give it the seal. Shurlock, however, told Warner to appeal his decision to the MPAA board, which was done.

As yet another indication of how much the Legion had changed from the old days, although there was no consensus on the part of the consultants who reviewed it, a sizeable majority voted against condemning the film.

Those who favoured it, including some (celibate?) priests, described it as valid adult entertainment, despite its foul language and sexual dialogue! It was clear that the morals of many priests and Papists were no different from those of society around them. Warner gave the assurance that no one under 18 unless accompanied by a parent would be allowed to buy a ticket, and the film was classified “A4” by the Legion (adults only). In June 1966 the MPAA board met to rule on the film, and a seal was granted.

“However, when Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton hit the screen screaming and tearing at each other with a hateful vengeance [in *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*] it was obvious that the movies had been changed forever. No longer were they going to be reigned [sic] in by codes.”⁴⁵⁸ Quigley’s son, Martin Quigley, Jr., declared in the *Motion Picture Herald* that the Code was now dead.⁴⁵⁹ The supreme irony, however, was this: “[Roman Catholic] Church pressure had created the PCA in 1934, and, thirty-two years later, the [Roman Catholic] church played a major role in hastening its demise”, when the Legion granted an “A4” rating to this movie.

“The decision to award *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* an A-IV rating touched off the biggest outpouring of protest letters in the history of the Legion and NCOMP.”⁴⁶⁰ This just showed that despite the liberalisation within much of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic institution, there was still a huge bedrock of conservative Roman Catholics who were utterly opposed to the new direction being taken. The NCOMP was referred to as the “NCOMPetents” by one group of angry Romanists. Martin Quigley, Jr. wrote to Spellman, the cardinal, asking him why it was that such things as blasphemy, profanity, and obscenity were now acceptable to the “Church” when displayed in movies. Sullivan the Jesuit was kept busy replying to over a thousand letters about the film. In writing to a bishop, he said that despite the fact the film was controversial it attempted to make “a moral statement about our times consistent with a Christian viewpoint on life.” What an astounding statement! This aptly encapsulated the liberal Romanist notion of “morality”, so far removed from the Word of God. That such a film could be justified, even partially, as being “consistent with a Christian viewpoint of life” speaks volumes about the vile, false “Christianity” of Roman Catholicism. It also shows how the Jesuits

had changed course, changed tactics, and swung the “Church” to the left when it came to films.

But then Sullivan went even further, showing how deeply he had himself imbibed liberal Romanism and jettisoned the conservative Romanism of the pre-Vatican II days: he wrote that Pius XII’s encyclical, *Miranda Prorsus*, had opened the way for a more “tolerant”, open-minded view of movies, and stated that “we cannot intrude upon what is alone their [adult Roman Catholics’] right and obligation, namely, the exercise of individual responsibility in conscience.”⁴⁶¹ This may have reflected the general American (and even western) attitude to “freedom of expression” and “freedom of conscience”, but it must be remembered, firstly, that it is not the truly Christian one, for true Christians do not seek to be entertained by filth (thus showing, yet again, the unchristian nature of Romanism); and secondly, it shows the base hypocrisy of Rome, which has always been *against* liberty of conscience and freedom of expression, and yet – when it suits its purposes – it speaks in favour of the very things it opposes! Vatican II and its aftermath often produced statements like this from the lips of Roman Catholics, so as to attract more people to the “Church” and to hold on to those who had imbibed such notions from the America they lived in.

***Darling* (1965): the Legion Sinks Still Further**

The astounding about-face of the Legion (the NCOMP) was seen again when the 1965 British film, *Darling*, was shown in America. Although it was about a woman who leaves her husband, has various affairs, participates in an orgy, appears nude, has an abortion, etc., the NCOMP, after getting a few seconds of nudity cut from the film, awarded it Best Picture of 1965, a film of “artistic vision and expression”! The old Legion was clearly nothing like it had once been. And Romish publications reviewed it very positively as well.⁴⁶² There were protests from many Romanists, however, showing again that the “Church” hierarchy was moving faster than many in the pews.

The Code Replaced by CARA: Censorship Now Truly Dead

In 1966 Jack Valenti became president of the MPAA. He was an Italian Roman Catholic. But he also loathed censorship of any kind, from

any source whatsoever, and he planned to destroy the Code. He said, "It was plain that the old system of self-regulation, begun with the formation of the MPAA in 1922, had broken down. From the very first day of my own succession to the MPAA President's office, I had sniffed the Production Code constructed by the Hays Office. There was about this stern, forbidding catalogue of 'Dos and Don'ts' the odious smell of censorship, I determined to junk it at the first opportune moment."⁴⁶³

And junk it he did. In September 1966 Valenti's new Code came in. It was not merely a revision of the previous Code, but amounted to a brand new one. "Expunging the last vestiges of Quigley-Lord-Breen moral absolutism, the new document stressed opposition to 'censorship and classification by law' and delegated the parents of America as the final 'arbiters of family conduct.'... The official MPAA press release explained, 'this revised code is designed to keep in closer harmony with the mores, the culture, and the moral sense and the expectations of our society.'⁴⁶⁴ It certainly was, for society had changed, and not for the better. And now that the floodgates were opened, Hollywood would cause it to sink even faster into a vortex of moral relativism and degraded filth.

Instead of regulations, the new policy was to issue ratings: classifications of films according to their content. And so it was that, in November 1968, the Production Code was replaced by a rating system developed by the Motion Picture Association of America. It was called the Code and Rating Administration (CARA). Geoffrey Shurlock of the PCA retired, to be replaced by Eugene Dougherty, a Roman Catholic. And priest Little retired from the NCOMP, to be replaced by priest Sullivan.

The original CARA ratings were as follows: "G" (Suggested for General Audiences); "M" (Suggested for Mature Audiences); "R" (Restricted – no persons under 16 unless accompanied by a parent or guardian); and "X" (Persons under 16 Not Admitted). Krol, the archbishop, was in favour of the new age classification system, and he sounded like priest Sullivan (quoted above) and even like a committed American when he declared that the Roman Catholic institution was committed to the U.S. Bill of Rights, "no part of which is more important to the American people than that freedom of utterance which includes artistic expression."⁴⁶⁵ This Popish archbishop's supposed fondness

for the Bill of Rights was a sham. Rome has *never* been in favour of American freedoms, and has opposed and warred against them from the very beginning. American freedoms have always stood in the way of Rome's authoritarian expansionist ambitions. So a statement like this was made for reasons of expedience, to fool the people, to make it seem as if the "Church" of Rome was pro-American, and thereby to increase its own power in the United States.

As the years went by, the CARA ratings system would be altered. But consider this: "CARA is a secret society, guided only by the gut instincts and inchoate feelings of a membership whose names, qualifications, and grade-point scale are a mystery to all save the inner sanctum of the MPAA – a true star chamber."⁴⁶⁶ It is in fact *so* secretive that Kirby Dick, director of a documentary entitled *This Movie Is Not Yet Rated*, which came out in 2006, actually hired private detectives to learn the identities of the board members!

Are true Christians able to trust the ratings system? Absolutely not! These ratings should *never* be used by believers as their guide. It is the height of foolishness when naive parents look at a movie's rating and say, "Oh, this one will be great for the children – it says 'All.'" Christians should never, ever entrust a faceless, nameless, essentially secret society to tell them that a particular movie is safe for their children! Christians are to raise their children according to the Word of God – not according to the world. They must *expect* the world to have a very different understanding of what is wholesome family entertainment! The world's ideas of morality, right and wrong, family, entertainment and decency are *not* the same as the Christian believer's. The world is not governed by the Word of God.

In effect, with the replacement of the Code by the ratings system, *ensorship was now dead*. A new era had dawned for the movie industry. It would not be an easy one for the Roman Catholic institution. Rome would not have things all her way as had pretty much been the case throughout Hollywood's "Golden Age".

"The code was dead, censorship was dead, and the cultural war that had raged between the Catholic church and the movie industry was, at least temporarily, over."⁴⁶⁷

The NCOMP Continues to Liberalise

The NCOMP was hardly recognisable, now, as the Legion of the past, and Romish media support for movies which once would have been condemned outright was so enthusiastic that it can only be described as a total about-face. “Subjects that in the past had aroused the church’s ire were no longer an issue”⁴⁶⁸ – including such subjects as foul language, homosexuality, abortion, etc. Even the Legion’s old automatic opposition to any nudity at all was greatly relaxed now. And even when Romanism itself was shown in a somewhat poor light in a film, this was not automatically condemned by the NCOMP. Furthermore, priests or nuns having sexual affairs was no longer a subject off-limits either! These were astounding times.

***The Shoes of the Fisherman* (1968): Promoting a Socialistic Romanism and Foreshadowing John Paul II**

A film that only makes sense in the light of the post-Vatican II “Church” was *The Shoes of the Fisherman*. In this film, a Popish cleric, Kiril Lakota, is ransomed from the Gulag Archipelago, taken to Rome, and is in the conclave when the pope of Rome dies suddenly. The film’s hero gets elected as the first non-Italian pontiff in four centuries. In these aspects, the movie (unknowingly, of course) anticipated the 1978 election of just such a non-Italian pope, Karol Wojtyla from Poland (who almost uncannily shared a name sounding very similar to that of the film’s character), who became John Paul II. Furthermore, in the film, in a summit meeting with the Soviet Union Communist premier and the Chinese Communist leader, this pope averts a nuclear war, caused by a famine, between the two Communist states by pledging to give the vast resources of the Roman Catholic “Church” – its land, its buildings and art treasures – to alleviate hunger. The film was clearly a promotion of a radical new, Socialistic brand of Romanism which in the wake of Vatican II was sweeping through the Romish institution. Although the real non-Italian pope, John Paul II, elected ten years after this film was released, never did anything quite so radically and Socialistically left-wing, he certainly was a “people’s pope” who held firmly to his own brand of Catholic-Communism.⁴⁶⁹

***Rosemary's Baby* (1968): Marking the Beginning of Hollywood's Satanic Season**

This horror film of demon possession, Roman Polanski's screen version of an Ira Levin novel, described by one as "a highly serious lapsed-Catholic fable",⁴⁷⁰ centres on Rosemary, a young Irish-American ex-Roman Catholic girl who nevertheless cannot escape being haunted by images from her Roman Catholic childhood. She becomes impregnated by the devil during a Satanic black mass.

It is significant that in the Hollywood of the post-Code era, Roman Catholic girls were so often the focus of interest from Satan. There are a number of reasons for this, notably that Romanism's teaching on sex, sexuality, marriage, etc., has always been distorted, closely associated with confessionals, priestly absolution, and feelings of deep guilt and shame. In the popular mind and thus in Hollywood, Roman Catholic girls have so often been divided into either pious anti-sex maidens or morally loose harlots who rebel against the restraints of their religion, knowing they can always just go to confession and put it all right.

In the black mass, during a realistic dream, Rosemary is tied down to the altar by Satanists, all of whom are Roman Catholics (including John and Jackie Kennedy), and Satan impregnates her. The impregnation by the devil is not a dream, but real. She is comforted by the pope of Rome himself, who forgives her, and she kisses his ring.

Asked why all the dream figures during her impregnation by the devil were Romanists, Roman Polanski said that this was because Rosemary was an ex-Romanist, and her associations in such circumstances would be people who represent married Roman Catholicism to her. But this explanation is hardly the whole of it: clearly, this film was a frontal assault on the religion of Rome. In the film, the cover of *Time* magazine which stated, "God is Dead!" is very prominent; and clearly the film itself was a strong statement to that effect. It was a film in which Satan was made out to be victorious.

It is chilling indeed that Roman Polanski had wanted his own wife, Sharon Tate, to play the part of Rosemary (it was eventually played by Mia Farrow); and Tate reportedly was the one who came up with the idea for the scene in which Rosemary is raped and impregnated. Not that long afterwards, on August 9, 1969, when Sharon Tate was eight and a half months pregnant, she and her unborn baby were brutally

murdered by Susan Atkins and Tex Watson, two disciples of Charles Manson. Screenwriter Wojciech Frykowski was at Sharon Tate's home at the time and was also murdered, and when he asked Tex Watson who he was and what he was doing there, Watson replied, "I'm the devil, and I'm here to do the devil's business."⁴⁷¹ Satan is all too horrifyingly real.

This was, truly, the beginning of Hollywood's assault on Roman Catholicism via the medium of horror films in which Satan emerges victorious. The late 1960s, and the decade of the 1970s, was a time of increasing interest in witchcraft, Satanism, black magic, and all things occultic, especially among the disillusioned youth of the "flower power" generation. Partly, Hollywood simply plugged into this fascination with all things evil and dark, but partly, Hollywood itself led the way into it, as it threw off the constraints of the Papist-controlled Production Code years and went into attack mode against all things Papist. And in the process, it was also assaulting morality, decency, and the truth of the Gospel which Romanism had perverted for so long, but which was associated in the popular mind with the Romish religion.

The Legion Limp On

The NCOMP soldiered on, under priest Sullivan, for some years more, a mere shadow of its former self. When it condemned certain films, very often the Papist press ignored it and recommended what the Legion had condemned.

In 1970 the NCOMP, together with the National Council of Churches (NCC), was well aware that Hollywood was no longer paying any attention to their concerns. In a joint statement, they said theatres were not enforcing the age restrictions on movies; movies containing sex and violence were being classified as "G" (all ages admitted) and "GP" (all ages admitted, parental guidance suggested); etc. But the MPAA did nothing, and so in 1971 the NCOMP and NCC withdrew their support for the MPAA's rating system.⁴⁷² But the truth was, "No one in the industry seemed to care. At a time when more than half of all U.S. Catholic women reported practicing birth control, a much more serious sin in the eyes of the church than attending a condemned film, it was hard to believe that the laity was paying much attention to NCOMP's

evaluations. Where once the threat of a Legion condemnation could bring the movie moguls to heel, news that NCOMP had condemned 20 percent of the films it reviewed in 1971 caused hardly a ripple within the industry.”⁴⁷³

It was an even greater blow to the NCOMP that “Church” leaders and so many Roman Catholics in general were simply ignoring it. The faculty and students of a Jesuit college, Creighton University, invited the producer of a movie that had been condemned by the NCOMP to screen it on campus; and the film critic for *Our Sunday Visitor*, an influential Romish publication, placed two movies in his 1971 list of the ten best films which had been condemned by the NCOMP!⁴⁷⁴

The End of Irish Roman Catholic Domination in Hollywood

Irish Papists had always been viewed by Anglo-Saxon Protestants as lazy, given to drunkenness, and fanatically devoted to the Roman Catholic “Church” – a stereotype which, nevertheless, in general terms contained quite a bit of truth. But the power of Hollywood helped greatly to change this perception, for as has been shown in this book, Irish-American Roman Catholics were very involved in the movie industry from its earliest years. And by the mid-twentieth century they had managed to swing public opinion in their favour via Hollywood movies that portrayed them very positively, movies such as *Boys Town*, *Going My Way*, and a number of others. In fact, Irish-American Roman Catholics were the movie industry’s favourite ethnic group from the late 1930s through to the 1950s. Although Jews owned the movie studios, there were important Irish-American directors, actors and actresses during this period; and in addition it was Irish-American Roman Catholics who made and enforced the Motion Picture Production Code, as was seen, the enforcing being backed by the powerful Legion of Decency, which was under Irish-American control. The Jewish studio owners knew on which side their bread was buttered, for American cities, where moviemakers earned the most money, were heavily Roman Catholic, and if they did not toe the line when it came to Roman Catholic standards of morality, the Legion could organise boycotts that could ruin a film’s success financially.

But in addition to Irish Papist dominance of Hollywood, there was another reason why those who made the movies (even when they were

predominantly Jewish) were usually very happy to make use of Irish-American Romanists as characters in their movies. This was because, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Irish-Americans were in a special position as far as immigrants were concerned: they were not yet fully accepted into American society, but they were more accepted than other immigrant communities, being English-speaking and less “different” than other immigrants; they had been in the United States longer than most other immigrants; and they were recognised by other, newer immigrant communities (such as Italian-Americans and Polish-Americans, also both Roman Catholic in religion) as the leaders of all immigrants. This was not by accident: Irish-Americans had deliberately positioned themselves as leaders via their militant, proud brand of American Romanism, which proved very attractive to the newer Romish immigrants – Poles, Italians and French – who thus formed with the Irish a larger American Roman Catholic group, yet always with the Irish in charge. And as the twentieth century progressed Irish-Americans ascended the social ladder, becoming very powerful in many aspects of American life, including politically.

Even Jewish-Americans recognised this leadership role of the Irish: “Hollywood made over forty films pairing Irish Catholics and Jews between 1910 and the early 1930s, for example, and almost all of them taught the same lesson: the easiest way for Jews or any other new immigrant people to become Americanized was to marry, enter into partnership with, or even adopt an Irish Catholic.”⁴⁷⁵

These, then, are the factors behind the dominance of Irish-American Papists in Hollywood during this era. But it all changed in the 1960s. When the Motion Picture Production Code was dropped, and the Legion of Decency lost its influence, the huge power of Irish-American Romanism in Hollywood came to an end. The 1960s were also a time of massive social change in the United States, as indeed throughout the world, and a new generation of restless, directionless young people, stirred up by deliberate Communist propaganda in their music,⁴⁷⁶ strung out on drugs and sold out on “free love”, turned against the authority structures of their parents, the government and the “church”. These youngsters included large numbers of Irish-Americans, who turned against the religion and the restraints of their parents’ and grandparents’

generations. Prominent Irish-American writers of that era wrote much against what had gone before. And here it was: the root of all that was wrong with Irish-Americanism, according to these young writers, was the Roman Catholic “Church”. “For almost all members of the new generation of Irish American Catholic writers, the Catholic church lay at the root of all the repression, hypocritical pieties, deadened thought, and narrow ethnocentrism that plagued Irish Catholic America.”⁴⁷⁷

The tragedy is that they were right, to an extent even greater than they knew. No matter how long it takes, there is always a reaction against repression and oppression. The French Revolution was just such a reaction against centuries of domination and oppression by the Papal institution in France; and the 1960s youth rebellion was another one. And just as the French Revolution went to shocking excesses, so did the 1960s counter-culture rebellion. Revolting against the oppression, the stifling of intellectual thought, the hatred, the racism of Roman Catholicism and other forms of false “Christianity”, the youth of that generation dived headlong into sexual promiscuity, drugs, perverse music, and Communist philosophy and thought. With the ignorance of youth, they were pawns in the hands of the Marxists and they did not even know it. Their hatred for “institutional religion” and all forms of control made them cannon fodder for the Communist revolutionaries quietly going about their business behind the scenes.

Hollywood was not slow to jump on the bandwagon. Indeed, it can be argued – successfully – that to a very great extent Hollywood was *used*, particularly by Jewish Communists, to spearhead this youth rebellion and thereby promote Communist ideology across young America. Hollywood had changed: the Papist-controlled Production Code was gone, and new men were running the show.



CHAPTER TWELVE

THE 1970s: ROME UNDER ATTACK, BUT FIGHTS BACK

Up until now Hollywood had been viewed, by the Papal hierarchy, as a great and powerful tool to sway the masses in Rome's direction, but now all that had changed. What was Rome to do? How would she fight back? *Could* she even fight back?

Italian Papist Influence Replaces Irish Papist Influence in Hollywood

Another ethnic immigrant group now rose to prominence in Hollywood in the 1970s, replacing Irish-American Roman Catholic dominance: Italian-American Roman Catholic influence was now on top. There are many reasons for this massive change, not least among them the fact that Italian-Americans were perceived as being more emotional, more suspicious of authority, and thus more representative of what young Americans were feeling and expressing in the counter-culture decades of the 1960s and 1970s. The Mafia, the Mob, the Brotherhood, the Black Hand, the Cosa Nostra, the Underground, etc. – these all became favourite Hollywood themes, for they never failed to attract audiences who seemed to have an insatiable appetite for films about such things. And Italian gangsterism in America was always inextricably tied up with Italian Roman Catholicism. In Hollywood's Little Italy, "Behind every plaster-of-paris statue of the Madonna there lurked a Sicilian hitman intent on his vendetta... every household shrine contained at least one votive candle burning for a *mafiosi*.... Virtually any Italian gangster of note could count on several lavish film biographies and a television series or two. Al Capone, Joe Valachi, Lucky Luciano, and Joe Columbo became full-fledged media superstars."⁴⁷⁸

By this time, the Roman Catholicism of a place like New York was a very strange mix. Actually, it was hardly a mix at all, considering that the two main elements of it did not blend all that well. The situation was this: a Romish "clergy" dominated by Irish-Americans, and a Romish

“laity” dominated by Italian-Americans. And Hollywood loved this dichotomy between what was perceived as Irish Romanist puritanism and dogmatism, and Italian Romanist sensuality and wayward sexual behaviour.

Certainly, the Irish Romanist immigrants of the past had come to dominate the priestly positions of the American Roman Catholic “Church”, and had taught abstinence before marriage, purity within marriage, and sexual self-denial for those who entered the priesthood or the convent – even if in practice they knew such things were so often not adhered to, and even if in practice they themselves were far from morally pure (as the scandal of tens of thousands of sexual predator-priests abusing children, which broke in the 1990s and gained such global momentum afterwards, has proved beyond doubt).⁴⁷⁹ Italian Romanist immigrants, however, were not as rigid, and far more openly sensuous. “To Italians, Irish Catholicism seemed to be severe, doctrinaire, unemotional, and conservative; to the Irish, Italian Catholics were excessively superstitious, overly influenced by folk customs, fatalistic, almost pagan,” wrote one chronicler.⁴⁸⁰

And all of this Italian Romanism was encapsulated in four movies of the 1970s in particular, all of which were about Italian-Americans: *The Godfather* (1972), *The Godfather: Part II* (1974), *Rocky* (1976), and *Saturday Night Fever* (1977).

And along with the rise of Italian-American Papists in Hollywood films and the fall of Irish-American Papist dominance, Irish-American Papists began to be portrayed in the movies and on TV as corrupt, racist, given to drunkenness, and hypocritically religious. This is how they were portrayed in such films as *Joe* (1970), *Serpico* (1973), *Ragtime* (1981), *The Pope of Greenwich Village* (1984), and *L.A. Confidential* (1997); and in such TV shows as *Homicide: Life on the Street* (1993-1999), *The Fighting Fitzgeralds* (2001), etc.

The pendulum had swung back: once again, Irish-American Papists were being viewed as they had been before Hollywood had done so much to give them a make-over.

Another Important Vatican Document

A very important document was released by the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for the Instruments of Social Communication in January 1971,

entitled “The Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication” (*Communio et Progressio*). Let us study some aspects of this document.

Section 26 states: “If public opinion is to emerge in the proper manner, it is absolutely essential that there be freedom to express ideas and attitudes.” This sentence is designed to mislead the uninformed, to make them think that the “Church” of Rome is in favour of freedom of expression and ideas. It has *never* been in favour of these or any other freedoms, as its long history amply demonstrates with all the evidence one could desire. And in fact, this section immediately continues as follows: “In accordance with the express teaching of the second Vatican Council it is necessary unequivocally to declare that freedom of speech for individuals and groups must be permitted so long as the common good and public morality be not endangered.” Ah! This gives the game away, but sadly not to the masses of uninformed, who would see nothing sinister in this sentence, coming as it does immediately after the one about freedom of expression and ideas. Many would read this one and think to themselves, “Yes, this is true; freedom of speech cannot be granted if it harms the common good and public morality.” But what does *Rome* mean by “the common good”? Commenting on this very section of the Vatican document, author D.J. Beswick correctly explains the Papistical meaning behind these words:

“We have seen that the requirement of not conflicting with the common good is equivalent to acting in accordance with the instructions and directions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. It is thus easy to see how such freedom of speech is to be permitted ‘so long as the common good and public morality be not endangered’. In practical terms, what this means is that freedom of speech is to be permitted so long as there is no public criticism of the Catholic Church or Catholic social policy, or in other words one can criticise anything or anyone provided one doesn’t tread on Catholic toes.”²⁴⁸¹

Thus Rome sought to control freedom of speech and freedom of expression, by allowing these things as long as Roman Catholicism or any of its works was not criticised through the mass media. Of course, in practice Rome was only partially successful in achieving this goal; but the point is that this *is* Rome’s stated goal, and she will work

constantly for the day when she can totally manipulate and control the mass media to her advantage all over the world.

Sec. 29 is very revealing: “The process of promoting what is sometimes called a ‘propaganda campaign’, with a view to influencing public opinion, is justified only when it serves the truth, when its objectives and methods accord with the dignity of man, and when it promotes causes that are in the public interest. These causes may concern either individuals or groups, one’s own country or the world at large.”

Rome, of course, had been relentlessly pushing her own “propaganda campaign” via TV and the movies for decades when this was written, and she still is. This paragraph was an attempt to justify this. Considering the fact that Rome believes herself to be the sole propagator of the truth, and the sole and true defender of it, when she states that a propaganda campaign must “serve the truth” to be justified, this simply means the propaganda campaign must serve the interests of the Roman Catholic institution! As far as she is concerned, “causes that are in the public interest” are causes that are in Rome’s interest; for she believes the entire world must submit to her authority.

Following on from this clever Jesuitical reasoning, which the general public would never be able to see through, Sec. 30 states: “Some types of propaganda are inadmissible. These include those that harm the public interest or allow of no public reply. Any propaganda should be rejected which deliberately misrepresents the real situation, or distorts men’s minds with half truths, selective reporting or serious omissions, and which diminishes man’s legitimate freedom of decision.”

Terms do not mean what the dictionary may say they mean; they mean whatever those using them choose for them to mean. In this paragraph, Rome shows its antipathy towards any “propaganda” that is not its own propaganda (which she justified using in Sec. 29, as seen above). It is only *Roman Catholic* propaganda which, as far as Rome is concerned, ‘serves the truth’ and is “in the public interest”; therefore, any viewpoint which differs from her own is seen to be “propaganda... which deliberately misrepresents the real situation, or distorts men’s minds with half truths, selective reporting or serious omissions.” The fact that *Roman Catholics* in the mass media deliberately misrepresent the real situation, and distort men’s minds with half truths, selective

reporting and omissions is fine as far as Rome is concerned, because, as it has stated, Roman Catholic propaganda “serves the truth” and “promotes causes in the public interest.” As Beswick commented, “The Atheist-Communists use the same circular reasoning.” He wrote in addition: “if large scale Communist propaganda represents ‘Communist brainwashing’, then what does large scale Catholic propaganda represent? We have seen that the promoting of a propaganda campaign ‘with a view to influencing public opinion, is justified only when it serves the truth’, but this tells us nothing, because all propaganda campaigns, whether carried out by Atheist Communists, Roman Catholics or some other ideology, are claimed to serve the truth and promote causes that are in the public interest.”⁷⁴⁸²

Sec. 42 states: “But the right to information is not limitless. It has to be reconciled with other existing rights.... There is the right of secrecy which obtains if necessity or professional duty or the common good itself requires it. Indeed, whenever the public good is at stake, discretion and discrimination and careful judgment should be used in the preparation of news.”

So: when receiving news via any Roman Catholic or pro-Romanist news source (newspapers, radio, television), one can never be certain one is receiving the whole story. Take, for instance, the centuries-old sexual abuse of children by Romish priests. It had been going on for hundreds and hundreds of years before it became an international scandal in the 1990s and the 2000s. Was it ever fully or properly reported on by Roman Catholic media sources prior to that? No. Reason: Rome did not judge such news as being “in the interests of the public good”. Rather, it saw such information as requiring “discretion and discrimination and careful judgment”, for “the public good was at stake”. But by the “public good”, Rome means whatever is good for Rome!

“Thus we see that secrecy is to be used when the ‘common good’ requires it, and since Catholic Action is working for the ‘common good’, then secrecy is to be used when the machinations of Catholic Action require it. The complete lack of public awareness of Catholic Action shows that this directive is faithfully applied.”⁷⁴⁸³

Now for a very revealing paragraph. Sec. 106 states: “As representatives of the Church, Bishops, priests, religious and laity are increasingly asked to write in the press, or appear on radio and television, or to collaborate in filming. They are warmly urged to undertake this work, which has consequences that are far more important than is usually imagined.”

In obedience to this directive, priests were seen to be acting as advisors for Hollywood movies, even the most diabolical, gruesome and sexually explicit, if it was believed they would advance the cause of Roman Catholicism thereby. Some even became actors themselves. This will be well demonstrated a little further on in this book, when we examine the movie, *The Exorcist*.

Sec. 145 reads as follows: “Catholic associations for the cinema should collaborate with their counterparts in the other media in endeavours to plan, produce, distribute and exhibit films imbued with religious principles. With discrimination, they should also use for religious teaching all the new developments in this field which make inexpensive productions possible. These include gramophone records, audio and video-tape recorders, video-cassettes and all the other machines that record and play back either sound or static or moving images.”

Of course, vast strides have been made in these fields since this was written; but just as the Roman Catholic institution made great use of these now old-fashioned forms of equipment, so today it makes great use of the modern successors of those old records, tape recorders, etc.

Pieces of Dreams (1970): Hollywood Attacks Priestly Celibacy

In the post-Vatican II world and in the midst of the iniquitous sexual revolution and anything-goes philosophy of the 1960s, which swept up an entire generation of disillusioned youth throughout the western world, literally thousands of priests left the “Church” of Rome, unable to accept or promote Rome’s teachings on abortion, contraception, divorce, homosexuality, papal infallibility, etc. For them, the world had moved on and the “Church” had been left behind, stuck in an antiquated morality that as far as they were concerned was out of touch with the realities of the modern world. In particular, these young priests rejected priestly celibacy as old-fashioned and unnecessary.

Hollywood, of course, was not slow to take up these themes, producing movies which inevitably showed priests having affairs (often with nuns) and then leaving their “Church”. This is precisely what occurs in *Pieces of Dreams*.

The theme was very real. These things were happening all the time. But of course they had always happened, throughout the centuries. The only difference was that in the decade of the 1960s and afterwards, it was out in the open far more, and thousands of ex-priests were not ashamed to admit it.

***M*A*S*H* (1970): the Roman Catholic Religion Ridiculed**

Ring Lardner received an Oscar for the screenplay for *M*A*S*H*. A quarter of a century before, he had refused to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities regarding his possible affiliation to the Communist Party, and now he was rewarded for a film which was not only a criticism of America’s involvement in wars but also an outright attack on religion, in particular the Roman Catholic religion. Robert Altman, the director, was a Roman Catholic, but even so *M*A*S*H* was “the first major American movie openly to ridicule belief in God – not phony belief; real belief”, according to reviewer Roger Greenspun of the *New York Times*.⁴⁸⁴ Clearly Altman was a very disillusioned Romanist. Romish chaplains were depicted as fools, Romish sacraments were mocked, and sexual sin was glorified. Bible-reading, praying characters were ridiculed. Sex, in fact, replaced religion in the film. Sex, in essence, *was* the religion, just as it was the religion of multitudes of young people of that era.

***The Godfather* (1972): Rome’s Mafia Connections Shown**

Hollywood’s attitude to Rome had now changed dramatically. With no pro-Roman Catholic Production Code to live up to, directors and producers were free to make any movies they liked, and to attack any and all religion – including the Romish religion – freely. And they did so with a vengeance, depicting such themes as intrigue, murder, corruption, sex and much more as being closely connected with the Roman Catholic “Church”.

In 1972 *The Godfather* was released, to be followed by *The Godfather*:

Part II in 1974. These films became icons for devoted moviegoers. In them, Romanism and the organised Italian Mafia criminal underworld in America are constantly interwoven and juxtaposed, with the crimes committed in the film being linked with solemn Romish rituals. These films have been interpreted as follows: “From wedding to baptism in *The Godfather*; from first communion to a final prayer at the hour of death in *Godfather II*, organized religion and organized crime reveal themselves as two faces of a single, blood-stained coin.” “Catholicism is revealed as another racket, another set of opportunities to gain advantage by lying to yourself and to others, another hand-kissing hierarchy of absolute power”.⁴⁸⁵ It seems a huge stretch to believe that it may only have been the intention of the movie’s maker to interweave Romanism because the characters in the movie were Italians and thus Romanism was an integral part of their lives, and not for any sinister purpose of portraying the Romish religion as evil in itself. Certainly the movies’ director, Francis Ford Coppola, a Roman Catholic, is on record as having said, “I decided to include some Catholic rituals in the movie, which are part of my Catholic heritage.... I had never seen a film that captured the essence of what it was like to be an Italian American.”⁴⁸⁶ But he was not being totally forthright in saying this. The fact is that Romanism was depicted as being integrally connected with evil Italian Mafia figures – as indeed, in the real world, it is. The Italian priests are depicted as being unconcerned with how their Italian parishioners live, and only concerned with the external, empty rituals of the “Church”. As long as the parishioners attend the rituals, the priests are satisfied. They ask for no more, and the gangsters continue to flourish and commit terrible crimes, while remaining in good standing in the bosom of the “Church” in which they have lived their whole lives.

***Mean Streets* (1972): a Dark Depiction of Popish Guilt**

Another movie showing the interaction between Italian-American Roman Catholicism and Italian-American crime, this film was the work of Martin Scorsese, a Roman Catholic from Little Italy in New York who was also an ex-seminarian and therefore very familiar with the priesthood. It has been said of his films that they are “disturbingly sexual, embarrassingly personal, overpoweringly violent, and intensely

religious.”⁴⁸⁷

The film centres around an Italian-American Roman Catholic man involved with the Mafia, and his guilt and desire for forgiveness and comfort from his “Church”, which he just cannot find. All he experiences from his “Church” is more guilt, not peace or forgiveness. This of course is the reality for millions upon millions of Roman Catholics worldwide: their “Church” entraps them in a seemingly never-ending cycle of guilt and confession, but this does not bring peace to any who are truly troubled by their sins. Sadly, Scorsese obviously knew this only too well. Yet most of these Roman Catholics remain in their “Church” because it is all they know, constantly hoping for the very thing – forgiveness of sins – which they can never truly find there, for it is a false church and proclaims a false way of salvation.

Last Tango in Paris (1973): No Widespread Roman Catholic Outrage

As the 1970s progressed it was as plain as day that the morals of American Roman Catholics had sunk to new levels, with vile, immoral movies being praised in Roman Catholic publications. For example, in 1973 *Last Tango in Paris* was released, a film containing scenes of nudity, vicious and degrading sex, masturbation and murder; and yet NCOMP reviewers were not in agreement about the film, with one priest recommending an “A4” rating, and another reviewer calling the film a “stunning and overwhelming experience.” Furthermore, Roman Catholic publications were far from condemnatory. “Catholic opinion in *Commonweal, America*, and the *Listener* reflected the radical change in America toward movies of this sort. There was no sense of moral outrage, no demand for a national boycott by Catholics.”⁴⁸⁸

Brother Sun, Sister Moon (1973): a Flower-Child Francis

This film, about the life of the Roman Catholic “saint”, Francis of Assisi, was made by Roman Catholic Franco Zefferelli. But it depicted Francis as a virtual flower-child, doubtless to attract the hippie generation.⁴⁸⁹

Godspell and Jesus Christ Superstar (1973): Hollywood Declares Open Season on the Son of God

Now that there was no Jesuit-authored Production Code, nor any

Roman Catholic Production Code administrators breathing down their necks, leftist Hollywood producers declared open season on both true Christianity and false “Christianity”, and even on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. In Hollywood movies of the time, Christ was attacked, mocked, ridiculed. He was not shown as divine, only as human – sometimes *very* human: a wandering hippie, a cultic “free love”, anything-goes caricature, His disciples mere groupies of the sort that were following the rock stars of the time. *Godspell* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* were the most flagrant examples of this, but they were not the only ones.

But Romanism was not a spent force in Hollywood. Not by any means. And Jesuit involvement in the movie industry continued. This is amply demonstrated by *The Exorcist*.

***The Exorcist* (1973): a Jesuit Horror Film**

This film not only pushed the boundaries of decency even further, sinking to new lows in the horror film genre, but it also did something more. “*The Exorcist* is not merely a horror film; it is a *Catholic* horror film. And, more specifically, it is a *Jesuit* horror film.”⁴⁹⁰

Indeed so. But how could this be?

The film came out in 1973. Its writer and producer was William Peter Blatty, a Roman Catholic American of Lebanese descent. He had been a student at Georgetown University, the oldest Roman Catholic university in America and, specifically, a *Jesuit* university. He had considered becoming a Jesuit priest himself. His mother had recently died and he had many questions about life after death, and wanted to make a film examining these. While at Georgetown he had read about a Roman Catholic exorcism, and decided to make a film about it. The demon possession he read about concerned a 14-year-old Lutheran boy in Maryland who had experienced poltergeist phenomena in his room after playing with the Ouija board. The family’s Lutheran pastor could do nothing for him, telling them to go and see a Roman Catholic priest as “the Catholics know about things like this.” This they did, and the boy was eventually supposedly delivered after Jesuit priests performed a month of exorcisms. He was baptized as a Roman Catholic during this time. And in 1950 one of the Jesuits who had been involved

addressed Georgetown University where Blatty was a student.⁴⁹¹ It had a profound effect on him.

He remained fascinated with exorcisms, and after his mother died (and encouraged by Jesuit priest Thomas V. Birmingham, who later played the president of Georgetown University in the film) Blatty went into seclusion in 1969 and wrote a novel called *The Exorcist*. It became a bestseller, and then was turned into a movie.

Thus the film's writer/producer was a Jesuit-educated Papist; the film's director, on the other hand, was William Friedkin, an agnostic Jew! Here we see yet another Papist/Jewish collaboration on a Hollywood movie. From its very earliest years Hollywood had been under the influence of Papists and Jews, and even now, despite the Production Code having been long removed, that collaboration still at times continued.

It is a film about a girl whose mother comes to the Jesuits' Georgetown University – Blatty's university, which features prominently in the movie in various ways. In the film, when the young girl begins to behave in a violent and obscene manner, showing signs of demon possession, her mother asks a young Jesuit priest-psychiatrist, who has begun to question his faith after his mother's death, to perform an exorcism. He, along with another priest-exorcist, perform the exorcism, the girl is no longer possessed, but both priests die. This ending, although defended by Friedkin the Jewish director, was very unsatisfactory for Blatty, the Papist writer-producer, because the film gave the appearance that evil had been victorious, which was not what he wanted to convey.

Nevertheless, it did convey other things Blatty wanted to say. For example, Jesuits have been willing to die for their religion throughout their history, and many of them have. The death of the two Jesuit exorcists, then, was almost to be expected (in the film) in the sense that they were "heroic" priests willing to lay down their own lives for the sake of freeing the young girl from the demon. The movie's main priest shouts out to the devil, "Take me! Come into me!" This the devil does, and the priest dies a violent death; yet his death is seen as a sacrifice of love for the soul of the girl. This is why Blatty gave the name Damien Karras to the priest in the movie: "Damien" was the name of a third-century "saint" who was brutally killed, and it

was also the name of a nineteenth-century Romish priest who died of leprosy while ministering to lepers on a Hawaiian island; and the surname “Karras”, Blatty explained, evoked the Latin word *caritas*, or “charitable love.”⁴⁹²

Even priest Karras’ doubts about his faith, and his physical wrestling with the devil in the movie, are straight out of the Jesuit textbook, *The Spiritual Exercises*, written by the Jesuit founder Ignatius de Loyola. Loyola wrote, “it is characteristic of the evil spirit to harass with anxiety, to afflict with sadness, to raise obstacles backed by fallacious reasonings that disturb the soul”; and, “The action of the evil spirit upon such souls is violent, noisy, and disturbing.”⁴⁹³

By having the Jesuit Karras call out to the demon to possess him instead of the girl, and then having him die as a demon-possessed man, Blatty claimed (in the Jesuit magazine, *America*, in February 1974) that the priest acted out of love, and by sacrificing his own life in this way he defeated the devil. However, director Friedkin filmed the priest’s violent end in such a way as to make it uncertain what the priest’s ultimate fate would be. Those watching the film were left to make up their own minds as to whether or not the priest had actually succeeded in defeating the devil.

No true Christian would say such a thing to a devil, of course; nor can a true Christian ever be demon-possessed.

Not only was Blatty a Jesuit-educated Roman Catholic, but real Jesuit priests were used as consultants for the movie, and even *acted* in the film. Jesuit priest William O’Malley played the part of Jesuit priest Dyer, and Jesuit priest Thomas Bermingham played the president of Georgetown University. These men, claiming to be “men of God”, “other Christs” (as priests of Rome do), were happy to be part of a film with vile language, extreme violence and perverted sex! This truly shows the nature of Roman Catholicism. They were able to overlook these things, for they knew that it promoted the power of Romanism, which was all that mattered to them. In becoming actors in this film, and consultants for it, these Jesuits were simply obeying the directive given in Section 106 of Rome’s “Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication” (*Communio et Progressio*), issued just two years before in 1971, which (as we have seen) stated: “As representatives of

the Church, Bishops, priests, religious and laity are increasingly asked to write in the press, or appear on radio and television, or to collaborate in filming. They are warmly urged to undertake this work, which has consequences that are far more important than is usually imagined.” Just how important such consequences would be for Rome when *The Exorcist* was released, will soon be seen.

In order to achieve as much realism as possible from the actors, Friedkin went to extreme lengths on set to make this horror film. He and his crew would fire off guns at times, simply for the purpose of making the actors tense and jumpy. Complex rigging caused real pain to some of the actors and their screams were genuine. Friedkin even slapped Jesuit priest O’Malley through the face while the cameras rolled, so as to get real pain registered on his face. At times the set was made very cold, down to 10 degrees below zero, so that the actors really felt cold and their breath was frozen, to demonstrate how the demon sucked the warmth out of the air. And on top of everything there were very real disasters that occurred on set, such as an interior set burning down. Rumours started to circulate that the production was cursed, rumours which Friedkin was happy to encourage. All of these things made everyone very edgy, leading to Jesuit priest Bermingham “blessing” the set.⁴⁹⁴

Even though Friedkin deliberately tried to create a tense atmosphere, real pain, etc., we have no doubt that demonic forces *were* at work behind the scenes of this movie.

It was a huge success when released, with long queues of people waiting to see it and security guards to prevent rioting. Audiences were deeply shocked by its horrifyingly graphic nature. In addition to being full of violence, degraded sexual practices and obscene language, it contained scenes of urination and vomiting, and of course, graphic portrayals of demon possession. Mass hysteria ensued: some people threw up while watching it, some passed out, some ran in terror for the exits, some cried uncontrollably, and some believed they had become demon-possessed while watching it. There is no reason to doubt that they really had, in some cases. Nurses were present when it opened in New York to assist in the chaos. In Los Angeles, one theatre manager estimated that at each screening there was an average of four people fainting, six

vomiting, and many running out of the theatre in panic. There were reports of heart attacks and even a miscarriage as people viewed it. People were admitted to hospitals countrywide after viewing it. An English boy apparently died from an epileptic fit the day after seeing the film; a German boy shot himself in the head; a teenager killed a nine-year-old girl and said he did it while possessed; a man killed his wife with his bare hands after he believed he had become possessed. In fact, everywhere there were people claiming that either they or their children were possessed.⁴⁹⁵ Demon possession, as the Bible shows, is a very real phenomenon, and no doubt this horror film was an instrument of the devil in many cases of real demon possession at the time.

The film's "strange effect on adolescent girls" caused the British Board of Film Classification to refuse to permit recordings of it to be distributed in Britain until 1999. Yes, truly there was a dark power at work behind the scenes.

But just as the film's vile content had not stopped Jesuit priests from acting in it, it did not stop certain Jesuits from praising it either. For example, Jesuit priest Robert Boyle spoke well of it for its portrayal of the Jesuit community, among other things, in the Jesuit magazine *America*.⁴⁹⁶

This willingness of Jesuits to act in the film, and to praise it, is not at all surprising when one understands the unofficial Jesuit motto that "the end justifies the means", and the strong Jesuit belief in the power of theatre (and film) to influence people along Jesuit lines. In making this film, Blatty gave the world nothing less than "Jesuit theatre."⁴⁹⁷

What *The Exorcist* did for Roman Catholicism was phenomenal. As one film critic, Pauline Kael of the *New Yorker*, said, it was "the biggest recruiting poster the Catholic Church has had since the sunnier days of *Going My Way* and *The Bells of St. Mary's*." For it "says that the Catholic Church is the true faith, feared by the Devil, and that its rituals can exorcise demons."⁴⁹⁸ Precisely. Just as that Lutheran pastor had directed a family in his flock to go to a priest of Rome for help concerning a case of demon possession, so now, after the film's release, non-Papists began to increasingly look to the priests of Rome to help them with exorcisms. As a result of *The Exorcist*, people of various religious persuasions became convinced that if ever an exorcism was

needed, a priest of Rome needed to be called in. This faith in priest-exorcists was reflected in other movies as well: for example, in *The Amityville Horror* (1979), in which a family calls in their parish priest to exorcise their home. Truly, this Jesuit horror movie had increased the power and prestige of the Romish priesthood immensely.

“For an America soaked in ‘God is Dead’ promulgations, *The Exorcist* was a startling revelation, an everlasting no to secular humanism, a homage to the demonic and the angelic, an epic poem of Catholicism.”⁴⁹⁹

“Long before William Peter Blatty read about the 1949 exorcism in Maryland, he was being schooled by Jesuits. Blatty – perhaps unwittingly – articulated in his novel and film themes that he had been taught during his eight years of Jesuit education, which was noticed by Jesuits like Robert Boyle. *The Exorcist*... [can be viewed] as an expression... of a complicated Jesuit spirituality.”⁵⁰⁰ This is correct. As we have shown elsewhere in this book, the Jesuits almost from their very inception were well aware of the power of theatre to move audiences, and they wrote and produced many plays. Then when film was invented, they continued using their methods to the same purpose. It will be remembered that centuries ago, Jesuits were in the forefront of elaborate stage productions that dazzled the audiences. And this Jesuit strategy is seen clearly in *The Exorcist*. “The explicit imagery that gives *The Exorcist* much of its power grew from the same Jesuit heritage.”⁵⁰¹

William Peter Blatty had, probably unknowingly, served Satan well. The Jesuits, who for centuries had been at the forefront of education and the theatre and later the movie industry precisely for the purpose of moulding the world in their own image as far as possible, had shaped and then directed Blatty to play a major part in advancing the Jesuit/Papist cause. A vile horror movie had done wonders for the Roman Catholic “Church”.

Interestingly, by the time *The Exorcist* was filmed and released, Blatty claimed he was no longer a practising Roman Catholic. But he did not call himself an “ex-Catholic”, rather merely a “Christian.” He once said that there is actually no such thing as an “ex-Roman Catholic”, for the Roman Catholic religion is “like a woman you’ve had children by; she’s always in your blood.”⁵⁰² Indeed, even if he was

no longer a practising Papist (and with Jesuits and their pupils one can simply never be sure of this), Blatty's movie was still an extremely Papist one, serving the interests of the Vatican very well. The Jesuit-educated Blatty created a pro-Jesuit movie that did wonders for the Order. The Jesuits' fingerprints were all over it.

And yet...although it was certainly their intention to give the world a pro-Papist, pro-Jesuit film, and for many this was exactly what it was and it did wonders for Rome, for many others it had the opposite effect. For these others it was nothing but “a real horror show devoid of both God and humanity”,⁵⁰³ for it depicted a weak God and very weak priests opposing a very powerful devil, a Roman Catholic “Church” which used primitive rituals, miraculous medals, holy water, ceremony rather than anything really genuine. “Warner Brothers had the biggest hit of the Christmas season not by celebrating an infant God of love, but by offering a horror masterpiece that wallowed in curses, blasphemies, desecrations, spirit-rappings, levitations, sexual perversion, hysteria, evil spirits, frustration, doubt, and despair. Audiences were coming not to be uplifted, but to be ‘grossed out.’”⁵⁰⁴ There is much truth in this. For many, it was a pro-Roman Catholic recruitment film; for many others, it was an attack on Roman Catholicism, a denial of its supposed power and sanctity. Much of this did not please Blatty. He disagreed with director Friedkin over the ending where the priest appears to perhaps have been defeated by Satan. And he disagreed with Friedkin about other scenes which ended up being deleted from the film, scenes which Blatty felt were crucial to explaining the theology behind the film. But Friedkin wanted action only, not pauses for theological explanations. To this degree the Jesuits did not have it all their way with the filming. Besides, the film was so graphically horrific that, quite frankly, it is doubtful whether any inclusion of spoken Romanist theology in an attempt to explain the film and give it an overtly Roman Catholic purpose would have succeeded at all. It was so full of horror imagery – blood-covered crucifixes, vomit, filthy language, and above all, degraded sexual practices – that any overt Roman Catholic “message” would have failed. One critic branded it nothing but a “religious porn film.”⁵⁰⁵

But as it turned out, years later William Peter Blatty got the ending

to the film that he had always wanted. As stated previously, he had always been dissatisfied with the ending, for it seemed to indicate that evil had triumphed. He wanted the film to end in what he considered to be an uplifting way. In 2000 he and Friedkin re-edited it, added eleven minutes of new footage, and re-released it, advertising it as “The Version You’ve Never Seen.” “In the 2000 version, Regan [the young girl] not only recognizes the symbolism of Father Dyer’s Roman collar with an affectionate kiss, she smiles and waves at him as the car drives away. She has undergone some kind of transformation. Rather than giving Karras’ medal to Father Dyer as she does in the original, Chris MacNeil [the mother] keeps it. Blatty explained that this gesture meant that ‘she is now open to faith.’”⁵⁰⁶ Furthermore, the movie now ends with priest Dyer meeting the Jewish detective and walking off arm in arm; and the last words heard in the film are, “God is most great.”

Pro-Papist American TV Shows of the 1970s

Certain American TV shows were of particular value to Rome at this time. One such was *The Archie Bunker Show*, a very popular comedy series. Carroll O’Connor, the Irish-American who played the lead character, received the “St. Genesius Award” in Rome, which was periodically presented to outstanding Roman Catholic actors.⁵⁰⁷

Rome’s Worldwide Influence Over the Mass Media by the Mid-1970s

The massive influence of Roman Catholicism in American broadcasting by the first half of the 1970s is shown by the number of Roman Catholic radio and TV programmes, some of which had been broadcast for decades, and most of which were propagated through the Department of Communications of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the United States Catholic Conference. In 1974 the *Catholic Almanac* listed the following Romish radio programmes: *Christian in Action*, a weekly programme heard on over 50 radio stations; *Christopher Radio Programme*, a weekly programme heard on 937 stations; *Christopher “Thought for Today”*, a daily programme on over 2600 stations; *Crossroads*, a weekly programme on almost 325 stations and produced by the Passionist “Fathers” and “Brothers”; *Guideline*, a weekly programme heard on approximately 90 stations;

and *Sacred Heart Programme*, five 15-minute programmes and one half-hour programme produced weekly by the Jesuits. And it listed the following Roman Catholic TV programmes: *Sacred Heart Programme*, a weekly programme produced by the Jesuits; *Directions*, a weekly programme on over 100 stations; *Look Up and Live*, on approximately 120 stations; and *Religious Specials*, the Roman Catholic portions of which were telecast on approximately 175 stations.⁵⁰⁸

But it was not just in the United States that Roman Catholicism exerted a huge influence in the mass media by the first half of the 1970s. In Britain, Roman Catholics systematically infiltrated key positions in broadcasting and other areas of the mass media. The 1974 edition of the Official Catholic Directory of England and Wales gave the names and addresses of 26 Popish priests attached to the BBC as local radio advisors; 12 priests attached to the independent TV companies; four Roman Catholic representatives (two bishops, a priest and a “layman”) on the Central Religious Advisory Committee of the BBC and ITA; the priest who was Roman Catholic assistant to the Head of Religious Broadcasting for the BBC; the priest who was Roman Catholic assistant for religious broadcasting for North England, Midland and Wales; the priest who was the Roman Catholic representative on the religious advisory board of the Independent Broadcasting Authority; and the director and board of trustees, most of whom were bishops, of the Catholic Radio and Television Centre in Middlesex.⁵⁰⁹

And if this was the number of priests involved in the British broadcasting system, one can only imagine the number of Roman Catholic employees distributed throughout the system as well.

The same kind of Papist infiltration took place in New Zealand. It was so obvious that in the mid-1970s Radio New Zealand was known colloquially, to the senior non-Romanist broadcasting officials, as “Radio Vatican”; and so was the NZBC before it. Most key positions were held by Papists.⁵¹⁰ In fact, according to a senior non-Papist broadcasting official in 1975, 82% of all NZBC employees were Papists, and the programming section consisted entirely of Papists.⁵¹¹ This in a country where Papists at the time constituted only 17% of the population.

According to the New Zealand *Tablet* of May 19, 1976, the Catholic

Women's League, and Roman Catholic schools, were seeking to actively promote involvement in the media, especially television, "to promote Christian and human values."⁵¹²

Truly it is accurate to say of the mid-1970s that: "If one takes a generalised view of material presented in our mass media, there are indications of a systematic Roman Catholic influence in the mass media throughout the western world"; and, "throughout the western world the control of the flow of information in the mass media, is fundamentally a Catholic Action phenomenon."⁵¹³

The movement known as Catholic Action was one of the primary sinister influences behind the scenes, to bring this about. Although only a minority of Roman Catholics ever belonged to Catholic Action, around 10%, it was nevertheless extremely powerful, exerting a disproportionate influence over society wherever it was active. How true this comment from New Zealand: "in the case of New Zealand this figure [10% of Roman Catholics] accounts for 50,000 people. Now if, for the sake of argument, there happened to be 50,000 Atheist-Communist Actionists in New Zealand engaged in activities such as the programming of broadcasting (giving a subtle Communist slant to news and current affairs etc.)... or if this much was even suspected – then the thinking non-Communist would be highly concerned at the implications."⁵¹⁴ Why, then, were non-Roman Catholics not concerned at the militant nature of Catholic Action and other Popish movements, and their infiltration of key areas of society, and why are they not concerned still? Tragically, it is because Protestants and others no longer know the truth about Romanism and its plans for world domination; plans which are more insidious, and ultimately more dangerous, than the world domination plans of international Communism or international Islam.

"The Roman Catholic lawyer and writer, the late Edmond Paris, has shown that when an organised movement such as Catholic Action controls the media it also controls the affairs of the country."⁵¹⁵

***The Omen* (1976) and Its Sequels: Romanism Portrayed as Weak, Useless "Christianity"**

These horror films – *The Omen* (1976), *Damien – Omen II* (1978), and

The Final Conflict – Omen III (1981) – depicted the triumph of satanic forces over Roman Catholic priests and ritual. They depicted Rome’s priests as fools and comics, well-meaning but unable to stop the forces of darkness.

The Omen was adapted from a Gothic novel by David Seltzer, a book which was about a time when “democracy was fading, mind-impairing drugs had become a way of life... God was dead.” It was about the time of the coming of Antichrist, and mankind could do nothing to prevent it. And Roman Catholicism was portrayed as Christianity, utterly powerless, a religion of superstition, one moreover full of priests and nuns who were actually secret Satanists. The foster family of the Antichrist in the film is portrayed as a lapsed Roman Catholic family. Romanism is everywhere in the film – but always in a negative light, a religion of ineffectual ritual and superstition.

In *Damien – Omen II*, this attack on Romanism and its priesthood is intensified. And in *The Final Conflict – Omen III*, the demon actually mocks and sodomises a statue of Rome’s “christ”. Again in this film, Rome’s priests are defeated one after another. And yet in the end, supposedly, “Christ” wins. It is a hollow victory, however, considering that in all three films there are hours of celluloid depicting Satan’s victories and power.

***Rocky* (1976) and its Sequels: Romanism Once Again Holds Its Head Up**

This movie, and its sequels, centred around a character called Rocky Balboa, a Papist Italian-American boxer, played by Sylvester Stallone, an Italian-American actor who became one of the most famous and one of the richest actors in Hollywood history.

Although the films are about a white heavyweight boxer who beats black boxers (and in the wake of the boxing successes of Mohammed Ali this went down well with white audiences), it was also a film in which Romanism played quite a part, albeit usually in the background rather than up-front. But it was always *there*: whether represented by an image of “Christ” behind the ring in a boxing club, or Rocky asking a priest to bless him, or holding a vigil at a Romish shrine, having a Romish wedding, or praying in a Romish hospital chapel. He may seduce the girl before marriage, he may be a boxer from the

other side of the tracks, he may not be a very good Romanist, but at heart he is still a Romanist; that is the point. He is an Italian, and therefore he is a Romanist. It is part of who he is. It has been said that “Rocky’s intrinsic humanity and his wholehearted love for marriage, his wife, and his kids afford a moving witness to Roman Catholicism’s emphasis on the sanctity of the family,”⁵¹⁶ and this may be true to the extent that Rome has always emphasised these things in its teaching; and of course this would have been a huge boost for Romanism at a time when Hollywood had declared open season on the “Church”. But let us not kid ourselves here: Romanism’s much-vaunted “emphasis on the sanctity of the family” has been, through the centuries, nullified by its own immoral practices: enforced celibacy for priests contrary to the institution of marriage, leading to all the filthy sexual immoralities of which so many multiplied thousands of them have been guilty; sex before marriage; philandering husbands all too often easily “absolved” by going to confession; nuns shut up in convents and denied the joys of married life; children and women forced to confess sexual sins to a bachelor priest; children abused by priests; and so much more.

Besides, for all its supposed promotion of the sanctity of Romish marriage, the films are full of brutal violence in the name of sport, filthy language, etc. But these things do not seem to overly concern priests and people within the “Church” of Rome.

Nevertheless, “Few contemporary film portraits of Catholics celebrate such stirring accomplishments [as “Italian pride, Catholic marriage, and the family circle”].... Most contemporary portraits of ethnic Catholicism are dark portraits of stunted lives, compulsive guilt, and abiding despair.”⁵¹⁷ This was written in 1984, and was correct, as we have seen: after the demise of the PCA and the Legion, Hollywood declared war on the Roman Catholic religion. It was a vicious backlash, a reaction against those decades in which Romanism had been Hollywood’s religion by force, and film-makers (mostly Jewish) had been compelled to kowtow to Rome’s stranglehold on the industry, even though they well knew that the saccharine image of Romanism so often depicted in the movies of the era was far from the grim reality. Now, with all that in the past, they were wreaking their revenge. But the *Rocky* movies were, for Rome, a welcome lull in the battle.

Lipstick (1976): an Attack on the False Sanctity of Romish Establishments

In this film the Roman Catholic “Church” once again comes in for a beating. It is about a rapist who is a music teacher at a Romish girls’ school, and who is supported by nuns who cannot believe that he is guilty of what he has been accused of – and yet he is. And there were other films, too, along similar lines, which came out over the next few years.

Saturday Night Fever (1977): an Anti-Roman Catholic Disco Movie

After the Production Code days were over, Hollywood, in its all-out attack on Roman Catholicism, focused most often on Rome’s attitude to sexual matters. This was seen very plainly in *Saturday Night Fever*; an immensely popular musical centred on an Italian immigrant family in New York. One son is a priest, the other (played by John Travolta) is a teen idol and disco star. The father is an unemployed though hard-working Italian immigrant who has seen better days. The mother is a devout Roman Catholic who takes refuge from the reality of her life in her religion and wishes her wayward son was a priest like his brother.

The priest-brother renounces the priesthood when he realises that he was a priest only because this is what his parents wanted for him. And the girls in the film are Roman Catholic girls with very loose morals. Italian Roman Catholic culture has so often inculcated the great double standard of sexual morality: that the men must try to seduce the girls, but the girls must either remain virgins or become whores. There is no middle ground: they must either be very loose, or very virtuous.

Tony, the wayward son, tries on his ex-priest brother’s priestly garment. “In a daring image, the most striking anti-Catholic metaphor in the whole Hollywood catechism, Tony imagines himself strangled by the vestments of the old creed. The scene, a pantomime, details the central idea about Catholicism and sexuality in contemporary film – Catholicism is a ‘hangup’ that kills. Catholicism, this image asserts, strangles the young with outworn ideas, stifles desires, and makes growth, happiness, and autonomy impossible. In cinema’s new cosmology of sexuality, Roman Catholicism is the dark star, the death principle, a somber creed steeped in thanatos and crippling guilt.”⁵¹⁸ Unfortunately, with Romanism equated with Christianity in Hollywood after so many decades, such powerful criticism, and

rejection, of Romanism in a film was also a powerful criticism and rejection of Christianity. And this is how millions took it, when they watched films such as this. An entire generation of young people were influenced against Christianity because of what they saw in the cinema. It was a vicious assault which very few true Christians recognised as such then, or have recognised since.

***The Amityville Horror* (1979): Depicting Demonic Victory Over Rome's Priests**

In this horror film, the clear victors are demons, not the Roman Catholic institution. It revolves around a haunted house purchased by a Methodist man and his Roman Catholic family, and the horrors they experience while living there. A nun who attempts to enter the house is forced by demons to flee, vomiting as she does so. The priest who tries to confront the devil is trapped in the house and overpowered by the demons, and even back in his own rectory continues to experience demonic attacks. He is just no match for the devil, as is made abundantly clear, and ends up, blinded and in despair, being taken care of by another priest.

In the film there is also a lengthy theological debate between this priest and two others, who try to dissuade him from attempting the exorcism and tell him that to proceed would be to disobey his superiors. He is described as a modernist priest who felt that the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s did not go far enough; and he pleads with them that the "Church" is his home and his strength, and both he and the family he is trying to help need the "Church" very much. But the other priests recommend nothing more than a vacation for him. In the words of two researchers, these scenes in the film "suggest a sinister segment of Hollywood's treatment of Catholics in the sixties and seventies. The combination of massive change in the Church and massive turmoil in the country set the stage for old demons which the new Church seemingly couldn't control. The Age of Kennedy and the tragic aftermath of Camelot shifted the focus to the evil assassin's magically accurate bullet and the devil's dark powers."⁵¹⁹ It is true that Hollywood had turned against the Roman Catholic institution, to a very large extent, in the post-Code years; but against this must be set the other undeniable fact, that for decades Hollywood had been dominated, even controlled, by Romanism, as has been amply documented here. And

as we have said before, there is always a reaction to such oppressive control by this evil religious institution. The reaction ends up being as evil as the religious institution it is reacting against (witness the French Revolution), but as terrible as this is, it is not at all surprising. Rome, by its sinister stranglehold on Hollywood for all those decades, sowed the seeds for the virulently anti-Romanist films which took such pleasure in mocking everything Roman Catholicism stood for in the years that followed the demise of its domination.

The Wanderers (1979): Another Critique of Roman Catholicism

This was yet another film depicting Italian-American life, in which sexual themes abound and the attitude of the Roman Catholic institution to sex is mocked.

The Runner Stumbles (1979): Yet Another Critique of Roman Catholicism

This was the film version of a Broadway drama of the same name, and another assault on Romanism. The priest in the film, played by Dick Van Dyke, and the nun, played by Kathleen Quinlan, not having found what they sought in their “vocations” despite trying very hard, fall in love; but the priest’s devout housekeeper murders the nun, believing she was demon-possessed to seduce the priest. The priest leaves the priesthood, and at the nun’s graveside he cries out to God, “What kind of God are you? I loved her. I loved her. I don’t have the Church anymore. What do you want from me?”⁵²⁰ Romanism is depicted in this film as a failure, unable to satisfy the deepest longings of the heart (which is true). Such a film could never have been produced in Hollywood’s “Golden Age” when Joe Breen presided over the industry; but now, even though Roman Catholicism was still a powerful force to be reckoned with in the movie industry, it was by no means *all*-powerful. It could now be freely criticised, attacked, ridiculed in films, and it frequently was. And unfortunately many people, in seeing such films, equating Romanism with Christianity, were not only encouraged to forsake Romanism but to close their eyes even to true Christianity.

The devil had done his work well: through both pro-Papist and anti-Papist films, he was deceiving multitudes.



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE 1980s: THE MOVIE ASSAULT ON ROMANISM CONTINUES

The Legion Dies with Hardly a Whimper

By 1980 the NCOMP, the once all-powerful Legion of Decency, was finished. Hardly any Roman Catholics were in favour of it anymore, and even the bishops saw no reason for its continued existence. Conservative Roman Catholics had long since given up on it, once it had become liberal, and liberal Roman Catholics just saw no point to it. And so it was that Jesuit priest Patrick J. Sullivan announced that the NCOMP would not be publishing any more reviews after September 1980. “What had started with such a fury in 1934 died in 1980 with hardly a whimper of protest.”⁵²¹

For decades Rome had, through the Legion, exerted a massive influence over Hollywood. Film-makers were too afraid to cross it, for it threatened to condemn any film it did not like, and so they readily bowed and scraped to it, making the cuts and alterations which it demanded so as to bring every film into line with what Rome wanted. It was much, much more than a Roman Catholic rating organisation; it was a powerful censoring body. Sullivan lamented the loss of Legion power in its heyday with these words: “As everyone knows, Catholics had ‘clout’ in those days and because of that clout, motion pictures were a family entertainment.”⁵²² He was right about Roman Catholic clout: it had been immensely powerful. But as time went by that clout over Hollywood was eroded.

Not only did Roman Catholics, in large numbers, ignore Legion fulminations against movies from the very inception of the Legion itself, but in time Jesuit intellectuals, reading the signs of the times in society and realising that Rome’s attitude to the movies would have to change if it wanted to keep its hold on its own people, exerted their powerful influence over the Legion and swung it away from its original stance to a more liberalised, “tolerant” one. It became a battle between

the older, more traditionalist Roman Catholics, epitomised by Martin Quigley, and the newer, liberal Roman Catholics, led by Jesuits such as John Courtney Murray and Patrick J. Sullivan. And the Jesuits won. But their victory was not theirs alone: Roman Catholics in general simply refused to follow the dictates of the Legion, and flocked to see the very movies it condemned.⁵²³ America's moral values, if values they could be called, had permeated American Romanism. This was something the hierarchy of Rome came to realise, and to understand that it would have to "go with the flow" in order to hold on to American Roman Catholics.

How Protestant "Fundamentalism" Replaced the Legion of Decency

Some years after the NCOMP died, American Protestant organisations came to the fore as the new watchdogs of the movie industry. One was the American Family Association. Another, and by far the most well known and most influential, was the Christian Film and Television Commission, headed by Ted Baehr. Baehr's organisation had many similarities with the old Legion of Decency. For example, it asked those who supported it to take an oath of decency; and it issued *Movieguide*, which it touted as being a "family [it originally said "biblical"] guide to movies and entertainment." Like the old Legion, Baehr also sought to persuade movie and TV executives to adopt regulations that were very much like that old Jesuit creation, the Production Code.⁵²⁴

Also, Baehr created a movie classification system. But he classified movies not just according to their morality, but also their artistic merits. This naturally created many problems and hypocritical stances for him, when a movie was rated highly for its artistic merit but condemned for its moral tone. As we pointed out in the Introduction to this book, there is something extremely hypocritical about certain men, professing to be Christians, setting themselves up as movie reviewers, carefully watching all kinds of immoral movies themselves, and then turning around and warning other professing Christians not to watch those movies as they are morally objectionable! If a movie should be shunned by Christians, then it should be shunned by "Christian reviewers" as well. They do not occupy a higher plane than other men, able to resist the temptations others face. There is simply no excuse for going to watch morally objectionable films, not even so as to be able to tell others not to do so!

A pastor does not say to his flock, “Stay here while I go into that brothel to see what it’s like, and then I can let you know whether you should go in or not.” What is good for the goose is good for the gander.

That Baehr was very influenced by the old Production Code, and by the work of the Legion, was obvious. And despite having a very undeserved reputation as something of a Protestant fundamentalist, he was more than willing to seek the assistance of Roman Catholics for his work, thereby showing his true ecumenical colours. In 1992, for example, he asked Romish cardinal, Roger Mahony, to work with him in seeking to get the industry to set up a regulatory system, as in the past. Mahony, initially sympathetic to the idea, changed his mind when it was criticised by Hollywood leaders. He decided that he preferred the idea of Hollywood producers voluntarily cutting back on the amount of sex and violence in their films. And he stated that it was not for him to dictate which films Roman Catholics could see and which they could not, but that this must be left to their own consciences. A very American-sounding response, though far from biblical and, furthermore, very hypocritical too, given Rome’s antipathy towards Americanism and towards the idea of its subjects following their own consciences in anything else.

And so a most extraordinary situation had developed: that of *Roman Catholics* sounding like liberal, amoral upholders of individual liberty of conscience, and *Protestant “fundamentalists”* sounding like old-style, authoritarian Roman Catholic priests!

Don’t Go in the House (1980): Hollywood Keeps Up Its War Against Romanism

In this Gothic tragedy, once again Romanism comes in for a beating. An Italian Roman Catholic man leaves his wife for other women, and she, a devout Romanist but unstable, believes that their son Donny must have the demons of lust burned out of him, so she holds his arms over her kitchen stove and severely burns him. Donny becomes a twisted soul, sexually abusing and torturing women with a blowtorch. When he goes to steal “holy water” from a Roman Catholic “church”, the priest is ineffectual in helping the demon-possessed Donny, who later uses his blowtorch on the priest, symbol of a “Church” which is powerless to help him.

***True Confessions* (1981): Irish-American Romanists Depicted as Depraved**

True Confessions is a film about a policeman investigating prominent Roman Catholic “laymen” for the brutal rape and murder of a young girl. In addition, the cop’s brother is an Irish-American monsignor, the chancellor of the archdiocese of Los Angeles, and involved in corruption with the Roman Catholics under investigation. The scandal that erupts destroys the priestly brother.

This movie deliberately and ruthlessly attacks and pulls down the kind of Irish-American Romanism portrayed in the much older *Going My Way*. Instead of the happy-go-lucky lightness of *Going My Way*, *True Confessions* is full of Irish-American Roman Catholic corruption and perversion – and indeed Hollywood was definitely now portraying Irish-Americans this way. It was not the huge commercial success that *Going My Way* had been, but that is not the point: the film reflected “a revolution in the representation of Irish Catholic America on film and in television since the 1960s.... Depicted for thirty or forty years as pictures of innocence, guardians of morality, and/or exemplars of patriotism in movies like *Going My Way*, Irish American Catholics were now showing up largely as cynical cops, corrupt politicians, nationalist zealots, or hypocritical priests.” And, “because Irish Americans have long dominated and continue to dominate the Catholic church in America, *True Confessions* stands at a critical point in movie representations of the American Catholic church.”⁵²⁵

The movie was based on a book by John Gregory Dunne, who also wrote the screenplay. Dunne was an Irish-American Romanist himself, who believed that Irish America could only properly be understood through its religion. In this he was correct, for Roman Catholicism has dominated and defined Irish-Americans through the decades. He believed that the Roman Catholic institution “is the root of Irish American corruption and repression.”⁵²⁶ And he pulled no punches in getting this message across in the movie. Andrew Greeley, a Roman Catholic, said angrily of the movie that the “Irish characters in it, civil and ecclesiastical, are without exception, venal, corrupt, obsessed, sick, hypocritical and disgusting.”⁵²⁷ The Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States must have been fuming! How times had changed for them.

Not only does the film deal with corruption in the Roman Catholic “Church”, but also with sexual sin. For example, a Monsignor is found dead and naked in a brothel; the married Roman Catholic men in the film all have girlfriends or prostitutes on the side; etc. The film shows supposedly “respectable” Roman Catholics involved in all kinds of sexual sins.

Of course, many Roman Catholics did not want to admit it when the film was made and many do not want to admit it now, but the sad truth is that the Roman Catholic institution, in the United States no less than anywhere else, *is indeed* deeply involved in these very sins and crimes, and always has been.⁵²⁸ The evidence has always been there, through the centuries, a vast accumulation of evidence, but tragically most Roman Catholics have chosen to ignore it or pretend it is not true, and their ecclesiastical leaders have done their best to brush it under an increasingly lumpy carpet. It was only in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the scandal broke worldwide about the vast scale of priestly sexual abuse of children, that finally there was large-scale Roman Catholic admission that, after all, their “Church” was a cesspool of sexual iniquity. Most continue to remain Roman Catholics, however.

Thus, what the film depicted about the corruption and immorality within the Papal institution was not inaccurate. Not at all. This does not mean the film is a decent one for Christians to watch, of course; they do not need to go to vile Hollywood to learn the truth about Roman Catholicism. But these things are brought out here merely to show that Hollywood was now happy to openly attack Roman Catholicism – the very religion that had once been dubbed Hollywood’s religion. Again, Rome’s own wickedness, hypocrisy, oppression, etc., had led to a reaction, a backlash; and it was a violent one.

It is true that the main priest-character in the film eventually is free of all the filth he had once been embroiled in, ending his days as a simple country priest. As one critic said, “Implicit in the film’s conception is that there is a pure Catholicism tucked away somewhere waiting for [the priest] to return to it.”⁵²⁹ But this does not take away from the film’s over-riding emphasis on the sleazy, hypocritical nature of American Roman Catholicism. It simply reveals (if it reveals anything

at all) that Dunne, who had been raised Romanist, still hoped that out there somewhere, there was a “decent” Roman Catholicism. But as far as he was concerned, the Romish institution in the United States was, overwhelmingly, a cesspool. And this is what he sought to bring out in the story.

***Absence of Malice* (1981): Another Dark Portrait of Romanism**

As quoted previously, “Most contemporary portraits of ethnic Catholicism are dark portraits of stunted lives, compulsive guilt, and abiding despair”⁵³⁰ (this from a 1984 publication). And this film was certainly no exception: it was about an Irish-American Roman Catholic man and a disgraced Roman Catholic woman who commits suicide.

***The Verdict* (1982): Yet Another Celluloid Assault on Romanism**

In this film, a drunken Irish-American Romanist attorney takes on a Roman Catholic hospital, a prejudiced Irish-American Romanist judge, and the Romish archdiocese of Boston. The film depicts Romanists in a very poor light: “its clergymen are modern day Machiavellis shunting down corridors of power and sequestered in limousines”. The bishop in the film is unscrupulous, caring nothing at all about people but an awful lot about money, and knowing how to use it to his advantage by bribery and buying people off. Of course, this is not an inaccurate portrayal at all. This is precisely how the hierarchy of the “Church” of Rome operates. This does not, however, make the film a decent film which true Christians should see – not at all; the truth about the Roman Catholic institution is fully documented in print, and such truth never needs to be learned from a fictional story in a movie containing filthy language and other unacceptable material for a true Christian.

***Amityville II: the Possession* (1982): Another Horror Film Assault on Roman Catholicism**

This film was perhaps the best-known imitation of *The Exorcist*. The family at the centre of the film consisted of an Italian-American brute, his devout Papist wife, and their children who hate him. Once again depraved sex, including incest, features prominently in the film, and the message that comes through is that Roman Catholic girls are often the loosest, morally, of any, and yet riddled with deep guilt at all times.

This theme is typical of Hollywood in the post-Code, post-Legion years, when Romanism became fair game in movies. Sadly, there is much truth in the stereotypes, in the sense that Romanism inculcates deep guilt in its adherents, even while it encourages a lax morality via its confessionals, its supposed celibate priesthood which so many Papists know is nothing but a joke, etc. In *Amityville II* there is incest and confession to a priest, but no peace is experienced by the guilty one as a result.

The priest who tries to help the family experiences poltergeist activity and bloody hallucinations, and ends up failing to help them at all. They are killed, he views himself as responsible for their deaths, and determines to exorcise the demon, even against the advice of his religious superiors. In the end he himself voluntarily becomes possessed (just like the priest in *The Exorcist*). This gives the impression that Satan is the victorious one in the film. Indeed, Satan mocks the priest for acting on his own, without the support of his “Church” and disobeying it. The message conveyed by all this is that the “Church” did not protect the priest at all, just as he did not protect the dead family.

***Evilspeak* (1982): Still Another Anti-Roman Catholic Horror Movie**

In this film, an overweight, unpopular cadet, teased mercilessly by his Roman Catholic friends, gets his revenge by unleashing demons which devour them, the Papist chaplain, and others. And in its final scene, pigs from hell run amok through a Romish chapel, desecrating its images, the confessional box, and the tabernacle (where Rome’s mass-wafer is kept). The message being sent to the audience is that “God” (the Roman Catholic god) is powerless even to prevent the desecration of his own holy places.

***The Monsignor* (1982): Priestly Corruption Portrayed**

In this movie, Christopher Reeve played the part of a Romish priest who was a thief and a murderer and who gave Mafia money to the Vatican. He rises to the very top of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the Vatican, precisely because of his wicked lifestyle. His bishop mentor advises him to use his faith, brains, and sexual abilities “discreetly.” And this he does, bringing money into the Vatican from the black market, letting

a gangster friend wager Vatican money in the world currency market, and seducing a Carmelite postulant.

There really *are* such priests and always have been (and plenty of them!), and there *is* a link between the Mafia and the “Church” of Rome and always has been;⁵³¹ but this was *not* the kind of image of the Roman Catholic “Church” that the Vatican wanted to see portrayed.

***Agnes of God* (1985): a Murdering Nun**

Things just got worse and worse. In the 1985 film *Agnes of God* a nun kills her baby. In actual fact, nuns throughout history *have* at times killed babies, often the offspring of illicit affairs between priests and nuns. This is well documented in literature, with firsthand testimonies from nuns themselves, among others.⁵³² But Rome certainly did not want such facts brought to light by the far more powerful modern medium of film!

***The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988): Blasphemy Made by an Italian Roman Catholic**

In 1988 *The Last Temptation of Christ* came out, a film that deeply offended and angered both Roman Catholics and Protestants because it speculated about Jesus’ supposed fantasies, including sexual ones. They picketed outside movie theatres and boycotted the film in their thousands, and there were even threats of violence made. And yet the film was made by an Italian-American Roman Catholic named Martin Scorsese!

The United States Catholic Conference declared the film to be morally objectionable, but, remembering the old Legion protests which so often had had the opposite effect to that desired, it did not actually ask the Roman Catholic faithful to join the protests.

Scorsese had been raised Papist and at one time had considered becoming a priest. In 1972 he read a novel by Nikos Kazantzakis, written in 1953, and was so taken with the story that he bought the motion picture rights. Scorsese was later to say, “I’ve always wanted to do a spiritual movie but religion gets in the way.” As far as he was concerned, *The Last Temptation of Christ* sought to “tear away all the old Hollywood films... and create a Jesus you could talk to and get to know.”⁵³³ Astoundingly, Protestants and Romanists who were so

offended with this film would, a mere sixteen years later, welcome Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* with open arms. And yet *The Passion* (as will be seen) was as unbiblical as *The Last Temptation*, though in a different way. It was also even more sickeningly violent. How quickly the masses can be manipulated to change!

Conclusion

And so the 1980s ended with Hollywood having cast off the shackles of the once-virtually-almighty Roman Catholic control of the industry, and to a very large extent having declared open season on all things Roman Catholic. Hollywood, from its beginning, was a way for depraved men to express their depravity through a new art form, just as men have done through other art forms through the centuries. Then along came the American Roman Catholic institution, seeking, as it always does, to control every aspect of society and channel everything to its own ends; and thus it came about that two devil-inspired expressions of man's depravity clashed. One was that depravity which expresses itself via an art form, giving vent to all kinds of immorality by flaunting it on the screen; and the other was that depravity which expresses itself via religion. Let the reader understand very well at this point: *both* were of Satan. He makes use of any and all means he can to ensnare men's souls. He knows that some are ensnared by immorality, debauchery, etc., while others are ensnared by false religion.

For decades, religious depravity was dominant over Hollywood. During this time, films were very often cleaner, morally, than they would otherwise have been; but at the same time they promoted a false version of "Christianity", and thus a spiritual filthiness that is just as destructive to the souls of men as physical filthiness, and often even more so. How many millions of people, attending the movies during that "Golden Age" (so-called) of Hollywood when Rome swept out much of the immorality that the moviemakers would have so loved to retain, were subtly led into a spiritual bondage just as powerful as any physical bondage to lusts of the flesh? There can be absolutely no doubt that Hollywood during this period played an immense part in breaking down Protestants' resistance to Romanism, changing their attitudes towards all things Roman Catholic, and softening them up for the ecumenical movement which burst on the religious world in the 1960s.

But not only that: because Rome's own notions of morality are not based on the Bible, this meant that although movies during this period were morally cleaner than they would have been, they were certainly (for the most part) far from the moral standards of the Holy Scriptures. Yet because a supposedly "Christian" censorship system was in place for all those years and the public knew it, they came to believe that Rome's notions of morality were one and the same with the Bible's. And in this way the morals of Protestant moviegoers underwent a subtle but very decided shift. Through the powerful medium of film, they began to accept and adopt Rome's morality for themselves, without even realising it.

And the results are all too evident today. Generations of Protestant moviegoers were indoctrinated in Roman Catholic morality; they have learned their morality from the movies instead of from the Bible. And this has resulted in two things. First, while Romish censorship dominated Hollywood, there was a decided slackening of moral standards throughout the western world, including among Protestants. The point is that although movies of this era were more moral than they would have been if Rome's censorship had not been applied, *they were not moral enough*. They were moral according to Rome's lights, but not biblically moral. They promoted much that earlier generations of Protestants would never have allowed; such as more revealing clothing, "dating" by young people, worldly music, dancing, other forms of worldly entertainment, and much more. Pastors of what would once have been called Bible-believing churches began to permit things which would never before have been permitted, and no longer did they preach against these things. Parents, professing to be Christians, allowed their children to have liberties which went beyond what was biblically justifiable. Churches began to change their outreach programmes for young people, lowering their standards and coming to embrace the utterly unbiblical concept of "entertainment evangelism" to "reach the lost in a way they understand" and to "show them that Christians can have fun too."

And the second thing this has resulted in has been that when, finally, Roman Catholic censorship of the movie industry came to an end, moviegoers, already softened up to lower moral standards and having become avid moviegoers, readily began to embrace the now-

raunchier movies that Hollywood began to spue out. The damage had been done in the decades of Romish censorship: morals had dropped, a hunger for ever-more explicit entertainment had been created, and once the sluice gates were opened there was no shocked retreat by Protestant moviegoers as a whole; rather there was an embracing of the ever-lower standards which very soon became commonplace in movies. And this has continued ever since, so that the vast majority of professing Protestants today comfortably attend even the vilest movies regularly, and relax in front of their TV screens to watch the same filth there. They see nothing wrong with it. They cannot imagine ever not doing what they are doing. It is just a regular part of their lives, and one which they will not give up. They are spiritually blind, unregenerate, worshipping before this entertainment idol with all their hearts.

Thus by the end of the 1980s, Roman Catholic control over Hollywood was over. But then something extraordinary began to happen.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

FROM THE TWENTIETH INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Hollywood Not Entirely Anti-Roman Catholic by the Late 1990s

In the previous chapter we saw that by the end of the 1980s Hollywood had not only cast off all remaining vestiges of Roman Catholic censorship, but had become decidedly anti-Roman Catholic in a great many of the movies that were produced. Nevertheless, it would not be accurate to say that Hollywood had completely rid itself of Roman Catholic influence.

According to a priest of Rome who spent most of his priestly life in Hollywood, by late 1998 the entertainment industry was *not* anti-Roman Catholic. Priest Bud Kieser, a former TV personality, movie producer, author, and founder of a Roman Catholic entertainment award, said of Hollywood: “They like us. They don’t like our position on birth control. They don’t like our position on abortion. They don’t like our position on women priests. But generally they like us. They like us for sticking with the poor, and honestly serving the poor. A major number of studios in Los Angeles have given very significant money to Cardinal [Roger] Mahony [of Los Angeles], for his inner-city scholarship fund. Significant money.”⁵³⁴

What he said about studios giving money to Rome was true. Rupert Murdoch, the influential media mogul and a Roman Catholic, in 2000 donated \$10 million towards the construction of a new Roman Catholic cathedral in Los Angeles. Murdoch had wide holdings in the movie, TV and publishing industries, including Fox Television, 20th Century Fox Films, the *London Times* and *New York Post*, Harper Collins and Zondervan publishing houses. And even though his movie and TV productions were immoral, Romish cardinal Roger Mahony readily accepted his donation, and in January 1998 made Murdoch and his wife members of the Pontifical Order of St. Gregory the Great. This knighthood is bestowed on behalf of the pope of Rome, and is

supposed to be given to persons of “unblemished character” who have “promoted the interest of society, the [Roman Catholic] Church and the Holy See.”⁵³⁵ Evidently, then, Murdoch and his wife had done just that.

What had begun to happen by this stage (the late 1990s) was that things were again changing. Roman Catholicism had dominated Hollywood during its “Golden Age”; then liberals and Marxists had risen to a position of dominance for some decades, so that by the end of the 1980s Rome’s power over Hollywood had been severely curtailed. But by the late 1990s an extraordinary thing was occurring: liberal/leftist Hollywood and Roman Catholicism, although certainly not actually merging, were beginning to find *common ground* in certain spheres. And this extended into the decade of the 2000s.

Yes: in Hollywood as virtually everywhere else, the Roman Catholic institution and the liberal/leftists, and even Marxists, were finding they had things in common. As priest Kieser said, the latter found much to admire in the former’s social programmes, even while rejecting its doctrines and its stances on particular issues. And this was in line with the Jesuit/Papist strategy ever since the years leading up to the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. The entire Roman Catholic institution swung heavily to the left from then onwards, even promoting its own brand of Communism known as liberation theology, and pushing a pro-poor agenda that was very appealing to liberals and Reds, regardless of what they thought of Rome’s position on other things. Common ground was found in leftist “social justice” causes, and this began to show itself even in Hollywood. Not completely, it is true; but plainly the earlier animosity was nowhere near as great.

And in a very short space of time, leftist-dominated Hollywood began to take a different approach to making movies of a religious nature. Let us examine this change.

“Spirituality” Makes a Comeback in Hollywood

According to Hollywood insiders Jack and Pat Shea, by 2001 a renewed interest in “spirituality” was sweeping through Hollywood.⁵³⁶

The Sheas, a Roman Catholic writer/director couple, said that recent movies and TV programmes marked a return to the discussion of spiritual themes. “People are definitely more interested in spirituality

these days,” said Jack Shea, who was president of the Directors Guild of America. According to his wife Pat, the head of Catholics in Media Association, this was shown by the success of such TV series as *The West Wing* and *Touched by an Angel*. She said, “We [Hollywood] got so secularised and were so afraid of saying anything about religion. Now, it’s all right to say you’re religious.”

So: first there was Roman Catholic censorship; then, in reaction to that and also in line with the times, there was the period of virulently anti-religious movies issuing from Hollywood, even specifically anti-Roman Catholic; and then, once that anti-religious reaction had begun to run out of steam and also as society entered a phase (again in reaction to the anti-religious phase) of embracing all kinds of New Age teachings, Roman Catholic mysticism, and other strange new religious experiences, Hollywood woke up to the fact that “there’s gold in them thar hills” – the hills of religion.

For a few years the Sheas had been meeting with Romish archbishop, John Foley, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, as well as other Papist officials, in talks with entertainment representatives. Jack Shea said that producers and writers were becoming increasingly interested in the Roman Catholic “Church’s” attitude towards media, and were becoming increasingly aware that the “Church” of Rome was not “into condemnation” of the media.

Note what was happening in Hollywood: yes, “spirituality” was again gaining ground, but what was this? Roman Catholic mystic spirituality, and (although it was not stated by the Sheas) other forms of religious spirituality as well, notably of an eastern nature. But why was this? Hollywood was not suddenly being converted to Romanism. This was not a return to the Hollywood which was under the iron heel of the Papist-controlled PCA and the Romish Legion of Decency. But Hollywood producers and others had again become aware of the money-making value of producing films and TV series that catered to religious people. Not truly Christian people, but religious people. This did not by any means show a Damascus-road-like conversion occurring in Hollywood! As always, it was about money. This was even admitted by Pat Shea in the interview, when she said: “We also have to remind

the Church that we [Hollywood] are a commercial entity, that it's a business. It's walking that fine line between the entertainment aspect of what we do and the responsibility of our influence on our audience."

The Sheas pointed out the huge influence of the Roman Catholic "Church" on the arts through the centuries. Jack Shea said the "Church" should "continue to be involved in movies and television and all entertainment, because that's how you reach people. That's the language of the people now." And Pat Shea said the "presence of Church people [in the industry] brings to mind our tremendous influence in our society – not only American society, but our products are shown all over the world."

Indeed so. And so the tension continued between the desires of the immensely powerful "Church" of Rome, and the desires of liberal/leftist Hollywood. For decades, Rome was dominant; then the liberals/leftists/Reds rose to dominance. Rome changed tactics with the times, but never lost its desire to rule over the dream factories of Hollywood. It continued to exert a strong, behind-the-scenes influence, and always hoped and worked for more.

Let us examine what transpired in the first decade or so of the twenty-first century, for even though this reveals the ongoing tug-of-war between Roman Catholicism and liberal/leftism in Hollywood, it also reveals a *rapprochement* between the two, a finding of some common ground where they could co-operate, incredible as this was. And this common ground was so often found in the most unlikely of places.

The *Harry Potter* Phenomenon

Beginning with the first film adaptation of the *Harry Potter* series of books in 2001, each book was turned into a blockbuster movie. Countless volumes were written about this series, and it is not the present author's intention to go into detail on the occultic nature of these books and films aimed at children, as this would go beyond the purpose of the present book. That they aggressively promoted witchcraft and other aspects of the occult has been thoroughly documented by many researchers. There can be absolutely no doubt of the great spiritual danger the stories pose to children. They provide young minds and hearts with an indoctrination into witchcraft, and their influence has been incalculable.⁵³⁷

As has been shown in this book, over the decades Hollywood went from being an industry heavily under Roman Catholic influence to being an industry in which Roman Catholicism was frequently attacked and ridiculed (albeit Roman Catholic/Jesuit influence was still present), and at the same time the *true* Christian faith was attacked and ridiculed as well. It is not at all surprising, then, given the radical leftist/liberal and Communistic influence in Hollywood, that the *Harry Potter* books were viewed as an astoundingly useful tool, once made into movies, for promoting their agenda and corrupting the minds and hearts of children.

But even so, despite the overt witchcraft and paganism of the *Harry Potter* movies, institutions and individuals claiming to be “Christian” had fallen so far by then, had departed so far from biblical truth, that the Potter stories were actually *praised* by such neo-Evangelical magazines as *World* and *Christianity Today*, and by individual neo-Evangelicals and outright heretics such as Charles Colson,⁵³⁸ Rick Warren,⁵³⁹ etc. The Anglican “Church” (which is no more deserving of the name than Romanism) even published a guide advising people how to *use* Harry Potter to spread the “Christian” message! A former archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, described the story as “great fun” and a serious examination of good and evil.⁵⁴⁰

The films were also praised by Romish leaders. Rome has always been adept at turning even the most unlikely things to its advantage. In the not-so-distant past it would have strongly condemned films such as *Harry Potter* outright; but now it was taking a different approach. Aware that huge numbers of Roman Catholics would flock to see the films anyway, Romish priests sought to find something – anything – “good” in the films, latched onto these, and then spun a bizarre yarn about how even these dark, occultic, witchcraft-saturated films could be used to somehow do good! Unbelievable? One would think so. But here is the proof:

Michael Bernier, a Romish priest in Westfield, Massachusetts, USA, described himself as a “Pottermaniac”, and in 2007 he said that “Christians” (i.e. Papists) should not fear this devotion to a boy wizard. “On the surface level it does sound suspect and does raise red flags,” he said. But he stated that the magic in the stories was not sorcery,

and went on to say, astoundingly: “There’s a great deal of Christian imagery and symbolism in the books. And I think it answers, at least in parts, a longing that we have for Christ”.⁵⁴¹ What utter blindness! To see “Christian imagery and symbolism” in books about a wizard! And as for answering any longing people have for Christ, one can say with certainty that J.K. Rowling, the books’ author, was expressing no such longing whatsoever when she wrote them. But this has ever been Rome’s way: to take what people already accept and believe, and then “baptize” it, putting the best Popish spin on it that they can. This is what Rome did with the pagan holidays of ancient times, with the sacred sites of ancient paganism, with the pagan temples, with pagan gods and demigods, and with so much else.⁵⁴²

Bernier added that he hoped readers would embrace the “goodness” of the books and the enjoyment of reading: “They’re wonderfully written books that appeal to kids and adults. They’re easy to read and they’re entertaining.”

Before he became pope of Rome, when he was still a cardinal, Joseph Ratzinger (who became Benedict XVI) was the head of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the old Inquisition); and as such, he responded to a book written about the dangers of the Harry Potter stories by sending a note to the author, thanking her for her book and saying that if the accusations were true then they would be of grave concern. Priest Bernier claimed that as a result of this, many people wrongly believed that Benedict XVI “came out against the Harry Potter books.” He said, “Pope Benedict has not said anything actually about the Harry Potter books themselves. I don’t know if he’s even read them.”

Whatever Ratzinger’s views of the stories, it was plain that by 2009 and the release of the next film in the series, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, the Vatican was full of praise for it. It said the film made the age-old debate over good versus evil crystal clear. The Vatican newspaper, *L’Osservatore Romano*, said that this film was the best adaptation of the books to date. Although it criticised author Rowling for leaving out any explicit “reference to the transcendent” in her stories, it said the latest instalment nevertheless made it clear that good should overcome evil “and that sometimes this requires costs and sacrifice”.⁵⁴³ So the Vatican was willing to overlook the occultic

nature of the films in order to dredge up some nebulous moral about the overcoming of evil by good.

In 2011, when the final film instalment in the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*, was released, the review in *L'Osservatore Romano* stated that although it might be too scary for young viewers, it championed the values of friendship and sacrifice! “As for the content,” one reviewer wrote in the paper, “evil is never presented as fascinating or attractive in the saga, but the values of friendship and of sacrifice are highlighted. In a unique and long story of formation, through painful passages of dealing with death and loss, the hero and his companions mature from the lightheartedness of infancy to the complex reality of adulthood.”⁵⁴⁴

How far the Roman Catholic institution had come! – from once upon a time, via the Breen Office and the Legion of Decency, condemning anything remotely un-Papist and demanding changes, to now actually looking for and praising vague references to such things as friendship and sacrifice in an occultic movie! But this of course was perfectly in line with the changed Jesuit tactics which we have noted in this book. Putting a finger in the wind and noting the way the world was going, including the Roman Catholic world, the Jesuits did what they have always done: they loosened the rigid moral standards of previous times so as to retain a hold on the people.

The reviewer continued, writing that young people who had grown with Potter and his friends “certainly have understood that magic is only a narrative pretext useful in the battle against an unrealistic search for immortality.” Considering that even many adults would have to read that sentence twice to understand what the reviewer was saying, it is utterly ridiculous to believe that children viewed the Potter stories in this light! Millions of them were absorbed into the magic of the series, believed in the power of magic and sorcery as a result, and had a deep indoctrination into witchcraft and the occult.

Another reviewer in the same edition of the Vatican newspaper stated that the Potter saga championed values that “Christians” (i.e. Papists) and others share, and provided opportunities for “Christian” parents to talk to their children about how those values are presented in a special way in the Bible. Thus, once again, we see Rome’s method: sifting

through the occultic evil of the story to supposedly extract the odd “value” which all people share. And this sinful approach was followed by many “Evangelicals” as well. Instead of going to the source of all truth, the Bible, they preferred to let their children learn “values” from a film about witchcraft, and then attempted to somehow get the children to take an interest in the Bible afterwards! Blind, lost souls, ignorant of the Gospel and strangers to Christ the Lord.

This reviewer then wrote: “Harry Potter, although he never declared himself a Christian, calls on the dark magician to mend his ways, repent for what he has done and recognise the primacy of love over everything so he will not be damned for eternity.” This Roman Catholic reviewer failed to understand that someone like Harry Potter was as lost, as damned to eternity for his sins, as the dark magician he was fighting against! This is because he, like all Papists, was himself a lost man, ignorant of the Gospel of Christ. To him, someone like Harry Potter was “good”, even though not a Christian, and thus (by implication) not going to be damned like the dark magician was. This is supposed salvation by one’s own works, which is the belief of Rome. But it is *not* the teaching of God’s Word, the Bible.

He also wrote that this film demonstrated that “from the pure of heart like the young Harry, ready to die for his friends”, come big lessons! Truly, this was one branch of Satan’s kingdom (Romanism) praising another branch of Satan’s kingdom (the occult)! The Lord Jesus Christ spoke of the pure in heart, but someone like Harry Potter (if he existed) would not be among them. The “pure in heart” (Matt. 5:8) are those who have purified their hearts by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 15:9), *and no others*.

What was going on? Simply put: Rome was following the tactics it had begun to use as the Jesuits moved away from supporting outright, top-down Roman Catholic censorship via the Breen Office and the Legion of Decency, and instead sought to influence movies more subtly, praising whatever they could about them, finding “morals” even when there were none, even working on the sets as advisors. They had come to believe that this was the only way forward for Rome: it could no longer prevent its people from attending the movies, so it might as well adopt the tactic of “if you can’t beat them, join them”. In typical Jesuit

fashion, by appearing to their people to be progressive and modern and in no way fun-spoiling fuddy-duddies, they felt this would be the way to maintain their hold on their flocks. “Don’t condemn and forbid, rather praise where you can and issue weak cautions about whatever is simply too objectionable” – this in a nutshell was their tactic ever since they jettisoned the Breen Office. “Become all things to all men”, the Jesuit motto that is nothing but a distortion of the biblical teaching, lay at the heart of this tactic of theirs. Merge Romanism with the world as far as possible. In the early centuries of the Christian era, Rome, in order to keep the loyalties of the masses of pagans whom it baptized and declared to be “christians”, retained their pagan temples and even their pagan gods, but gave them the names of “Christ”, “Mary”, the “saints”, etc., thereby keeping the masses happy and (bottom line) keeping the money flowing in. And today, centuries later, the same tactic is followed: the masses want their entertainment, so (the Jesuits have reasoned) far better to let them have it, but maintain a semblance of spiritual “oversight” by issuing cautions, telling the people to “be careful” while enjoying the films, and praising whatever they can.

***The Lord of the Rings* (2001): a “Fundamentally Roman Catholic” Movie**

The film adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien’s fantasy book, *The Lord of the Rings*, was released in 2001. And according to Tom Shippey, one of the world’s leading authorities on Tolkien and a scholar of early English language and literature at the Jesuit-run St Louis University (amazing how frequently the Jesuits crop up, is it not?), the story told in *The Lord of the Rings* is “fundamentally Catholic”.⁵⁴⁵ Yet, he added, “On the face of it – it isn’t. The characters appear to have no religion at all. They are living in a historical limbo, a pre-Christian time. But they have an inkling of the revelation that is to come. They are like the philosophers in Dante’s *Inferno*, who are before Christ and are found in the first circle of hell.”

Shippey went on to point out that “The Inklings” was the name of the writers’ group that Tolkien belonged to with his friend, C.S. Lewis, who was an Anglican. Lewis, while a member of the Inklings, wrote *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Tolkien was raised as a Roman Catholic. His mother converted to

Romanism when Tolkien was a child. When she died he was raised by a priest of Rome, and remained a devout Romanist all his life. Yet he was perfectly willing to write the *Ring* series of books, which Shippey described as “alternative history.” He said: “Tolkien left gaps fitted to the Old Testament – at the start of Tolkien’s pre-history the people first come into the world fleeing from what seems to be the Garden of Eden.” Tolkien “studied the literature of pre-Christian to conversion times”, and taught the *Edda*, which was an Icelandic story of pre-Christian Norse beliefs. He also formed a club, called the “Coalbiters”, for the study *and propagation* of Norse mythology.⁵⁴⁶

This Roman Catholic, then, loved to study and propagate paganism, and the film adaptation of his book was a yet further propaganda push for ancient heathenism – yet heathenism which Rome was willing to accept as being in some way pro-Papist. In truth, *The Lord of the Rings* could be taken as a summary of Jesuitism’s post-Code approach to movies: to find some way to use even blatantly paganistic films to promote Roman Catholicism, no matter how indirectly and tenuously.

It all fitted very well with Rome’s post-Vatican II approach to converting the world to Roman Catholicism: the interfaith movement, finding common ground with pagan religions, heathen beliefs of all kinds, merging Roman Catholicism with various heathenish religious practices and outlooks, so as to appeal to as wide a segment of society as possible.

***The Passion of the Christ* (2004): Showing Up the Enmity Between Roman Catholic and Liberal/Leftist Hollywood**

Despite this new era of uneasy truces and of seeking common ground, Hollywood’s liberal/leftist/Marxist crowd were horrified when a top Hollywood actor/director went too far and made a blatantly pro-Roman Catholic movie, without compromising with the Hollywood leftists or toning the religious message down.

In 2004 actor/director Mel Gibson, a devout traditionalist Roman Catholic, released *The Passion of the Christ*. It became a phenomenal success at the box office, grossing \$370.3 million in the U.S. by the end of its first year, and \$611.9 million worldwide; but it was ridiculed and effectively boycotted by liberal/leftist Hollywood and by the liberal/leftist press. Gibson, in fact, financed the making of the movie himself

because the major movie studios would not touch it. In addition they turned on Gibson, portraying him as a “strange” Roman Catholic who did not accept the authority of the current Roman pope, or the use of English in the Roman mass. Warnings started to be issued that the film was anti-Semitic, a charge Gibson vociferously denied. Given the leftist/liberal/Red Jewish control of most of Hollywood, and its hatred of anything it considered “Christian”, this level of antagonism was not at all surprising.

Much of what is written below is excerpted and adapted from an article written by the present author at the time when the film was released, entitled “*The Passion of the Christ*”: *Outreach for Antichrist*.⁵⁴⁷ Additional material has been added.

Before the movie’s official release Gibson began to tour the country, showing a preview to groups of Roman Catholics *and* conservative Protestants. He showed the trailer to the National Association of Evangelicals in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and to 350 Jesuits at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California. Speaking to a reporter, Gibson joked that he was nervous about how the Jesuits would respond to it: “We’re Catholics, right? We’re scared of the Jesuits. Every good Catholic is,” he said.⁵⁴⁸

In 2003, before the film opened, the marketing director of Gibson’s Icon Productions hired A. Larry Ross Communications (ALRC) to promote the film among professing Christians. Ross had for years been the director of media and public relations for Billy Graham. ALRC did its work well: its massive promotional work among “Evangelicals” paid off. By the time the film opened it had already received a huge amount of free publicity – publicity which had bypassed mainstream Hollywood almost entirely.

Such was the utter spiritual blindness of so-called “Evangelicals” that many churches reserved entire movie theatres for themselves, with some even holding services *in* the movie theatre *after* the movie was screened! Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals in the USA, said the film would inspire believers for decades or even centuries.⁵⁴⁹ Billy Graham strongly endorsed it – a man who also endorsed the Roman pontiff, John Paul II, accepting it when the man holding the position which for centuries Protestants have

recognised as that of the biblical Antichrist, called him his brother.⁵⁵⁰ Jack Graham, president of the Southern Baptist Convention in the USA, endorsed it. James Dobson, that promoter of psychoheresy, endorsed it.⁵⁵¹ So did many others the world over. As the Lord Jesus said, “They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matt.15:14).

Gibson said during previews of the film, “The Holy Ghost was working through me on this film. I was just directing traffic.” And: “I think that the Holy Ghost is real. I believe that he’s looking favorably on this film. And he wanted to help. I could always use a little help.”⁵⁵² His pious claims notwithstanding, his foul language showed up his real colours – but the “Evangelicals” were willing to turn a deaf ear to it. In an interview, he said of some Roman Catholic and Jewish scholars who sent him a report detailing what they held to be inaccuracies in the film: “They always [expletive deleted] around with it, you know?” And: “Judas is always some kind of friend of some freedom fighter named Barabbas, you know what I mean? It’s [expletive deleted]. It’s revisionist [expletive deleted]. And that’s what these academics are into.”

And the acceptance of this film by “Evangelicals” illustrates what we have stated earlier – that by the time the film appeared, so many, who claimed (falsely) to be Christians, saw nothing much wrong with Hollywood. It was not that many years before when Evangelical pastors regularly preached against ungodly movies, and members of their churches were not permitted to watch them if they wanted to remain as members. But as the tide of wickedness rose higher and higher, the voices boldly preaching against it grew fewer and fewer. The professing “Church” was engulfed by the world. The world *entered* the professing “Church”, and the “Church” justified this by saying it needed to be “relevant”, to “keep up with the times”, etc. Professing “Christians” started attending ungodly movies, as well as soaking up the filth of Hollywood in their own homes via their TV sets, and later via videos and then DVDs. And the pastors did nothing. In fact, for the most part they were as guilty as their flocks. Such things as holiness and separation from the world were now considered quaint left-overs of an earlier era. For multitudes hypocritically calling

themselves “Christians”, the TV guide became more important than the Bible, and they knew the names and histories of their favourite movie “stars” better than the heroes of the faith. Television brought the cesspool of Hollywood right into the home at the touch of a button, and the majority of those who named the name of Christ did not care. They happily indulged in it all, and looked with disdain on those lone voices in the wilderness who dared to lift up their voices against such wickedness. Yet the Word of God speaks plainly: “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes” (Psa.101:3); “whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil.4:8).

The fact that a movie like *The Passion*, made by such a man as Mel Gibson, could be so acceptable to the “Evangelical” world, was a terrible indictment upon the men filling “Evangelical” pulpits. A huge measure of the blame for the blubbing acceptance of this film by the so-called “Evangelical” world had to be laid squarely at the feet of the so-called “pastors”, the men who disgraced the pulpits of “Evangelical” churches. The pews follow the pulpits. When the shepherds go astray, how swiftly the sheep follow. How solemn that word in Jas.3:1: “My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that *we shall receive the greater condemnation [margin: judgment]*”.

That multitudes of professing “Evangelicals” flocked in their droves to watch this movie revealed the utter spiritual blindness that hung, like a thick cloud, over the professing “Christian” world; and it revealed the shocking spiritual bankruptcy of the vast majority of men standing behind pulpits. Gibson’s production company, quick to seize the opportunity to make ever more money from the film, marketed the film as “perhaps the best outreach opportunity in 2000 years” – and the “Evangelical” world fell for this slick marketing hype hook, line and sinker.

How possibly could a man like Mel Gibson make a sound biblical movie? Even apart from the fact that he was a traditionalist Roman Catholic, he had starred in violent, brutal, gory movies, full of foul language and sexual immorality. How then could he turn his defiled

hands to so solemn a subject as the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory (even apart from the fact that no sinful, mortal man can ever properly depict the Lord Christ in a film), and handle such a theme with reverence, holy awe, holy fear, and with his eye to the glory of God? It was impossible. The Bible was written by *holy* men of God, as they were moved by the *Holy* Ghost; and it is *holy* men of God, men called by the Holy Ghost, who are to teach and expound it to souls. The men of the world *cannot* teach the true Christian the true meaning of any portion of God's holy Word, and no Christian should ever go to the worldly for such instruction. What, then, were so-called "Evangelicals" doing, flocking to be taught the (supposed) meaning of the crucifixion by a wicked, immoral, idolatrous man like Gibson? And what were they doing, taking the work of such a man and attempting to use it for evangelism? They were blind, mad, those who "eat and drink with the [spiritually] drunken" (Matt.24:49). Like drunk men, they could not discern the truth, for indeed they were strangers to it.

The reason this film was so acceptable to so many who professed (falsely) to be Christians, was because *Hollywood* was so acceptable to them. Hollywood, with all its violence, adultery, fornication, sodomy, foul language, etc., etc. This was an extremely violent movie, and not that many years before most people would not have been willing to watch a movie with such extreme brutality; but years of constant, daily exposure to Hollywood "blood and gore" had desensitised people to such things, to the point where the average moviegoer had become quite used to it, saw little or nothing wrong with it, and in fact all too often actually *craved* it. Like the ancient Romans in the amphitheatres, who had an insatiable bloodlust and watched with relish the agonies of Christians being torn to pieces by wild animals, moviegoers crave ever more "reality" in movies, and Hollywood is all too ready to provide it. The Bible reveals the total depravity of all mankind; and certainly this depravity is revealed in the so-called "entertainment" industry.

This was a film described by *Time* magazine as "crimson carnage from the moment Jesus is condemned, half an hour into the 127-min. film."⁵³ It went on to say that it was a film for "cast-iron stomachs; people who can stand to be grossed out as they are edified." It stated that Mel Gibson had invented "a new genre – the religious splatter-art film". It was a "relentless, near pornographic feast of flayed flesh.

Gibson gives us Christ's blood, not in a Communion cup, but by the gallon. Blood spraying from Jesus' shackled body; blood sluicing to the Cross's foot." It was so violent that in some places cinemas actually provided "sick bags" for the audience! And yet despite such horrifying violence, many professing "Christians", no less than those who made no such profession (thus showing that in reality there *is no* difference between them!), with an apparently insatiable appetite for movie violence and gore, and seeing no harm in it, were now able to go and satisfy their bloodlust by watching it in a supposedly "Christian" context – thereby supposedly "sanctifying" it. How true the following comment: "The ghoulish relish of hordes of professing Christians for the violence of this film is in stark contrast with the attitude of the followers of Christ who witnessed His crucifixion – 'And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things' (Luke 23:49). They could not bear the sight of His sufferings up close but displayed the natural reaction of abhorrence at the sight of a loved one's sufferings and so 'stood afar off'." ⁵⁵⁴

Mel Gibson was raised a Roman Catholic, and considered himself to be a Roman Catholic traditionalist. He loved the Latin mass, the central blasphemy of the Romish religion. He had a priest of Rome on the movie's set, who offered mass and heard the confessions of anyone who wished to confess. When asked in an interview if someone could be saved apart from the Roman Catholic "Church", Gibson gave the centuries-old Romish answer: "There is no salvation for those outside the Church". ⁵⁵⁵ And yet this devout, fanatical Romanist, spouting official Romish doctrine, was hailed as a true Christian by blind "Evangelicals" the world over!

So as far as Gibson was concerned, the film's purpose was to show the supposed connection between the cross and the Romish blasphemy of the so-called "sacrifice of the mass". This is exactly what Rome has always claimed: "The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one single sacrifice*: 'This divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and *is offered in an unbloody manner*.'" ⁵⁵⁶ This is an outright denial of the once-only, all-

sufficient sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross for the sins of His people. The Lord's words on the cross, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30), are not understood by any Romanist; for they believe that in the mass, the sacrifice of Christ is *re-enacted*, day after day and year after year, hundreds of thousands of times around the world. Romanists do not understand Christ's words to be referring to the fact that His great work was finished, and never to be repeated in any form or sense. How then, how possibly, could a movie about the crucifixion made by a devout Romanist ever be biblically accurate? And yet "Evangelical" pastors reserved entire movie theatres to show this film to their flocks!

Jim Caviezel, who pretended to play "Jesus" in the film, was a devout Roman Catholic who used the rosary, attended the mass regularly, and went to confession. During the filming, he and Gibson went daily to mass together, with Caviezel saying, "I need that to play this guy" (a true Christian would not refer to his Lord and Saviour so irreverently as "this guy"), and he went to confession regularly, saying, "I didn't want Lucifer to have any control over the performance" (little did he know that Satan controlled the entire performance from beginning to end). He carried what he believed was a piece of the true cross on his person at all times, as well as relics of various Roman Catholic "saints". This was a man, however, who, for all his "devoutness", had previously starred in movies filled with profanity, violence, sex, etc. And this was the man whose face became the image in the minds of millions of people the world over whenever they thought of Christ!

And what did Caviezel himself say about the film? "This film is something that I believe *was made by Mary for her Son.*"⁵⁷

Caviezel stated that many in the film crew converted to Roman Catholicism. And yet "Evangelicals" hailed it as a wonderful evangelistic tool! It led poor souls into the clutches of the Papal Antichrist – and they praised it as leading souls to Christ.

For all true Bible Protestants, the fact that this was a Roman Catholic movie was reason enough to utterly reject it. But the age is one in which so many, *claiming* to be Christians, see nothing much wrong with Roman Catholicism. The diabolical ecumenical movement has done the devil's work very well. It was not that long ago when pastors regularly preached against Roman Catholicism, calling it what it is: the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth (Rev.17:5).

No members of their churches were permitted to have any spiritual fellowship with Papists (2 Cor.6:14-18; Rev.18:4,5). But this had all changed.

Modern “Evangelicals” were willing to forsake almost all biblical standards, and to adopt the Jesuit motto that “the end justifies the means.” If, to their minds, “souls were saved” by watching the movie, or “Christians were edified”, or “Christians had their faith deepened”, then the end justified the means. They *professed* to be “Bible-believers”, and very loudly and proudly said, “We believe nothing but what the Bible teaches!” But this was a lie. The reality is that they believed *many* things that were not taught in the Bible – and they rejected many things that *were* taught in it.

Also, contrary to what so many “Evangelicals” seemed to think, the film was not based solely on the Gospel accounts of Christ’s crucifixion. Gibson also based it, to a large extent, on the visions of two Roman Catholic nun-mystics, Anne Catherine Emmerich and Mary of Agreda. Emmerich claimed to have seen visions of the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, and these were recorded in her book, entitled *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*. It is easy to see where Gibson got the title for his movie! As for Mary of Agreda, she wrote a book entitled *The Divine History and Life of the Virgin Mother of God as Manifested to Mary of Agreda*. Of Emmerich’s visions, Gibson openly admitted: “She supplied me with stuff I never would have thought of.”⁵⁵⁸ If this was really a movie based on the Gospel accounts, why did Gibson need to “think of” *anything*? All that is needed is in the Scriptures. But of course Rome has never believed that. Those two nuns did not believe it. That was why they readily added their own “stuff”, and why Gibson readily swallowed it.

The film subtly gives the impression that it was actually Mary who offered Christ as a sacrifice, not God the Father. “‘The Passion of the Christ’ leaves us with a vision of the sacrifice of Christ that is only dolorous [dolorous: full of grief; sad; sorrowful; doleful; dismal] and which puts into sharp relief the Roman Catholic notion not only of the importance of Christ’s agony, but that of Mary in ‘offering her Son’. In an interview with Zenit, the Roman Catholic News Service, Father Thomas Rosica ... illustrated how ‘The Passion of the Christ’,

in keeping with Roman Catholic theology, uses extra-biblical content to massively exaggerate the role of Mary.... ‘The Mother of the Lord is inviting each of us to share her grief and behold her Son.’ This use of extra-biblical material, emphasis on physical suffering, exaggeration of the role of Mary, and explicitly Roman Catholic theology should not surprise us, however, as these are all hallmarks of the primary inspiration for this movie: [Anne Catherine Emmerich’s] *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*.⁵⁵⁹

Then too, there are non-biblical “flashbacks” to Jesus’ childhood with Mary (again promoting Romanism, the cult of Mary). As for Satan, he is depicted as “an androgynous creature, a Gollum with weird sex appeal, who slithers through the crowd, working mischief.”⁵⁶⁰

The film is thus an heretical mixture of aspects taken from the Gospel accounts, Roman Catholic mysticism, Mel Gibson’s own thoughts, unjustifiable poetic licence, and Roman Catholic doctrine.

What were some of the fruits of this film?

Something extraordinary, something diabolically *evil*, was witnessed in all this: this film pushed the devil’s ecumenical movement forward! For decades, Rome had been doing all in its power to woo the so-called “Evangelicals” into its embrace; and it was having much success. But this movie pushed “Evangelicals” even further into the arms of “Mother Rome”. “Evangelicals” hailed Mel Gibson as a “born-again Catholic Christian”, an outright oxymoron, for no Roman Catholic is a true Christian. When the Lord saves an adherent of this false religion, He does not leave him in that error and heresy. He draws him out, just as He does for any member of any false religion whom He saves. If Gibson had been truly converted to Christ, he would have repented of his sins, which would include repenting of acting in and making his past movies, and he would have forsaken Romanism. “Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16).

The Passion was a giant leap forward for the ecumenical movement. It promoted Roman Catholicism on a huge scale among “Evangelicals”. “Mel Gibson’s movie savages the Word of God for the benefit of an accursed church with an accursed gospel.... We are at yet another turning point in the history of the Church.”⁵⁶¹ Ex-priest Richard Bennett stated: “The Evangelical church’s acceptance

of Gibson's movie gives shocking – maybe apocalyptic – insight into the state of popular Christianity today. Will history reveal this day as the time when Evangelicalism, on a popular level, merged with the Roman Catholic Church?"⁵⁶² Certainly it greatly *promoted* the merger so desired by ecumenicals. The wall of separation between Roman Catholicism and "Evangelicalism" had been crumbling for decades, and this film was another, very powerful assault on that wall, causing it to crumble even further.

It burned into the minds of millions a graphic image of "Christ" that is utterly false. For millions of people, the face of Jim Caviezel *became* the face of Christ, as surely as multiplied millions for many centuries have had an image of Christ in their minds that was formed by gazing at statues, or paintings. After watching the film the arch-ecumenist, Billy Graham, said: "Every time I preach or speak about the cross, the things I saw on the screen will be on my heart and mind."⁵⁶³ He merely voiced what millions felt. But this is all idolatry. "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female" (Deut.4:15,16).

In the aftermath of *The Passion*, Mel Gibson was hailed by naive and foolish Charismatics, Pentecostals, and neo-Evangelicals as a wonderful Christian man. They ignored the fact that he was a Romanist, held to the usual heretical and blasphemous Romish doctrines, and had made an extremely pro-Papist movie. And yet as time went by, in addition to his Romanism Gibson demonstrated, by his sinful conduct, just what an unregenerate man he was. Among other things, he divorced his wife, to whom he had been married for over thirty years, and lived with his girlfriend, with whom he had a daughter – all *after* he had made *The Passion*. And in 2006 he was pulled over for speeding, and found to be drunk. He swore loudly at the arresting officers, and let loose with various anti-Semitic remarks, including making the accusation that Jews were "responsible for all the wars in the world".⁵⁶⁴ But the "Evangelical" world by and large did not care: Gibson was their hero.

The Passion of the Christ did wonders for Roman Catholicism, and shocked Hollywood. It revealed that even after many years of anti-

religious liberal/leftist/Marxist propaganda via films, or at the least of very watered-down, effeminate, mystical references to “religion” on occasion, there were still millions of moviegoers who *were* devoutly religious (not Christian but religious), and who were willing to support overtly religious movies. And so the battle continued between religion and secularism, and indeed between conservative Romanism unwilling to compromise and “progressive”/liberal Romanism in Jesuit hands, willing to compromise with the non-Romish world so as to get its way by other means.

Yes, Hollywood was shocked at first. Its agenda of opposing anything too blatantly religious, too overtly “Christian” (according to its false understanding of “Christianity”), was threatened by the runaway success of *The Passion*. Hollywood was serving the idols of secular humanism, Marxism, eastern mysticism, and New Age spirituality. But now Hollywood’s love for another idol kicked in: the idol of Mammon. There was big money to be made by catering to the religious tastes of Roman Catholics and Protestants. These groups had not faded away, despite the relentless assault by liberals, leftists, Marxists, secular humanists and others in Hollywood and other influential parts of society. Ideological idols were all very well – being evangelists for the liberal/leftist/Marxist cause and all that – but at the end of the day Hollywood bigwigs still bowed before the idol of Mammon above all others. It was time to start milking the religious masses.

Disney was first to jump on the bandwagon:

The Chronicles of Narnia (2005): Occult Fantasy of a Closet Roman Catholic

The following is excerpted and adapted from an article written by the present author at the time when the film version of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* first appeared. The article was entitled “*The Chronicles of Narnia*”: *Occult Fantasy of a Closet Roman Catholic*.⁵⁶⁵ There are also some excerpts from another of the author’s articles, entitled “*Faith-Based*” *Films or Hollywood Heresy?*⁵⁶⁶

C. S. Lewis’ world-famous series of fantasy novels, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, were long praised as “Christian allegory” in many ecclesiastical circles. Lewis himself has been described in many of these circles as “the greatest Christian writer of the twentieth century.” And in 2005 the

first book in the series, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, was made into a blockbuster movie by Disney, the first of a series of movies to be based on the *Narnia* novels. The big question is: *why?*

For decades, Hollywood had ignored the millions of professing “Christians” as a market. It promoted everything that Christianity opposes: violence, profanity, sexual sin of all kinds, nudity, drunkenness, and a whole host of other sins. It had gone out of its way to mock Christians, to portray Protestant ministers as wild-eyed, dangerous fanatics, to ridicule the Bible, to attack everything held dear by Christians. But while this was going on, something was happening in the “Christian” camp. The times were changing, and millions of people who *claimed* to be “born-again Christians” were no longer as antagonistic towards Hollywood as earlier generations had been. The men in the pulpits no longer thundered against the movies, and the people in the pews were regularly attending the movie theatres, and soaking up the same filth that everyone else was enjoying. The vast majority of those now naming the name of Christ were in fact not truly born again at all! They were merely disciples of the new, popular, easy-believism, “call yourself a Christian but be part of the world too” doctrine that had been sweeping through churches for years. A false “gospel”, indeed, but one that was, and is, believed to be the true Gospel by millions today.

Nevertheless, despite their acceptance of so much Hollywood filth, many of these professing “Christians” still drew the line at attending movies that were just too depraved, even for them. And they kept their children away from them as well. Yet they were very willing to flock to watch a movie with a supposedly “Christian” theme. After all, they called themselves Christians! Hollywood, however, was not paying attention.

Until *The Passion of the Christ*, that is.

As we have seen, when Mel Gibson’s movie hit the screens it was a runaway success, and Hollywood was stunned. The masses of unregenerate worldlings who nevertheless called themselves “Christians” flocked to see it, and doubtless made Mel Gibson laugh all the way to the bank. And suddenly Hollywood sat up and took notice. Here was a very lucrative niche market indeed! One which Hollywood had been ignoring!

“*The Passion* really surprised Hollywood,” said John Buckeridge, the editor of *Christianity Magazine* (certainly *not* recommended for any true Christian!). *Christianity Magazine* ran a cover story on how churches could link into *Narnia*’s release to promote a “Christian” message.⁵⁶⁷ “Everyone thought it would bomb,” he said. “What they didn’t realise was that there is an audience for a film with a Christian message.” Passing by his inference that *The Passion* was Christian, he was correct in saying that the movie surprised Hollywood, and made the moviemakers realise that there was a vast untapped niche market out there. “Disney recognises the marketplace. In Hollywood, money talks,” added Buckeridge. Very true! But this did not seem to concern him in the least, nor did he appear to note the obvious paradox of saying that Mammon is the god of Hollywood, and yet supporting Hollywood for making a movie (*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*) with what he claimed was a “Christian” message! Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters...Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt. 6:24). By Buckeridge’s own admission, Hollywood served Mammon. It could not, then, be serving God. And yet he recommended that churches make use of *Narnia*! “This could be as successful as *The Passion of the Christ* in triggering dialogue. There is a Christian parable in there,” he said.

And indeed, “churches” worked themselves up into a froth of excitement, convinced that this movie represented the greatest evangelistic opportunity since the previous year’s *The Passion of the Christ*. But as with that unscriptural Roman Catholic splatter-movie, so with this one: it just showed how biblically illiterate and doctrinally confused vast numbers of churches were. The truth about *Narnia*, and Lewis himself, is far, far darker than most “Evangelicals” would know, or, sadly, understand.

Millions of “Evangelicals” (along with Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Pentecostals, Charismatics, etc.) had for many years claimed that *The Chronicles of Narnia* were wonderful “Christian allegories”, and they continued to do so once the movie was made. Russ Bravo, development director for Christian Publishing and Outreach, said: “There are clear Christian parallels you can draw from the storyline” of the *Narnia* books. As noted above, John Buckeridge,

editor of *Christianity Magazine*, said: “There is a Christian parable in there”.⁵⁶⁸ And the neo-Evangelical, ecumenical *Christianity Today* magazine, when recommending the *Narnia* series, said: “In Aslan [the lion in the stories], Christ is made tangible, knowable, real”; and: “Christ came not to put an end to myth but to take all that is most essential in the myth up into himself and make it real.”⁵⁶⁹ What utter nonsense!

Here is something really sinister indeed: the *Narnia* books are sold not only in Christian bookstores, but in *occult* bookstores as well, and are recommended by the promoters of the occult game, “Dungeons and Dragons”!⁵⁷⁰ Astounding: a series of books, written by a man professing to be a “Christian”, and hailed by many professing “Christians” as “Christian allegory”, yet the message of which is such that *occultists* are happy to sell them. Churches rushed to support the movie, encouraging their flocks to see it, and yet as those professing “Christians” sat there watching it they were doubtless rubbing shoulders with witches, Satanists, and other occultists in the audience who were deriving their *own* “message” from it. The professing children of light, sitting next to the children of darkness, watching the movie together, and both leaving the movie theatre satisfied, the one group convinced they had just seen a wonderful “Christian allegory”, the other group knowing that they had just seen an occult fantasy!

For this is precisely what the *Narnia* stories are all about: occultism, heathen mythology, magic. Lewis borrowed elements from the Bible, but he draped the stories in heathen mythology and outright occultism. He concocted a hybrid religious teaching, in line with his own deep fascination with heathen mythology, magic and occultism.

Many of the *Narnia* characters are in fact *gods and demons* from pagan mythology! Aslan is the god-like lion who is seen as Christ in the stories; and yet in heathen mythology this lion represents the *sun*. In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, Aslan is said to be “coming and going”; to have “golden” eyes, face and fur; to have “warm breath”; to scatter golden beams of light; to be big and bright; etc. And according to the *Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols*, by Gertrude Jobes, the sun is seen as a *lion, golden* in colour; with its breath symbolising the sun’s rays; etc. In addition, the ancient sun-worshippers believed that the sun died as it reached its southernmost

point, bringing winter. It was “reborn”, or resurrected, when it returned northward, bringing spring. In the *Narnia* series, when Aslan returned to Narnia, it became spring; and after dying at night, he was resurrected in the early morning!⁵⁷¹

In another book in the series, *Prince Caspian*, the heathen god Bacchus appears, along with “wild girls.” They dance a wild “magic dance” in a “grove” (a place of heathen worship, Exod. 34:13; 1 Kings 15:13; 16:33; etc.) on “Midsummer night”, having been seated in a “wide circle around a fire”, with various kinds of wine available, and “wheaten cakes”. Lewis was simply copying the heathen doctrines surrounding Bacchus. For in paganism, Bacchus was the god of wine; he attracted women to him, who danced and were possessed with occult powers; Midsummer eve is a witches’ festival held on June 24; there is dancing, feasting, cakes and wine!

Throughout the *Narnia* books, Lewis writes about dryads, nymphs, satyrs, fauns, etc. *The Cromwell Handbook of Classical Mythology* classifies these as demons. His books also deal with such occult practices as alchemy, clairvoyance, astrology, crystal gazing, necromancy, magic, talismans, etc. The Lord forbids such occult practices in many parts of His Word, e.g. Deut. 18:9-14; Gal. 5:20; Isa. 8:19,20; Acts 7:42,43.

Who was C. S. Lewis (1898 – 1963)? He was a writer, critic, professor of English literature, a man who held senior positions at Cambridge and Oxford universities, and he is praised (incorrectly) as a “Christian apologist.” The ecumenical neo-Evangelical, J. I. Packer, called him “our patron saint” (an interesting choice of title, considering that it is Romanists, and not Evangelicals, who have “patron saints”).⁵⁷² According to the far-from-Evangelical *Christianity Today* magazine, Lewis “has come to be the Aquinas, the Augustine, and the Aesop of contemporary Evangelicalism” (an interesting choice of “heroes”, considering that Aquinas was a Roman Catholic apologist, Augustine was an early “Catholic” in doctrine, and Aesop, although he taught many moral truths with his stories, was a heathen).⁵⁷³ But despite the fact that Lewis’ books on “Christian” apologetics rank him, in the minds of many – Romanist, Anglican, liberal, “Evangelical” – as one of the most brilliant defenders of Christianity in the twentieth century,

the facts tell a very different story indeed. It is enough of a danger sign to know that he is so admired by Roman Catholics, Protestants, conservatives and liberals – quite obviously then, he was not a sound theologian, but “broad-based” and ecumenical; but there is certainly plenty of evidence to show just what kind of a “Christian apologist” he really was.

From a very young age, Lewis was attracted to occult fantasy and fiction; for example, Norse and Celtic mythology, magic, etc. He was to immerse himself in Norse mythology. By the age of 12 he was “hooked” on fantasy, elves, etc. And he himself said that he came to the very frontiers of hallucination. His favourite literature in his early years included E. Nesbit’s occult fantasy works. Twenty-five years after he claimed to have become a Christian (he was clearly never truly converted) he said that he still read these with delight. And this ungodly mixture of light and darkness, of a little truth mixed with magic, myth, etc., comes out in his various writings.⁵⁷⁴ He also immersed himself in the writing of the atheist and early science fiction author, H. G. Wells. At school, he attended a high Anglo-Catholic “church”; but he gradually dropped what he thought was his “Christianity” in favour of occultism, particularly the Norse mythologies.

At the age of 27 he met J. R. R. Tolkien, and they became close friends. Tolkien, author of the occult fantasy, *Lord of the Rings*, was a devout Roman Catholic. They would meet weekly to drink, smoke, and discuss each others’ stories. Tolkien would speak to Lewis about the Roman Catholic “christ”; and he worked on Lewis until he accepted the account of Christ as a “*true myth*.”⁵⁷⁵ This is an oxymoron if ever there was one. Either the account of Christ is true, or it is myth. It cannot be both. It is blasphemous to speak of the account of the Lord and Saviour in this way. But it fits in perfectly with Lewis’ love of mythology, which he was steeped in.

Lewis eventually joined the Anglican institution, and was Anglo-Catholic in doctrine; but he was greatly influenced by Tolkien, and at heart Lewis was clearly a “closet Papist.” He was certainly no Evangelical! The ecumenical *Christianity Today* magazine, which praised Lewis and recommended his *Narnia* books, still had to admit that Lewis was “a man whose theology had decidedly unevangelical

elements”.⁵⁷⁶ And even the neo-Evangelical ecumenical author, J. I. Packer, who used Papist language and called Lewis “our patron saint”, admitted that Lewis was “no such thing” as an Evangelical; yet he has become the most widely-read supposed “defender” of “Christian” basics among professing “Evangelicals!”⁵⁷⁷

Lewis had no interest in judging the soundness or otherwise of certain denominational traditions. In the preface of his famous book, *Mere Christianity*, he wrote: “The reader should be warned that I offer no help to anyone who is hesitating between two ‘Christian’ denominations. You will not learn from me whether you ought to become an Anglican, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or a Roman Catholic.... Ever since I became a Christian I have thought that the best, perhaps the only service I could do for my unbelieving neighbours was to explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times.”

An Evangelical? Not in the least. He was thoroughly ecumenical.

His stated aim, in *Mere Christianity*, was to present “an agreed, or common, or central or ‘mere’ Christianity.” In other words, those doctrines which are common to all who call themselves “Christians”, including Papists, Anglicans, ecumenists, liberals, etc. He was so concerned to achieve this aim that he submitted parts of his book to four ecclesiastics for criticism: an Anglican, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, and a Roman Catholic.⁵⁷⁸ He believed that one is free to choose whichever “tradition” one likes the most. Sound doctrine and godly practice – these were of no consideration to Lewis.

He was so adept at reducing “Christianity” to a very, very low common denominator, a “mere Christianity” as he himself called it, that his writings, in addition to being acceptable to Roman Catholics, “Evangelicals”, liberals, ecumenists, etc., are even acceptable to the Mormons! In April 1998, Mormon professor Robert Millet, dean of Brigham Young University, spoke at Wheaton College on the topic of C. S. Lewis and said that Lewis “is so well received by Latter-Day Saints [i.e. Mormon cultists] because of his broad and inclusive vision of Christianity”.⁵⁷⁹

Lewis did not believe in the biblical doctrine of penal substitution, and thus promoted a false doctrine of the atonement. He denied the

doctrine of man's total depravity. He believed in the Popish heresies of baptismal regeneration, salvation by works, the mass, purgatory, and praying for the dead. He did not believe in the biblical doctrine of repentance. He did not believe that the Holy Scriptures were inerrant, and thus rejected the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the Bible. He believed in theistic evolution. He denied the doctrine of hell. He thought that the salvation of unbelievers was possible. And he also requested the "last rites" of the Roman Catholic institution on his deathbed.⁵⁸⁰

Lewis did not openly join the Roman Catholic "Church". But despite holding to some non-Papist doctrines, that he was a "closet Papist" there can be no doubt, as the evidence above shows; and Papists have loved his writings and claimed him as one of their own. In a favourable article on Lewis published in *The Catholic Herald*, entitled "Why ever didn't C. S. Lewis become a Roman Catholic?" the author wrote: "we may surely say that we are honouring the memory of a man whose mind was *naturaliter Catholica*".⁵⁸¹

Michael Coren, a Papist author who wrote a biography of Lewis for teens, entitled *C. S. Lewis: The Man Who Created Narnia*, was asked by the Roman Catholic news agency, Zenit: "What do Catholics need to know about C. S. Lewis?" This was his reply: "They should know he wasn't a Catholic, but that doesn't mean he wouldn't have become one eventually. G. K. Chesterton became a Catholic in 1922 but had really been one for 20 years." He went on to say: "Lewis... was a man of his background but his views were very Catholic: he believed in purgatory, believed in the sacraments, went to confession."⁵⁸²

No wonder, in the light of Lewis' belief in, and propagation of, Popish teaching, he was described by a high-ranking Jesuit theologian as "probably the most successful Christian apologist of the twentieth century."⁵⁸³

But did Lewis, in fact, actually *join* the Roman Catholic institution before his death? Papists say he did not; but he confessed his sins regularly to a priest of Rome, *and* he received the Romish sacrament of the "last rites", on July 16, 1963.⁵⁸⁴ And it is highly unlikely that he would have received the "last rites" if he had not in fact *formally converted to Rome!* So there appears to be more to Lewis' love of Romanism than at first meets the eye. There are aspects to all this that

are very mysterious. He certainly appears to have been a Papist before his death.

As noted above, when the film of the first book came out, “churches” worked themselves up into a froth of excitement, convinced that this movie represented a huge evangelistic opportunity.

The movie’s makers made a concerted effort to include “Christian” organisations throughout the production of the movie. And religious leaders (specially selected!) were given a sneak preview at 140 venues throughout the United States. Michael Flaherty, president of Walden Media, said this preview was just one aspect of promoting the movie. “We’re willing to talk to almost all audiences that want to hear about the movies we make,” he told the *Texas Catholic* newspaper. “People seem to be interested that we’re going to churches to promote this movie, but we’re also going to schools, libraries, boy scout and girl scout groups. We’re going everywhere.”⁵⁸⁵ In other words, once again money was the motive. It did not matter whether the interested groups were Roman Catholic or Evangelical churches, secular schools or libraries – the movie was promoted to all because they knew it would appeal to all. The supposedly “Christian” content was sufficiently downplayed so as not to offend anyone, and yet it was sufficiently present so that it could be interpreted any way the viewer desired. As Flaherty said: “We’re interested in telling great stories and being true to the original themes of the author. Many times these great stories we want to tell will have elements of faith in them, and we don’t shy away from that. If people interpret the original themes of the book to have elements of faith in them, then they will probably see those same themes in the movie.”

Mere “elements of faith”; people “interpreting the story to have these elements of faith”; this was what passed for “Christian entertainment”. If this really was a Christian movie, the Christian message would be clear, bold, and all-pervasive in the story. But it was not.

Flaherty admitted the real motive behind such movies when he said that Hollywood producers “are going to be open to any audience that can make them money. If it helps sell tickets, moviemakers are going to emphasise Christian elements in movies.” And *that* is the bottom line! Hollywood producers had not suddenly exercised faith in God,

but they most certainly had faith in the trend of religious movies to make money for them, and they most certainly had faith in the gullible “Christian” public to flock to such movies and blow their money on them!

In Britain, a so-called “Evangelical” publisher sent out special *Narnia* packs to churches. Christian Publishing and Outreach (CPO), which distributed material to 20 000 churches, approached Disney and was granted permission to use two images from the film for its *Narnia* packs. Russ Bravo, development director for CPO, which provided posters, DVDs, invitation cards and folders, said: “A lot of churches have been ordering and will be staging their own events. We have seen very big demand across the range. We have a what-to-do guide, outlines that give ministers ideas on how to deliver sermons and material for Sunday schools”.⁵⁸⁶

Had things really sunk so low? Had the “Evangelical” world really sunk to such depths that ministers were given sermon outlines *based on a Disney movie of an occult fantasy book written by an unregenerate Anglo-Catholic?* Was *this* now the source for ministers’ sermons – a movie instead of the Bible? Yes, this really was how bad things had become. A generation or two ago, ministers were preaching against the movies; now they were going to the movies for their preaching material!

In the UK the Methodist organisation, Methodist Children, wrote a special *Narnia* service.⁵⁸⁷ Not to be outdone, Manchester Cathedral staged a *Narnia* day; and St Luke’s Anglican “church” in Maidstone decided to give out free tickets to single parents, as it had also done when *The Passion* had been released! “We are giving away £10 000 worth of tickets to single-parent families in and around the area,” said a spokesman for the “church”. “It’s a Christmas gift from the church to families who may not be able to afford to go to the cinema.” £10 000 could purchase a lot of Bibles to be distributed freely, or Gospel tracts; the sort of things one would expect a church would want to give away freely. But this was *not* a Christian church. For this Anglican “church”, its concept of “outreach” and “evangelism” was to get people into a movie theatre to see a Hollywood blockbuster!

Any notion of Christians being separate from and unspotted by the world was jettisoned long ago by the majority of institutions falsely

calling themselves “churches” in the West. Faced with fast-emptying pews and the corresponding loss of income, they decided that they needed to re-write the Gospel, re-define Christianity, and become fashionable and “relevant” in the world; in a word, to become precisely what the Bible forbids Christians to be (Jn. 17:11,14-16; 1 Jn. 2:15-17; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Jas. 1:27). But the Word of God is ignored by most who call themselves “Christians” today, and in its place they have formulated their own policy – to be as much in the world as it is possible to be; to show the world that “it’s cool to be a Christian”, and that being one does not in any sense mean that a person must deny himself anything. Their attitude is, “We can have the world and Jesus too!” Their message is, “Being a Christian doesn’t mean you can’t go out for a night on the town. Christians can participate in virtually all the activities anyone else participates in; the only difference is, we have Jesus as our Saviour!” The tragedy is that such “Christians” are Christians in name only. They are as lost as anyone else. The Bible is very clear: “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ *depart from iniquity*” (2 Tim. 2:19). They have never known the Lord and Saviour, the holy, harmless, undefiled Son of God who is separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26), and who came into this world “to save his people *from* their sins” (Matt. 1:21).

Disney, of course, was smiling all the way to the bank, grateful indeed for the gullible thousands of churchgoers who naively assumed that this movie was great Christian entertainment for their kids. It brought in more money – a lot more money – and money, after all, is Hollywood’s god.

The movie was occult fantasy supposedly delivering “the Gospel” in the form of magic, sorcery, and heathen mythology. Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of children, already increasingly paganised and opened up to the black arts through a barrage of occultism and fantasy adventure, most notably by the *Harry Potter* books and movies, were now indoctrinated even further into pagan beliefs and practices – even while they were being told by “churches” that the *Narnia* books were Christian. What spiritual confusion and devastation this was creating in young hearts and minds!

Hollywood Starts to Make Other “Faith-Based” Movies After the Success of *The Passion* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*

What is written below is excerpted and adapted from an article written by the present author, entitled “*Faith-Based*” *Films or Hollywood Heresy?*⁵⁸⁸

In the past, professing Christians knew that Hollywood could not, as a general rule, be relied upon to produce decent, moral, clean entertainment. Preachers thundered against supporting the sinful “entertainment” that spewed from the movie industry. And the ungodly garbage that Hollywood dished up was for the most part shunned by those claiming to be Evangelical Christians.

And in addition to producing immoral movies, over the years the movie industry has frequently produced films which are *direct attacks* on the Christian faith. In such movies Christ the Lord, His Gospel, and His followers, are ridiculed.

Occasionally producers have made biblical “epics” such as Cecil B. DeMille’s *The Ten Commandments*, or Franco Zeffirelli’s *Jesus of Nazareth*, and others of that nature; or they have zeroed in on biblical accounts containing a lot of fighting or romance (such as Samson and Delilah, a favourite theme for obvious reasons in this age of sexual immorality), and some of these movies have been touted as being “accurate” and “authentic”; but not only were they usually nowhere near as biblically accurate as they claimed to be, such films were not made in order to further the Christian faith, evangelise the lost, or build up true believers in their faith. They were simply attempts by the moviemakers to rake in mega-bucks from sweeping biblical sagas; and they often succeeded in doing just that.

By the 1980s the movie industry was becoming increasingly pervasive in society; and at the same time, as churches were moving away from their doctrinal foundations and from practical separation from the world, pastors no longer preached against ungodly entertainment. Professing Christians were increasingly attending the movies, no matter what was showing, and without much condemnation from the pulpits, if any, for the hirelings occupying them knew on which side their bread was buttered. Besides, the pastors were all too often just as much devotees at the shrine of Hollywood as anyone else.

Then came the invention of videos, which brought the movies right

into the living rooms of multiplied millions of people the world over. Suddenly, pastors not only had to condemn attending sinful movies, but to be consistent they had to condemn the bringing of those same movies right into the homes of their flocks. And this was something most pastors simply were not prepared to do. They compromised, they fell silent, their own children brought home the same Hollywood junk, and in no time at all a revolution had taken place which continues to this day. Professing Christians were watching anything and everything, seemingly without any conscience about it. The entertainment industry is a very different monster to what it was in the 1970s, in that today it is *all-pervasive* in society. Literally everywhere one goes, one is bombarded with it, in the form of music and movies. Television screens are in shops, malls, cars, and sometimes in every bedroom of people's homes. Many people rent DVDs a number of nights a week – certainly they watch TV throughout the entire evening. Many, in fact, watch it almost all day long as well, even at work. By 2007 the content of movies and television programmes had become *the most popular topic of conversation in America*, according to the Barna Research Group!⁵⁸⁹ And the rest of the world was not far behind. Computers provide instant access to the make-believe world of Hollywood and its equivalents. The so-called “stars” are seen everywhere, on magazine covers, posters, etc. We truly live in an entertainment-saturated world.

But even so, the moviemakers did not, as yet, tap into this vast and constantly growing market with films containing a specifically “Christian” content (or what passes for such). After all, the millions of so-called “Christians” attending the movies, and buying up or renting the videos or DVDs, were just as content as those who made no profession of Christianity to watch whatever Hollywood vomited out! They did not care if the movies glorified violence, or were filled with sexual immorality of all kinds, or foul language and blasphemy. Every so often a prominent “Christian” commentator would take a swipe at the filth being glorified in the movies, but hardly any of them ever advocated the only biblical response: *staying away from them*. They would bemoan the filth, but continue to go and watch it, along with the millions of others who would be found sitting in churches on Sunday mornings, even though their Friday and Saturday nights were taken

up with watching ungodly movies, and the rest of the nights in the week were given over to soaking in the same from their TV screens at home. A study by a leading Hollywood marketing firm, MarketCast, suggested that “Christians”, in addition to readily watching mainstream “entertainment”, were also drawn to violent fare – even the most conservative among them! Joseph Helfgot, president of MarketCast, said, “There’s a wind going through the production community about responding to religion. But when it comes to movies, people distinguish between moral issues and entertainment issues. And most people, even the very religious, are very happy with their movies.”⁵⁹⁰

What an indictment of those calling themselves Christians! *Most people, even the very religious, are very happy with the movies that are churned out.* They will watch precisely the same movies as those who make no profession of faith in Christ!

But of course, being religious, they would also love to watch “religious” movies; and Hollywood did not cater for this. It was in fact very *anti-religious*.

Until, that is, *The Passion of the Christ*.

As we have seen, this Roman Catholic splatter-movie took the world by storm, purporting to be an accurate, authentic depiction of the crucifixion of Christ, although it was nothing of the sort. Not that long before this, a film of this nature would have been shunned by Evangelical Protestants. But times had changed. Those calling themselves Evangelicals were not what they used to be! They were now avid moviegoers, vast numbers of them, with no qualms about watching scenes of horrific violence. They were also softened up to Roman Catholicism by decades of the ecumenical movement, being told by their own spiritually blind pastors that Romanism was “just another Christian church”, Roman Catholics were “brothers and sisters in the Lord”, etc. And what is more, the vast majority of them were by now so ignorant of sound biblical truth that they readily embraced Arminianism, shallow counterfeit evangelistic methods such as “movie evangelism”, “music evangelism”, the “altar call” and the “sinner’s prayer”, and the lie that they must be “in the world (i.e. part of the world, doing what the world does) to win the world” (so obviously contrary to Jn. 17:14-16, 2 Cor. 6:14-18, etc.).

Therefore when *The Passion* came out, they swarmed into movie theatres by their millions, urged on by their pastors. Protestant ministers pronounced this Papist film a “true Christian movie” and a great evangelistic tool, perhaps one of the greatest ever. And now Hollywood woke up to the vast “Christian” market out there. Evangelicals and Fundamentalists number tens of millions in the United States alone, and tens of millions more in the rest of the world. It is true that huge numbers of professing “Christians” had for years shown that they were more than willing to watch anything and everything the non-Christians watched; but *The Passion* proved that they would also flock in huge numbers to a “Christian” movie. But also, such a movie would attract *still more* professing “Christians”, those somewhat more discerning than the common herd, who still had some standards left and would not go to watch movies which were an *overt* attack on their morals or their faith. “A segment of the market is starving for this type of content [i.e. religious content],” said Simon Swart, general manager of 20th Century Fox’s U.S. home entertainment unit.⁵⁹¹ FoxFaith, Fox’s “Christian” division, declared that they were targeting, in particular, Evangelical or “born-again Christians”, who had often rejected popular entertainment as offensive. In fact, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment built up a network of “Evangelical Christian” moviegoers, including 90 000 congregations and a database of over 14 million mainly “Evangelical” households.

In the wake of the phenomenal runaway success of *The Passion*, Hollywood sat up with a jolt. *The Passion* grossed many hundreds of millions of dollars in worldwide box office proceeds. Dollar signs began to flash in producers’ eyes. There was a huge untapped – and extremely lucrative – market out there. They now knew that millions of professing “Christians” would rush to watch movies claiming to be “Christian”. And they would not even be very discerning – they would pretty much gobble up any old religious or pseudo-religious fare that Hollywood served up!

The vice-chairman of Universal Pictures, Marc Shmuger, said of the “Evangelical” market, “It’s a well-formed community, it’s identifiable, it has very specific tastes and preferences. In every fashion, you need to customize your message to your audience.”⁵⁹² This quote shows plainly enough that it is all about making money as far as the movie

producers are concerned. Some studios actually began turning to experts in “Christian marketing” to scan their scripts for content that would be objectionable to “Christians”, and come up with marketing plans to target the “Christian” audience.

And so the moviemakers began to add things into their movies which they thought would appeal to “Christians”, and to take things out which they thought would offend them. An example of adding something in: in a movie called *Mr. And Mrs. Smith*, which was about professional assassins, when a neighbour’s car is stolen a crucifix hangs conspicuously from a rearview mirror, and the actors wear borrowed jackets that read “Jesus Rocks” as they go undercover. And the movie’s director said, “We decided to make the next-door neighbour, whose crucifix it is, be hip, young, cool Christians. It’s literally in there for no other reason than I thought, This is cool.”⁵⁹³

And an example of taking something out: during shooting of the movie *Flightplan*, actor Peter Sarsgaard was instructed to strike the word “Jesus” from his dialogue. “They said: ‘You can’t say that. You can’t take the Lord’s name in vain,’” Sarsgaard said of the film’s producers.⁵⁹⁴

Well, if such additions and deletions satisfy professing “Christians”, then truly what passes for “Christianity” is shocking! A crucifix in a scene would once upon a time have thrilled no one but a Roman Catholic; and if those calling themselves *Evangelicals* are impressed because some godless moviemaker puts a crucifix in a particular scene, or makes the actors wear jackets with the words “Jesus Rocks”, then what passes for “Evangelical Christianity” is so far from being biblical that there are no words to adequately describe it. Likewise if the removal of a single use of the Lord’s name makes “Christians” assume that the movie is a good one!

But in the wake of *The Passion*, it was not just that moviemakers were making a few changes to their movies such as the ones described above – they realised that *entire movies* should be made to appeal to the “Christian” public.

As we have seen, the next major, supposedly “Christian” movie was *The Chronicles of Narnia: the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. And following the massive commercial success of *The Passion* and *The*

Chronicles of Narnia, 20th Century Fox announced that it would be producing as many as a dozen major “faith-themed” films a year, aimed at Evangelicals, under its new “faith-based” division, FoxFaith. This was described by the *Los Angeles Times* as “the biggest commitment of its sort by a Hollywood studio.” But it was certainly not the only studio to commit itself to this. And yet again, straight from the horse’s mouth as it were, we were made aware of the kind of “Christian” movie that would be produced. “We want to push the production value, not videotape sermons or proselytise,” said Simon Swart of Fox’s U.S. home entertainment unit.⁵⁹⁵ “We are not here to proselytise, we are making entertainment,” said Steve Feldstein, senior vice president of FoxFaith.⁵⁹⁶ Tragically, millions of professing “Christians” would rejoice over this hypocritical, dollar-driven interest by a major studio in producing such movies.

Make no mistake about it, Hollywood was *still* blatantly anti-Christian. The studios and producers were willing to churn out some “Christian-themed” movies if they believed it would make money for them. But it was extremely naive to believe that the moviemakers had all suddenly experienced some kind of conversion! It was all about profits. *The Passion* proved there was a vast “Christian” audience out there willing to waste their money on this kind of film, and the moviemakers rushed to cash in on that. But the movie industry was still committed to its agenda of making films which *attack* biblical Christianity, true Christians, the Gospel of Christ, and the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It had not changed.

Yet spiritually blind “Evangelicals” could not see what had happened! In fact, they *welcomed* it! Increasing numbers of churches began to make use of movie-like screens at the pulpits, where clips from movies, both religious and secular, were made accessible for churches to download, and were used to illustrate the pastor’s sermon! Professing “Christians” could easily recount scenes from their favourite films, but found it difficult to recall the central theme of the previous week’s sermon – and pastors and churches were well aware of it, and thus were swinging over to the use of film clips *in* their sermons. And they believed that in doing so they had made their churches more relevant to society! How deceived they were. All they had done, by integrating

popular culture with their version of the “gospel”, was that they had created a hybridised “gospel” that was nothing but “another gospel” entirely, and not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ! When a man behind the pulpit has sunk to such a low that he needs to pepper his sermon with scenes from Hollywood movies, he has acknowledged that Hollywood – ungodly, wicked Hollywood – is, as far as he is concerned, more powerful than the God of the Bible, and that such gimmicks are necessary today to enable people to “understand the Gospel”.

Such was the state of what passed for “Christianity” by the twenty-first century.

***The Exorcist: In the Beginning* (2005): the “Prequel” to the *Exorcist* Movies**

This film, a so-called “prequel” to the earlier *Exorcist* films, supposedly covers the time when the Roman Catholic priest-exorcist discovered his “vocation”. And despite the fact that the film was described by a Roman Catholic film critic as “at times lurid and grotesque”, and “often exploitative”, this same film critic, who praised the original *Exorcist* film as “deeply Catholic” and “supervised at every step by Jesuit theological advisors”, stated of the latest offering: “Still, with all those reservations, it does have its merits, and does have a Catholic framework.” And: “Altogether, the film is a sense-battering experience, which is of course what most people who go to see this film want. Viewers should try also to absorb a good Catholic lesson or two.”⁵⁹⁷ Incredible! Instead of simply saying such a film was not worth viewing, he called on viewers to try to get a Roman Catholic lesson or two out of it! Just as priests and reviewers did with the *Harry Potter* films, so this one did with this film: he attempted to find whatever thin strand of “good” (according to his definition) he could in it, and then to use this to justify watching the movie by claiming it had merit and a Roman Catholic framework!

As we have seen, this had been the Jesuit/Papist strategy ever since they came to reject the PCA and its Code.

***The Da Vinci Code* (2006): Anti-Roman Catholic Fiction, Yet Turned to Rome's Advantage**

Not everything in Hollywood was going Rome's way again, but even so Rome turned what it could to its advantage. What is written below is excerpted and adapted from an article written by the present author at the time when *The Da Vinci Code* was causing a stir worldwide. The article was entitled *Exposing The Da Vinci Code*.⁵⁹⁸

The novel on which the film was based, written by Dan Brown, was first published in 2003. By April 2005, 17 million copies had been sold worldwide, in 44 languages. Some claimed that it was the most successful work in history after the Bible. It was on the *New York Times'* best selling list for three years. In 2006 the film version appeared – and, just like the novel, it was an outright attack upon the Lord Jesus Christ, His blessed Gospel, and His true Church. It presented a false “christ” and a false presentation of what the Bible teaches, and millions were deceived by it into believing that Christianity is a lie, built upon falsehood and deception. Most people are extremely ignorant of both biblical truth and real history, and thus are unable to discern the difference between fact and fiction in the story. Therein lay its immense danger. It presented “another Jesus” and “another gospel” (2 Cor. 11:4).

A man who was a chairman of Sony Pictures (which was behind the movie) before becoming a producer said: “The amazing thing about this book is that it's provocative: is it all true? Isn't it true? As a history book it's extraordinary. As an exploration of the evolution of a particular religion, it's extraordinary.”⁵⁹⁹ Note how this *fictional* work was being described as “a history book” – not fiction, but non-fiction!

Certainly millions became so convinced that it was substantially true, even though presented as fiction, that large numbers of them visited the sites mentioned in the story, such as Westminster Abbey in England, the Louvre in Paris, Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland, the Chateau de Villette near Versailles, etc. The owner of the Chateau stated: “This book revealed the truth that the Catholics have been hiding for thousands of years.... The book is fiction, but it's based on truth.”⁶⁰⁰

What, then, is *The Da Vinci Code* all about?

The author, rejecting the biblical truth about the Lord Jesus Christ entirely, wrote that the divinity of Christ was a myth invented by the

Roman emperor Constantine in the fourth century AD. And his novel laid out a huge supposed “conspiracy”: that Mary Magdalene actually married Jesus Christ, that they had children – and that “the Church” covered this truth up, destroying Mary’s character by writing of her in the Gospel accounts as an immoral woman! Furthermore, the author claimed that the “Holy Blood” is the supposed bloodline from Christ and Mary Magdalene; and that the “Holy Grail” is not a chalice, but Mary herself!

To support his theory, Dan Brown claimed that the Dead Sea scrolls show a stronger association of Mary Magdalene with Christ than what we read in the Bible. He also had references to the so-called “missing Gospels”.⁶⁰¹

He claimed that in the painting called “The Last Supper”, by Leonardo da Vinci, Mary Magdalene is depicted on the right of Christ – supposedly a female apostle along with the other apostles. He claimed that her place was usurped by a male hierarchy, thereby suppressing the “sacred feminine.” And he asserted that the Roman Catholic institution organised a massive cover-up of this truth.

The story made reference to so-called Gnostic “gospels”, such as *The Gospel of Mary*. Other sources used by Brown were: *The Goddess in the Gospels: Reclaiming the Sacred Feminine*, and, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. These give a good idea of where Brown’s intellectual and spiritual leanings lay.⁶⁰²

According to the story, the royal historian, Sir Leigh Teabing, an eccentric obsessed with the “Holy Grail”, shelters Robert Langdon, a Harvard professor of Religious Symbolology, at his French chateau. Another character is Sophie, a French cryptologist able to decipher codes and puzzles, working with Langdon. Teabing shows Sophie *The Gospel of Mary*, supposedly written in Greek in the second century AD. It would be best to quote directly from the book at this point:⁶⁰³

“I shan’t bore you with the countless references to Jesus and Magdalene’s union [said Teabing]. That has been explored *ad nauseam* by modern historians. I would, however, like to point out the following.’ He motioned to another passage. ‘This is from the Gospel of Mary Magdalene.

“Sophie had not known a gospel existed in Magdalene’s words. She read the text:

“And Peter said, “Did the Saviour really speak with a woman without our knowledge? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?”

“And Levi answered, “Peter, you have always been hot-tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like an adversary. If the Saviour made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her very well. That is why he loved her more than us.””

Teabing explains that Peter was jealous of Mary Magdalene. “The stakes were far greater than mere affection,’ Teabing told Sophie, ‘because at this point in the gospels, Jesus suspects he will soon be captured and crucified.’” So he told Mary how to carry on his Church! Teabing added, “I dare say Peter was something of a sexist.”

“This is Saint Peter,” said Sophie; “the rock on which Jesus built His Church.” To which Teabing replied: “The same, except for one catch. According to these unaltered gospels, it was not Peter to whom Christ gave directions with which to establish the Christian Church. It was Mary Magdalene.”

The book continues: “Sophie looked at him. ‘You’re saying the Christian Church was to be carried on by a *woman*?’ ‘That was the plan. Jesus was the original feminist. He intended for the future of His Church to be in the hands of Mary Magdalene.’ ‘And Peter had a problem with that,’ Langdon said, pointing to The Last Supper. ‘That’s Peter there. You can see that Da Vinci was well aware of how Peter felt about Mary Magdalene.’” The suggestion was made to Sophie that in the painting by Leonardo, Peter was leaning menacingly towards Mary, and slicing his blade-like hand across her neck.

Next, Teabing pulls out a chart of genealogy, and shows Sophie that Mary Magdalene was of the House of Benjamin, and thus of royal descent. Sophie is told that Mary Magdalene was not poor, but that “she was recast as a whore to erase evidence of her powerful family ties.” “But why,” she asks, “would the early Church care if Magdalene had royal blood?” It is explained to her that it was her consorting with Christ that concerned the early Church, rather than her royal blood. “As you know, the Book of Matthew tells us that Jesus was of the House of David. A descendant of King Solomon – King of the Jews.

By marrying into the powerful House of Benjamin, Jesus fused two royal bloodlines, creating a potent political union with the potential of making a legitimate claim to the throne and restoring the line of kings as it was under Solomon.”

Then Teabing dropped his bombshell: “The legend of the Holy Grail is a legend about royal blood. When Grail legend speaks of the chalice that held the blood of Christ, it speaks in fact, of Mary Magdalene, the female womb that carried Jesus’ royal bloodline.”

“But how could Christ have a bloodline unless...?” Sophie paused and looked at Langdon. Langdon smiled softly. ‘Unless they had a child.’”

“Behold,’ Teabing proclaimed, ‘the greatest cover-up in human history. Not only was Jesus Christ married, but He was a father. My dear, Mary Magdalene was the Holy Vessel. She was the chalice that bore the lineage, and the vine from which the sacred fruit sprang forth!’”

The Bible, God’s Word, refutes Brown’s lies:

Firstly, the divinity of Christ was not invented by the emperor Constantine in the fourth century. The Bible is full of clear references to His divinity. To list just a few of the many passages which reveal it: Psa. 45:6,7 with Heb. 1:8,9; Isa. 7:14 with Matt. 1:22,23; Isa. 9:6; Jn. 1:1; Acts 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:16. Dan Brown showed both his utter contempt for God’s Word, and his abysmal ignorance of the Bible and of history, in making this absurd claim.

Secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ did not marry Mary Magdalene, nor beget children by her or anyone else. The Son of God came into this world *to save sinners* – this was His divine mission (1 Tim. 1:15). Mary Magdalene was one such sinner saved by God’s grace through faith in Christ. He cast seven devils out of her (Mk. 16:9; Lk. 8:2).

The Bible tells us very little about Mary Magdalene. She was with Mary the mother of the Lord, and some other women, near the cross when Jesus was crucified (Jn. 19:25). She sat over against the sepulchre when Jesus was laid in it (Matt. 27:6); and very early on the first day of the week, the day of His resurrection, she came to see the sepulchre, and to anoint Jesus’ body with spices, and found it empty; and she was the very first to whom the risen Jesus showed Himself

after His resurrection (Matt. 28:1-10; Jn. 20:1-18; Mk. 16:1-11; Lk. 24:1-10). She was a devoted and faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus.

But there is not a word about her being of the House of Benjamin! And Jesus certainly did not marry her! Dan Brown's fantasy was not the first to suggest that the Lord Jesus married Mary Magdalene – it is a lie that has cropped up many times before. This is because of a supposition (for that is all it is) that Mary Magdalene was the prostitute mentioned in Lk. 7:37-50. There is nothing whatsoever to support this supposition. They were two different women. But wicked men love to put forward this suggestion of a marriage between Christ and a supposed prostitute, for then it makes Christ appear to be a man of loose morals. They paint the entire scenario in their brains: the founder of a new sect physically attracted to a very worldly woman. They entirely ignore the fact that we are nowhere told Mary was a prostitute, and besides, the Lord Jesus *set her free* from Satan's power, and she became a devoted, holy disciple. That is not "juicy" enough for their sinful minds!

When Jesus met Mary Magdalene after He rose from the dead, what did He say to her? "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (Jn. 20:17). He would not so much as let her touch Him! He told her to go and tell His disciples that He was going to ascend; and this is what she immediately did (Jn. 20:17,18). And thereafter He did not appear to her alone, although she certainly would have spent time with Him in company with all His other disciples, before His ascension.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not marry anyone. Marriage was ordained by God for the good of mankind. Christ was God from all eternity; He came in the flesh, without laying aside His divinity, but taking a human nature into union with His divine nature; and He came into this world to purchase a "bride" with His own blood. But His "bride" consists of all the elect, all those for whom He laid down His life and shed His blood. The true Church is the mystical bride of Christ. He has no physical bride, nor ever any need of one (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:6-9; 21:9). Nor did the Lord Jesus beget children physically. The Bible says that His spiritual "children" are His elect people, for whom He died (Heb. 2:13).

It is nothing less than heresy and blasphemy to say that the perfectly sinless Son of God married a woman, and beget children.

This is proclaiming “another Jesus” indeed (2 Cor. 11:4) – not the true Jesus Christ revealed in His Word. It does not matter in the least if there are scrolls supposedly showing a stronger association of Mary Magdalene with Christ than what we read in the Bible – it is the *Bible* that is divinely inspired (2 Tim. 3:16). We did not have to wait till the twentieth century and the discovery of certain scrolls to ascertain the truth about Christ and Mary Magdalene – the books that comprise the Holy Scriptures, divinely inspired, were written in the first century AD, during the lifetime of the apostles, and furthermore were *known* to the true Church from that time on (see, for example, Col. 4:16; 2 Pet. 3:15,16; Rev. 1:1-3,10,11). God’s Word is settled. No more writings are ever to be added to it.

As for the so-called “Gnostic gospels”: one of the characters in Brown’s novel says of them that they are the “unaltered gospels”. In saying this, he implies that the four Gospels found in the New Testament were altered, and therefore cannot be trusted. Of course, he could not give any evidence for this; but millions of readers accepted it anyway.

Gnosticism, the word being derived from the Greek word meaning “knowledge”, was a heresy that arose in the early centuries of the Christian era. Gnostics claimed to possess special occult knowledge relating to God, salvation, etc. Gnosticism is not Christian in any sense, for it is unbiblical and anti-biblical. Aspects of it were exposed and refuted by the inspired writers of the New Testament Scriptures (e.g. Col. 2:8-23; 1 Tim. 1:4; Tit. 1:14; 1 Tim. 6:20; 1 Cor. 8:1). Unregenerate men are always seeking extra knowledge, and there is a particular attraction towards supposed knowledge that is “hidden” from the majority and known only to a select few. Herein lies the attraction of Gnosticism, in all its forms including modern ones; and herein lies also the attraction of Dan Brown’s fantasy to many: the attainment of “knowledge” supposedly hidden for centuries, occult “clues” hidden in mysterious places, tantalising hints of something beyond the awareness of the masses.

Men will eagerly sift *through* the Bible for supposed “hidden” messages or information, all the while ignoring, or failing to see, the *plain, straightforward* message of the Bible – the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of salvation; or they will eagerly search *outside* the Bible for supposed “hidden” messages that to their minds contradict

and overthrow the truth of the Bible (as in *The Da Vinci Code*). Either way, Satan is the winner. For by such means he keeps men from knowing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of sinners. For, “Neither is there salvation in any other [than the true Christ of God]: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Lost men eagerly search for “hidden” knowledge here, there, and everywhere; but the true, saving knowledge of the Gospel is *hidden from them*, unless and until the Lord opens their eyes. Truly, truly, “if our gospel [the *true* Gospel of Christ] be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor. 4:3,4).

Thirdly, it is a total fallacy to claim that Mary Magdalene was supposed to carry on Christ’s Church, for “Jesus was the original feminist”; but that her place was usurped by a male hierarchy, thereby suppressing the “sacred feminine”; and that “the Church” covered up the “truth” about Christ and Mary Magdalene, destroying her character by writing of her in the Gospel accounts as an immoral woman. One fantasy after another from Dan Brown’s brain!

There was, after all, no such “truth” to cover up. Christ was *not* married to Mary, and they did *not* have children. The Gospel accounts do not say much about Mary Magdalene at all. The writers of the Gospels did not depict her as an immoral woman. Very few details of her life are given.

The New Testament makes it very clear that Christ chose the apostles, and that they were all *men*. Mary’s place was not usurped by a “male hierarchy” – she never had a place to begin with, as one of the band of apostles.

As for the “sacred feminine”, this is all hogwash. It is very appealing to many in this age of militant feminism, and of goddess-worship by New Agers, witches, and others. Millions today are turning to the worship of a female deity, and anything that promotes that concept in the minds of the general public is very acceptable to them. Warbling on about the “sacred feminine” was a sure-fire way for Brown to up the sales of his book.

Besides, to believe the absurdity of this “cover-up” is to believe that the four Gospels were written by “the Church” (i.e. in Brown’s mind, the Roman Catholic “Church”), rather than by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This, if true, would mean that the four Gospels are mere fabrications, to which were attached the names of the four men to give them authenticity. But it is not true. The Gospel accounts were written by men who lived in the first century AD, and who were Christians, disciples of Christ. The Roman Catholic “Church”, which only came into existence centuries later, had absolutely nothing to do with their authorship. The Roman Catholic institution is guilty of very many cover-ups throughout its history, but this was not one of them. It could not “cover up” when it did not even exist!

As for the “evidence” in the famous painting called “The Last Supper”, by Leonardo da Vinci: let us for a moment assume that da Vinci really did depict Mary Magdalene on Christ’s right side, supposedly as being a female apostle. We are sure that authorities on the painting would deny that he did any such thing, but let us, just for a moment, suppose that he did. So what? Are we to be so foolish as to make a mere painting, by a Roman Catholic artist (however brilliant), our authority? Are we to set aside the testimony of God’s own Word, the Bible, attested by many infallible proofs, on the basis of this supposed “hidden clue” in a *painting*? Has the world gone mad? Evidently it has, when millions of gullible readers can reject the truth of God’s Word on such flimsy “evidence” as this.

The Brown story presents Peter as a “sexist”, jealous and scheming man (for he supposedly knew Christ wanted Mary to establish His Church, but was very opposed to this), and even a man who contemplated the murder of Mary Magdalene. What a terrible distortion of the truth about the godly apostle, Peter, a faithful Christian and minister! A simple reading of Peter’s own epistles, or of his sermon on the day of Pentecost, will provide the reader with an accurate picture of this humble, zealous servant of Christ. Nothing in the biblical account presents Peter as jealous of Mary Magdalene, scheming, with murderous thoughts towards her; and as for that modern-day, “politically-correct” term, “sexist”, it is too pathetic for words.

Thus, this fiction is an attack upon the Lord Jesus Christ, for it depicts

Him as a mere man, who fathered a child by Mary Magdalene. And it is an attack upon the Gospel of Christ, for obviously anyone who believes in, and follows, Jesus Christ, if He was who the book says He was, is following a mere man. In addition, as *The Da Vinci Code* makes reference to so-called Gnostic “gospels”, which are *not* divinely inspired but merely the works of enemies of the truth, people are drawn to accepting such lies as the “Gospel truth.”

But it is also an attack upon the true Church of Christ. Some might say, “But it’s an attack upon the Roman Catholic institution, not the true Church!” However, it is not that simple. Nothing Dan Brown wrote could ever expose even a fraction of the lies, false beliefs, human traditions, and massive cover-ups that characterise Roman Catholicism. The truth about Roman Catholicism is far more horrifying than anything in Dan Brown’s fiction. He wrote of how the Papal institution supposedly invented a story about Mary Magdalene and got this story incorporated into the Gospel accounts of the life of Christ. This is fiction, not fact. Rome did no such thing. But what *did* the Papal system do? It baptized the heathen doctrine of the mother-goddess worshipped around the world, calling this false deity “the Virgin Mary”, and exalted her to a position even superior to that of its own false “christ”! It gave “Mary” powers that the true Mary, the mother of the Lord, never had, it commands its blinded adherents to pray to her, sing hymns to her, build shrines in her honour, and it sets her up as assisting Christ in the salvation of the world! Truly, Romanism has invented a tale about Mary: not the “Mary Magdalene” of Dan Brown’s imagination, but the “Mary” worshipped by over a billion Roman Catholics worldwide as the “Mother of God”! The truth is stranger than fiction indeed.

But the problem with *The Da Vinci Code*’s attack on Romanism is this: it presents the Romish institution as “the true Church”; thus, anything in the story exposing the falsehood of the Romish “Church” is seen as exposing true Christianity, by the millions who read it! And thus, by presenting Roman Catholicism as “the Church”, it leads its readers to believe that Christianity is a lie; a deception!

But in a backhanded way *The Da Vinci Code*, despite its anti-Romanism, actually played right into Rome’s hands. How so?

The first way in which this occurred was when Opus Dei began turning the story to its own advantage. Dan Brown wrote of Opus Dei in the book. Opus Dei (Latin for “God’s Work”) is a secretive Roman Catholic organisation, extremely powerful and wealthy. Opus members include priests and non-priests, men and women, married and unmarried people, and many hold key positions in business, politics, etc. Often their affiliation to the organisation is unknown to others. These are facts! And so Brown saw an opportunity to make Opus Dei a part of his conspiracy book, as being deeply involved in protecting “the Church” from its enemies: murdering, drugging people, etc. Opus Dei, of course, denied all these things: as sales of the book soared, the Opus website stated, “Opus Dei is a Catholic institution and adheres to Catholic doctrine, which clearly condemns immoral behaviour, including murder, lying, stealing, and generally injuring people”.

Such disclaimers notwithstanding, anyone with an understanding of the true history of Roman Catholicism knows that Roman Catholic doctrine has never stood in the way of the Roman Catholic institution being involved in murder, lying, stealing, etc. History is replete with the evidence. The Jesuit Order alone has been guilty of all these things and more – and although the impression is given that the Jesuits and Opus Dei are enemies, behind the scenes this is certainly not always the case. The fact is that Opus Dei, like the Jesuit Order, *is* a dangerous organisation that will stop at nothing to achieve its goals. So Brown was correct in this. This is why his story became so popular: there was just enough truth in it to make it all seem plausible, in the minds of millions.

Amazingly, however, although *The Da Vinci Code* did not depict Opus Dei in a good light at all, the organisation turned the book to its own advantage. For example, in Britain a Radio 4 programme on 27 October 2005 claimed to have been granted “unrestricted access” to Opus Dei; and Channel 4 TV’s “Opus Dei and the Da Vinci Code” aired on 12 December 2005. But the interviewers on both programmes treated Opus Dei with kid gloves. “The interviewers did not press issues and did not probe. This was presumably a condition of access to Opus. One investigator was a former monk. The alleged ‘unrestricted access’ was stage managed and – mostly limited – to the women’s quarters. (The women in Opus are entirely separate and inferior to the

men.)... Channel 4 had posed the question, ‘Does Opus Dei deserve its sinister portrayal?’ The programme’s tame verdict was a foregone conclusion”.⁶⁰⁴

Given the huge influence Opus Dei members exert in all fields, including the media, this is not surprising.

But Opus was not finished turning Dan Brown’s story to its advantage. On the TV programme, 60 students at the London School of Economics were shown attending a lecture on 5 May 2005, entitled “The Da Vinci Code and Opus Dei: the Da Vinci Code Fact or Fiction? Opus Dei Tells All.” And the lecturer was Andrew Soane, Director of the Opus Dei Information Office in Britain. Another Opus director, Jack Valero, said: “A few years ago Opus Dei was virtually unknown outside Catholic circles. Now 70 million people have heard of Opus Dei. They have heard a pack of lies. We can now explain what Opus Dei is and what it does.... It is a great opportunity.”

Valero also said, “People read the book and phone in.” When the interviewer suggested to him, “Dan Brown is your best recruiting agent,” Valero replied, “Maybe he has done something he did not intend to.”

In addition, Roman Catholic journalist, John L. Allen, wrote a book entitled *Opus Dei: Secrets and Power Inside the Catholic Church*. He was granted access to Opus personnel and records to which others were not permitted. *But*: “Allen uses the fictional caricature of Opus in *The Da Vinci Code* to make points in Opus’ favour. Even where criticism of Opus is unavoidable it is muted and over qualified. This book could lead many Roman Catholic parents to take a more favourable view of Opus”.⁶⁰⁵

Thus Opus Dei managed to actually use the unprecedented interest in Brown’s book to get people interested in the organisation, and even to recruit new Opus members!

And the second way in which the book, and the film, actually played into Rome’s hands is as follows: some of the things Brown wrote about the Roman Catholic institution, Opus Dei, etc., are true. But the trouble is that his story was such a mixture of some truth and much error. Thus on the one hand, there are those who have no idea what is fact and what is fiction, and therefore they believe the lies and fantasies of the

author relating to the Lord Jesus Christ, His Gospel, etc. But on the other hand, there are those who understand that it is fiction, and who come to the following conclusion: “The book is a work of fiction, by its author’s own admission; it’s just a story; it is not meant to be taken seriously; and thus there is no reason whatsoever to believe that there is *anything* sinister about the Roman Catholic Church. He was writing a story, nothing more.” And as a result, they will in the future view the works of *serious* researchers into Rome’s wicked doings, intrigues, plots, schemes, assassinations, etc., in the same light! Whenever a serious work appears, exposing some aspect of the dark deeds of the Papal system, the tendency will be for many to dismiss it lightly as “a *Da Vinci Code*-type conspiracy theory”. Especially as, in the light of all the negative publicity generated against it by the book, the Vatican went out of its way to present itself as nothing like the kind of institution portrayed in the book. It is a past master at slick make-overs.

Either way, Satan’s purposes have been served. And the same is true of Dan Brown’s *Da Vinci Code*.

Bishops Issue Documents to Guide Papists in Dealing with the Media

And so the love-hate relationship between the Roman Catholic institution and Hollywood continued. In 2006 bishops’ conferences issued guidelines to Roman Catholics concerning the media. The Australian bishops’ conference published a document entitled, “Go Tell Everyone: A Pastoral Letter on the Church and the Media.” Recognising what it considered to be the positive aspects of the media, the document called on Roman Catholics to be “critical users”, not “passive consumers”, of the media. The media, it stated, should be used to communicate the Roman Catholic “gospel”. And later in the year the Canadian bishops published a document entitled, “The Media: A Fascinating Challenge for the Family.” In it, they stated that the media’s immense power can be positive, if they inform and educate; “But they also have the capacity to harm the family by presenting a false vision of life, love, family, morality and religious beliefs.” It recommended that families view the media critically, and react to media bias against religion by means of protests. It also set out a series of recommendations for parents on how to instruct their children in media use.⁶⁰⁶

Rocky Balboa (2006): another Pro-Roman Catholic Movie

What is written below is excerpted and adapted from an article written by the present author, entitled *Rocky Balboa: a “Christian Boxer”?*⁶⁰⁷

The Passion of the Christ set the ball rolling, and thereafter one movie after another was churned out with a supposedly “Christian” theme, or at the very least supposedly “Christian” undertones. In 2006 Hollywood served up *Rocky Balboa*, described as “the final round in the award-winning *Rocky* franchise.”

Hollywood actor Sylvester Stallone created the character of “Rocky”, a heavyweight boxer, decades earlier in a movie of the same name; and the first one was followed by a string of sequels. Then in 2006 he made, and acted in, what he said would be the last *Rocky* movie. Except that this one was touted as a movie to build one up in one’s “Christian” faith!

Incredible? Astounding? This reveals the depths to which those claiming to be “Christians” had sunk, when they could praise a boxing movie as containing a “Christian” message that should be studied, discussed, promoted, and even used as an evangelistic outreach tool!

What was the movie about? The following is an overview taken from a website called RockyResources.com, with the present author’s comments inserted at appropriate points:

“*Rocky Balboa* is an inspirational story that depicts a man who honorably answers the call in his life. With the odds stacked against him Rocky finds something left to give [What “call”? – the “call” to punch up another man for fame or money? Has the so-called “Church” reached the stage where the gory sport of boxing is now to be viewed as a *call*, if a man is “good” at it? Apparently yes].

“The greatest underdog story of our time is back for one final round of the Academy Award-winning *Rocky* franchise, former heavyweight champion Rocky Balboa steps out of retirement and back into the ring, pitting himself against a new rival in a dramatically different era.

“After a virtual boxing match declares Rocky Balboa the victor over current champion Mason ‘The Line’ Dixon, the legendary fighter’s passion and spirit are reignited. But when his desire to fight in small, regional competitions is trumped by promoters calling for a re-match of the cyber-fight, Balboa must weigh the mental and physical risks

of a high profile exhibition match against his need to be in the ring [His *need* to be in the ring? Do certain men actually have a *need* to be boxers? A “need” used to mean food, clothing, shelter. Other things were “wants”. But apparently the fictional character of Rocky has a “need” to be a boxer. Would someone else then have a “need” to be a knife-fighter, perhaps? After all, if a man has a “need” to be a boxer, then really anything is possible. And more importantly, do some *Christians* have this “need”? Apparently yes, if the fanfare about this movie was to be believed].

“*Rocky Balboa* motivates us to face our own challenges with perseverance, community support, and prayer [Prayer? Does Rocky pray for victory in the ring? Do others pray for him to win? That anyone could even think a movie about a boxing champion could ever possibly motivate anyone to face one’s challenges with prayer is shocking enough. What has modern-day “Christianity” become?].

“The story presents a dynamic opportunity for insightful discussions about where we find our courage, how we overcome losses and remain faithful, and what we define as victory” [The Bible answers all these matters perfectly. True courage comes from the Lord; believers remain faithful to the Lord by His grace, for He enables each one of His elect to persevere to the end; and as for overcoming and the true definition of victory, the Bible says: “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and *this* is the victory that overcometh the world, even our *faith*” (1 Jn. 5:4). But apparently we need to hold *discussions* about these things, being *guided by* this movie about a boxing champion! Not even a movie about the life of Paul, or Peter, or David, or Moses – a movie about some fictional boxer called Rocky! “The Lord is my Shepherd,” wrote David in Psa. 23:1, and the Holy Spirit guides into all truth, Jn. 16:13. But *Rocky* would be the shepherd of vast numbers of blind moviegoers, by guiding them (they believed), if not into all truth, then at least into a whole lot. Instead of turning to Christ, multitudes of “churchgoers” now turn to the cinema, and to superstars for answers to life’s problems. And the most tragic thing of all is that huge numbers do not even see anything wrong with this. Their lives are so dominated and controlled by Hollywood, that they do not even perceive the problem!].

And what of the man who created and played the part of “Rocky”? According to Stuart Shepard of Focus on the Family’s Citizenlink.com, Sylvester Stallone considered himself “reborn”. He said this during a teleconference with pastors and religious leaders, as reported on RockyResources.com. But let us delve a bit deeper. Focus on the Family was so ecumenical that it would not bother to make this distinction, but we must: Stallone was, by his own admission, a *Roman Catholic*. So when he spoke of being “reborn”, we have to bear in mind that he evidently meant this in the Roman Catholic sense. And what is that? According to Canon 208 of the Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law, one’s “rebirth” is when one is baptised! And Canon 849 says that by Roman Catholic baptism, “people... are born again as children of God”. Thus a Roman Catholic means something *radically different* from a true Christian, when he speaks of being “reborn”.

Stallone said: “I was raised in a Catholic home, a Christian home, and I went to Catholic schools and I was taught the faith and went as far as I could with it. Until one day, you know, I got out in the so-called real world and I was presented with temptation. I kinda like lost my way and made a lot of bad choices.”

Stallone spoke of Romanism and Christianity as being one and the same. This is how a Romanist would talk, of course, and the ecumenicals at Focus on the Family and elsewhere would readily accept Romanists as Christians, but the fact is that Romanism is *not* Christian, and there is the world of difference between a “Catholic home” and a Christian one. It is the difference between darkness and light.

He said he realised his fame was not the most important part of his life, and that God could help a person overcome his past. “The more I go to church, and the more I turn myself over to the process of believing in Jesus and listening to his Word and having him guide my hand, I feel as though the pressure is off me now.”

He also said: “You need to have the expertise and the guidance of someone else. You cannot train yourself. I feel the same way about Christianity and about what the Church is: The Church is the gym of the soul.”

When he said this, Stallone was sixty. And like many people who reach this age, he had doubtless begun to think about death, and the life hereafter. He doubtless truly realised that fame is fleeting, and that life

itself is short, and all the money and fame in the world cannot take a man to heaven. And so he turned to a false religion, as so many do in their later years. What a tragedy.

Stallone said that the infamous character of Rocky was meant to reflect the nature of Jesus! In the conference call with pastors and religious leaders he said, “It’s like he was being chosen, Jesus was over him, and he was going to be the fella that would live through the example of Christ. He’s very, very forgiving. There’s no bitterness in him. He always turns the other cheek. And it’s like his whole life was about service.”

It was shocking enough that men calling themselves “pastors and religious leaders” would even bother to *have* a conference with Stallone over this movie and his supposed “Christian faith”. Any true pastor, given the opportunity to speak with Stallone like that, would use it to witness to him of Christ the Saviour. But no – these men talked to him for the purpose of hearing what he had to say about the “faith lessons” of his boxing movie!

That was shocking enough. But that Stallone compared his character with the Lord Jesus Christ! – there seem to be no depths to which false ministers, blind leaders of the blind, will not sink, for they did not immediately and vociferously refute such a wicked notion. Stallone said, “it’s like his [Rocky’s] whole life was about service.” A *boxer* whose whole life is about service? A *boxer* who “was being chosen, Jesus was over him, and he was going to be the fella that would live through the example of Christ”? Where was the condemnation of such rubbish from the “pastors and religious leaders”? Deafening silence.

On a section of the website entitled “Faith Leaders Respond” (also called “Pastors and Leaders: Their Response”), one could see the kind of men (and women!) described as “Faith Leaders” and “Pastors”. To name just a few:

Stuart Shepard, Managing Editor of Focus on the Family’s Citizenlink.com: “Stallone spoke of being reborn in a teleconference with pastors and religious leaders concerning faith elements of the unlikely sixth (*Rocky*) movie.... I have to confess I was won over by the real-life story of redemption I heard. I’m believin’ it.”

What would we expect from this particular source? Focus on the

Family: ecumenical, riddled with psychology.

Dick Rolfe of The Dove Foundation: “I had a very favorable overall impression of the movie.... One Biblical profanity is the only ‘speed bump’ in an otherwise compelling movie.”

This was supposed to be a movie with “Christian” undertones, and yet it contains a “biblical profanity”. And incredibly, this man shrugged his shoulders and said it was just a small “speed bump”, nothing to be concerned about, the movie was still great! This was the level to which so-called “Christian” leaders had sunk! Who cares what the Bible says, it is fine to use a little profanity, the movie is great anyway – this was the message such a statement conveyed.

The Catholic Digest: “There’s a tremendous spirituality connected with the character of Rocky, because the entire thing was based on good Christian values and dilemmas – whether he could persevere through the storms.” Thus Roman Catholics were considered to be “Pastors and Leaders” as well. This movie was acceptable to both Papists and “Protestants”, in true ecumenical spirit. It therefore could not in any sense present the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, nor be truly Christian.

Francis Maier, Chancellor, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Denver, Colorado: “[*Rocky Balboa*] is a really excellent film.... It’s also one you can take the kids to.” A little “biblical profanity” and a message that boxing is an acceptable sport notwithstanding. But of course the Papists would praise it.

Roman Catholic nun, Rose Pacatte, of the “Daughters of St. Paul”: “One theme that stood out for me was the whole idea of self esteem. And how important that is to be formed.... That’s a good message for people to know and hear.” Apart from being yet another comment by a Papist, under the title of “Pastors and Leaders”, this was just nonsense. What does the Bible say about “self esteem”? “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Phil. 2:3). Esteeming others better than oneself, in true humility, is the very opposite of the arrogant “self esteem” mantra of modern psychology. But again, this is the kind of thing that would appeal to a Papist, and to millions of others as well.

The home page of the website was designed to provide “useful” tools to learn about the movie, “and utilize the film as a teaching, preaching

or outreach opportunity. If you are a church, school, or small group leader, there are some excellent resources here that will help you ‘get in the ring’ with Rocky.”

When a pastor has reached the stage of using a film about a *boxer* to supposedly “teach” the flock, or an evangelist is using it as an “outreach opportunity”, then truly, there are no words to adequately describe the state of what passes for “Christianity” in our times. The Bible has been set aside, and the words and methods of sinful men have replaced it. Truly, truly, the “watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs” (Isa. 56:10). These prophetic words are once again fulfilled: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:3,4). They will not read and study the Bible for themselves, but will turn to fables, to the movies, and embrace them as the truth; and unless a “teacher” gives them what they want, they will not support him. So there are “heaps” of false “teachers”, scratching the ears of deceived souls and catering to their lust for worldly entertainment. That is where the money is.

There was a “Register for Updates” section on the site, which said – amongst other things –

“Tell us how we can serve you:

– I am a MINISTRY/ORGANIZATION and we would like to partner to promote the film.”

It also advertised “Leader Resources” – including a “Leader’s Guide” – to “help in creating lively discussions about faith themes found in *Rocky Balboa*. The material includes discussion starters, scriptural references, fun trivia, tools, and effective actions, which could include hosting an interfaith event,” etc.

Ah! There we have it. The material could be used to host an “*interfaith event*”! Roman Catholics, Protestants – maybe even others – all joining together as one big happy family, to promote *Rocky Balboa* as a movie with profound “faith themes”! The blurring of fantasy and reality had reached this stage. People are so devoted to the idolatry of the movies, that their whole lives revolve around going to see them, analysing them, and molding their lives according to them. And religious leaders realised this, and began cashing in on it. They

could not hold onto their flocks by the Bible alone, but felt they must cater to a generation that lives like a parasite on the Hollywood host. Is this an exaggeration? *Everywhere, everyone* talks about the movies, talks as if these movies and their stars have a life of their own, and talks as if they have profound wisdom which we should all live by. And religious leaders know it. So they cater to it. Instead of sound teaching from the Bible, they provided discussions around supposed “faith themes” found in this movie. Instead of biblical separation, they promoted interfaith events around it.

One could also order the “Rocky Balboa Outreach Box”! The advert said: “This kit is designed for faith, educational, and community leaders to help tell the story of Rocky – one of courage, faith, and perseverance.” It is the task of the true Bible teacher to tell the story of *Christ the Lord!* But these false shepherds, these blind guides, were going to be telling the story of this fictional boxing character! – and in doing so, they would feel they had “done the Lord’s work” and “witnessed” to people!

True courage, faith and perseverance are found in the lives of the real men and women of the Bible, as well as in the lives of true Christian men and women throughout history. How possibly could the story of a *boxer*, and one moreover who is *not even real*, convey such things? It is utterly impossible.

On the “Digital Resources” (“Content for Webmasters”) section of the site, for the “Website Administrator Electronic Press Kit”, 2 Timothy 4:7 appeared from some Bible version or other: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”! The King James Version says, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”.

It is true that Paul the apostle, both here and also in 1 Tim. 6:12 and 1 Cor. 9:26,27, uses boxing as an *illustration* of the *spiritual warfare* in which Christians are engaged. But he is not *condoning* boxing with these words! For the Bible says of Christians, “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which

are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19,20). The Lord is certainly not glorified by a man punching another man repeatedly for entertainment, for "sport", causing blood to spurt from his face, bruising his body, and even punching him unconscious! This is mindless, senseless violence and does not in any sense glorify God. Many boxers suffer severe injuries, even to their brains. And nor does it bring glory to God for anyone to sit watching such "sport", enjoying the spectacle. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or *whatsoever ye do*, do *all* to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). Boxing cannot in any sense be compatible with such things as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Gal. 5:22,23). And it is impossible for one to go from watching a boxing match in a spiritual frame of mind: "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report... *think on these things*" (Phil. 4:8). Boxing stirs up passions in men. It stirs up anger, hatred, feelings of revenge and retaliation. Self-defence is legitimate; but beating up someone for fun or "sport" is sinful, plain and simple.

To misuse 2 Tim. 4:7, as was done by those promoting this boxing movie as a movie with "Christian" themes, revealed a shocking lack of understanding of the Bible, and of what it truly means to be a Christian.

***The Nativity Story* (2006): Yet Another Pro-Roman Catholic Movie**

In late 2006 the film, *The Nativity Story*, made its appearance. The story was told from the point of view of Mary and Joseph, and a huge amount of poetic licence was taken with the characters. This is how it was justified by screenwriter Mike Rich, who considered himself "a devout Christian": "There's very little detail in Scripture other than small accounts in Luke and Matthew. That means sourcing material while staying true to the Gospel."⁶⁰⁸

But he did *not* stay true to the Gospel. He sent his script to those described as "leading theologians, Jewish scholars and Biblical experts". And, as one Roman Catholic reviewer put it, the film was: "A composite of the birth narrative accounts in the gospels of Matthew and Luke, embroidered with apocryphal traditions as well as the imaginative inspiration of the filmmaker".⁶⁰⁹

The movie's co-producer, Marty Bowen, was a Roman Catholic. He said: "Growing up, I've always put Mary on a pedestal. She was

beyond reproach, and we never took her off that pedestal. When you see a statue of Mary in a church, she's not real; she's plaster. We're trying to make her real. We want to portray her as a fairly normal girl becoming a young woman. We grow with her in this story; it's an extreme character arc."⁶¹⁰

Further evidence of the unbiblical, pro-Roman Catholic nature of the film was given by the young girl who played the role of Mary, Keisha Castle-Hughes. She said: "The biggest thing, you never think is that she [Mary] was just 14 and carrying a child. She was just a girl, and then the next day, she's a woman and married, and the next she becomes like the mother of the world."⁶¹¹ Firstly, there is no evidence whatsoever that Mary was 14 years old. The Bible does not tell us, and there is no other way of knowing for certain. Secondly, Mary never became "mother of the world." But Rome certainly refers to her as "Mother of the Church".

Also, in the film Mary's parents not only appear, but are named – Anna and Joachim. The Bible, of course, does not give the name of Mary's mother, but this has not stopped Rome from coming up with one: "St. Anne" has always been the name associated with Mary's mother in Roman Catholic tradition, without any basis in fact. And the unbiblical nature of the film continues, with Mary being troubled over her upcoming marriage to "a man I hardly know, a man I do not love" (nothing like this exists in the Bible account); the three "Magi" (the Bible does not mention how many there were; this again is Roman Catholic tradition); the star being explained as a rare convergence of Venus, Jupiter and an astral body (the star was miraculous and was a real star, not some natural cosmic convergence); references foreshadowing events in Christ's life, such as Mary washing Joseph's feet, Joseph being angry over merchants in the temple, and others.

But Rome has never let the facts get in the way of a good propaganda story. This is what *The Nativity Story* was, and Rome was just glad that yet another movie could be harnessed for its own ends.

The Golden Compass (2007): Another Hollywood Attack on Roman

Catholicism

Of course, despite the resurgent interest in Hollywood in making movies with a religious message, things did not all go Rome's way: Hollywood, at its heart, was still decidedly anti-Christian and anti-Roman Catholic. And this was demonstrated, yet again, with the release of *The Golden Compass*.

Based on the first book in a trilogy entitled *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman, and put out by New Line Cinema in partnership with Scholastic Media, it was an attack on Roman Catholicism. This was denied by Nicole Kidman, the lead actress and a professing Roman Catholic. She said, "I was raised Catholic. The Catholic Church is part of my essence. I wouldn't be able to do this film if I thought it were at all anti-Catholic."⁶¹² Her denial notwithstanding, however, the film certainly promoted an anti-Romanist message. According to a Roman Catholic reviewer, "I vehemently disagree with Nicole Kidman. The trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, is the most seductive and diabolical attack upon God and the Catholic Church that I have ever encountered in books for children. Throughout all three volumes, Pullman is seeking to alienate children from God and the Catholic Church. By volume three, he has children joining the fallen angels in a final demonic attack upon the Kingdom of God."⁶¹³ In the movie the explicit attacks on the Romish religion were toned down, but the author well knew that after seeing it children would rush off to buy the far more explicit books.

Pullman said in an interview, "Atheism suggests a degree of certainty that I'm not quite willing to accede. I suppose technically, you'd have to put me down as an agnostic. But if there is a God, and he is as the Christians describe him, then he deserves to be put down and rebelled against. As you look back over the history of the Christian church, it's a record of terrible infamy and cruelty and persecution and tyranny. How they have the... nerve to go on *Thought for the Day* and tell us all to be good when, given the slightest chance, they'd be hanging the rest of us and flogging the homosexuals and persecuting the witches." He came out openly and said, "My books are about killing God." He also said: "[English poet William] Blake said that [poet John] Milton was a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it. I am of the Devil's party and know it."⁶¹⁴ He also said in an interview: "I'm trying to undermine the basis of Christian belief."⁶¹⁵

This poor benighted man was unable to distinguish between the false religion of Romanism, a harlot pretending to be the virgin bride of Christ, and the *true* Church of Christ which has never killed or persecuted anyone.

He also knew that he could get away with his blatant message because people were at the time focusing so much on the *Harry Potter* books and films that his own trilogy could slip in “under the radar”. He said, “I think that as long as people are agitated about whether Harry Potter makes you into a satanist, they’re not going to be very bothered with me. So, I’m happy to [take] shelter under the great umbrella of Harry Potter.”⁶¹⁶

According to the story, demons are the friends of children, animal spirits which embody the souls of people and accompany them through life; God was not the Creator of the universe, but a usurper; heaven and hell do not exist; the “Church” desires the “dehumanisation” of children by separating them from their personal friend-demons; God must be killed and the “Church” must be vanquished for the good of humanity; God is finally destroyed; the pope is called Pope John Calvin and the Vatican is moved to Geneva to reflect Calvin’s authoritarian rule over that city; Romish priests kidnap children and one priest is an assassin; etc., etc.

As an example of the blatant hatred for what Pullman considers to be “the Church”, there is this diatribe, uttered by a witch in the story: “There are churches there, believe me, that cut their children too... not in the same way, but just as horribly. They cut their sexual organs, yes, both boys and girls; they cut them with knives so that they shan’t feel. That is what the church does, and every church is the same: control, destroy, obliterate every good feeling.”⁶¹⁷

Another character in the story says, “The Christian religion is a very powerful and convincing mistake, that’s all.”⁶¹⁸ This particular character is a lapsed nun. In addition, the story contains messages in favour of witchcraft, sodomy, evolution, divination and premarital sex.

As is very evident, the books are not just an attack on the false Roman Catholic religion, but on biblical Christianity as well. There is a mighty spiritual war going on, and it is a war for souls. Satan will make use of pro-Papist films, and of anti-Papist films, to achieve his goals. Either way, he plays both sides and he wins.

***Rambo* (2008): a “Christian Rambo” Movie**

Sylvester Stallone, fresh from his foray into the pro-Roman Catholic religious movie world with *Rocky Balboa*, then decided to make a fourth movie in his *Rambo* series, about a Vietnam-vet action hero. Only this time, playing to the renewed interest in pro-religious films, he gave his latest offering (simply entitled *Rambo*) a religious twist.

In the story, Rambo is approached by some American missionaries who want him to lead them into Myanmar (the former Burma) to bring aid to the oppressed Karen tribe, many of whom are Christians. He does so, and later, when Burmese troops capture the missionaries, their pastor asks Rambo to rescue them. The film contains the usual Stallone-movie extreme, gory and stomach-turning violence: people being blown up, beheaded, impaled, etc. Any supposed “moral” message (or even pro-“Christian” message) is simply lost under the horror of this gore-fest.⁶¹⁹ But this did not trouble the multitudes of professing “Christians” who went to see the film, and doubtless thought highly of the Roman Catholic Stallone for slipping what they believed to be a “pro-Christian message” into the film. Thus is evil justified. Those who want to be entertained by evil will always find ways to justify it. The task is just made a whole lot easier when the moviemakers claim the trash they churn out contains some kind of “moral” or “religious message.”

A poll conducted in 2008 by the Jewish Anti-Defamation League in the United States found that 61% of Americans believed their religious values were under attack by the media. 59% believed those who ran TV networks and major film studios did not share their religious or moral values. 43% believed there was “an organized campaign by Hollywood and the national media to weaken the influence of religious values in this country.”⁶²⁰ And yet these high percentages did not give the Hollywood or TV network moguls any sleepless nights. They simply continued to make their anti-religious films and TV programmes, and to rake in millions. The reason is not hard to find, and it is just as true today as it was then: Americans might know that there is something utterly rotten within Hollywood; they might object to the attacks on their religious values; but at the end of the day, they have become *so addicted* to the media, *so mesmerised* by its entertainment, that they are simply unwilling to give it up. They continue to watch the very

films and programmes which they *know* are blatantly attacking their religious beliefs. And what is true of Americans is true of millions throughout the world.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CONCLUSION

Throughout Hollywood's history there have been two sinister and very powerful forces at work, seeking to harness the immense influence of the movies for their own purposes: the Roman Catholic institution, and liberal and Marxist forces, the latter specifically connected to powerful Jewish interests.

As has been shown in this book, Roman Catholicism exerted the greatest influence over Hollywood, and indeed over its many Jewish movers and shakers who champed at the bit and ground their teeth in frustration but could do little to change the situation, throughout the period that is often called Hollywood's "Golden Age". But over time, for reasons given in this book, Roman Catholic influence over Hollywood declined, and then it was that liberal and Communist Jewish influence, suppressed for so long by Romanism and mostly overtly hostile to Romanism, was able to take its revenge. And it is these liberal and Marxist forces which are at present ascendant, indeed dominant, in the film industry.

And they do not hide their agenda either. In the June 1, 2011 internet edition of the *Hollywood Reporter*, TV executives admitted in taped interviews that Hollywood was pushing a liberal agenda. For example, Susan Harris, the creator of such TV programmes as *Soap* and *The Golden Girls*, was quoted as saying that Conservatives are "idiots" with "medieval minds". She also said: "At least, you know, we put Obama in office, and so people, I think, are getting – have gotten – a little bit smarter." And the co-creator of the programme *Friends*, Marta Kauffman, said that casting Candice Gingrich-Jones as a minister who married two lesbians was a "[expletive deleted]-you to the right wing." She said that in particular, she liked the minister's line, "Nothing makes God happier than when two people, any two people, come together in love."⁶²¹

No, they do not hide their agenda. But they do seek to hide the scale

of *Jewish* control over Hollywood. Although liberal/leftist, secular humanist, and Communist Jews have used Hollywood as a powerful tool in bringing about the destruction of the West's morals, undermining its Protestant foundations and swinging it leftward, as a general rule they did not want the truth of Jewish involvement in this agenda to become widely known, for this could lead to a backlash against them; so they worked hard to *suppress* this truth. Just how successful they were was shown in 2008 by the results of a poll conducted by the Jewish Anti-Defamation League (ADL). It found that only 22% of Americans believed that Jews controlled Hollywood and big media. Some 44 years earlier, in 1964, a similar ADL poll found that almost 50% of Americans believed this. Thus the leftist/Communist drive to suppress this truth had been extremely successful.

But despite their attempts to suppress this truth, every now and then someone lets the cat out of the bag. When the results of the ADL poll were released, at least one Jewish-American journalist was both shocked *and upset* about the ignorance of Americans on this matter! In a column in the *Los Angeles Times* entitled "How Jewish is Hollywood?" Joel Stein wrote: "I have never been so upset by a poll in my life. Only 22 percent of Americans now believe 'the movie and television industries are pretty much run by Jews,' down from nearly 50 percent in 1964. The Anti-Defamation League, which released the poll results last month, sees in these numbers a victory against stereotyping. Actually, it just shows how dumb America has gotten: *Jews totally run Hollywood*" (italics added).⁶²² He listed Jewish media heads, including: News Corp. president Peter Chernin; Paramount Pictures chairman Brad Grey; Walt Disney Company chief executive Robert Iger; Sony Pictures chairman Michael Lyndon; Warner Brothers chairman Barry Meyer; CBS Corp. chief executive Leslie Moonves; MGM chairman Harry Sloan; and NBC-Universal chief executive Jeff Zucker.

Stein went on: "The Jews are so dominant I had to scour the trades to come up with six Gentiles in high positions of entertainment companies. When I called them to talk about their incredible achievement, five of them refused to talk to me, apparently out of fear of insulting Jews. The sixth, AMC president Charles Collier, turned out to be Jewish."

Stein believed that more Americans, not fewer, should know that Jews control the media. He concluded: "I don't care if Americans

think we're running the news media, Hollywood, Wall Street, or the government. I just care that we get to keep running them.”

Stein was proud of the Jewish control of Hollywood and wanted the world to know it. The facts he published could not have been pleasing to those Jews seeking to keep the full extent of Jewish control of Hollywood under wraps.

Yes, Jews control Hollywood. But note: the Jewish people, *as a people group*, do not control Hollywood. Vast numbers of Jews would not identify with the liberal, secular humanist, Marxist agenda being shoved down the world's throats via Hollywood movies. In saying “Jews control Hollywood”, we are saying that certain powerful Jewish liberals, secular humanists and Marxists control the industry. And it is these powerful men who are using the medium of film to deliberately push their diabolical agenda.

Liberals and Marxists, in particular Jewish liberals and Marxists, control Hollywood... for now. The false “Church” of Rome, once all-powerful over Hollywood, does not control Hollywood... for now. But Rome never gives up, which is why we can be certain it is doing all in its power to once again triumph in Hollywood. It suffers setbacks; it advances, then is forced to retreat, then advances again. And as has been shown in this book, it has certainly regained some of its influence again. Nothing like it once had, as yet; but it never gives up. And it must be remembered, as we have seen, that liberal Jesuits work behind the scenes to influence the films that are made.

But it is truly a sign of the times when professing Protestants believe that Hollywood under Roman Catholic control during its so-called “Golden Age” was better than Hollywood under liberal and Marxist control. They say this because, when Roman Catholics – via the Breen Office and the Legion of Decency – had the clout to force film studios to clean up their offerings, morally, before releasing them for public consumption, films were “cleaner”. But when Roman Catholic control waned, films became far more immoral. And this is true as far as it goes. But to take this position merely demonstrates, in fact, just how foolish and indeed biblically illiterate Protestants have become. For to focus solely on morality is simply not enough. The importance of good

morals cannot be over-emphasised, of course; but what about *truth*?

Herein lies the great danger of the moviemaking era when Roman Catholics controlled Hollywood with an iron hand; and this would be the great danger if ever Roman Catholics fully controlled Hollywood again. Even though, as a result of Roman Catholic censorship through the PCA and the Legion of Decency, movies of that era were often “cleaner” than they would have been without the Jesuit Code in place, it must never be forgotten that *Roman Catholicism was frequently being subtly promoted*. And thus Protestants who went to be entertained by the movies during that “Golden Age” were in fact being *entertained – and thus subtly indoctrinated – by Roman Catholic doctrine, plots, and characters*.

It is therefore utterly foolish of professing Christians to say things like, “At least in those days there was some sense of decency in movies, and they were better and more moral than what came afterwards, when the Code was scrapped and movies became far filthier.” How careful true Christians must be here! A movie that is morally unclean is of course very harmful to the viewer; but is a “clean” movie that pushes Roman Catholic morals, doctrines, characters, etc., less harmful? True, it may not be as *morally* harmful, but it would be *spiritually* harmful – and that is equally dangerous in the light of eternity. For if a man is outwardly morally upright all his life, yet spiritually deluded, he is as lost as the immoral man. Multiplied millions of people are merrily skipping down the broad way that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13) who are very moral in their behaviour, upright, clean-living, decent people by the world’s standards. Yet they are just as lost as any murderer or adulterer, for they are deluded *religiously*. As one glaring example, consider the following portion of God’s Word. Biblical prophecy makes it plain that each and every pope of Rome is the biblical Antichrist, and a powerfully descriptive word-portrait of him is given in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. And it says of him that he comes “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved*. And for this cause God shall *send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, that they might be saved*” (vv.10-12, italics added). Note that the words emphasised by italics show plainly that one is not damned only for

living an immoral life, but for not believing the truth, not receiving the love of the truth, and believing a lie because of strong delusion! False religion leads to hell just as certainly as sinful living. Unbelievers and idolaters are listed in the same verse as murderers and whoremongers as having their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8).

Multitudes are outwardly very moral, who are yet utter strangers to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and are deceived by false religion. Good morals will make society a better place, outwardly, and this is good as far as it goes, on a temporal level, for society; but good morals will not keep a single person out of hell, and they will not take a single person to heaven. For salvation is not by living an outwardly good life.

And besides, even apart from the Romish *religion*, or Romish *religious concepts and outlooks* at least, being so often promoted in such films, Romish *morality* is promoted as well. For such morality falls short of biblical morality, as Romish morality is certainly not one and the same with biblical morality. This is shown by the fact that even in such films, things are frequently permitted which are unbiblical. For example, the standards of modesty in clothing are not as high as what the Scriptures command; courting couples are permitted a leniency which the Bible does not permit in the relations between men and women before marriage; recreational activities such as dancing, drinking, etc., are readily portrayed as perfectly acceptable; and more. In this way, and precisely because such films are considered “moral” and “decent”, the high moral standards which were once maintained by Protestants were subtly lowered, little by little, by a process of gradualism. And we see the results everywhere today in so-called “Protestant” churches, where the moral standards of the members are little different from those of the world around them. Indeed, they are *as much a part of the world as anyone else*.

The truth is, Hollywood under *either* Roman Catholic *or* liberal and Marxist control is a very dangerous thing. The evidence is overwhelming. The medium of film is the most powerful medium in the modern world, and for its entire existence it has been used for evil by these two satanically-motivated forces. And this will continue,

regardless of which evil force is dominating it at any given time.

What, then, should the true Christian's attitude be towards Hollywood? A pamphlet written by the author, entitled *Hollywood and the Christian*, is reproduced below, slightly edited to make it a fitting conclusion to this book.⁶²³

A vast and lucrative industry thrives on the almost-insatiable appetite of hundreds of millions of people for entertainment. Films, whether via the big screen, TV, DVDs or the internet, fill the eyes and ears of modern man with images and sounds designed to thrill him, excite him, make him laugh, make him cry, and make him lust.

Mankind's appetite for entertainment is nothing new. In centuries past, the arena and the stage catered to this appetite. In the ancient arenas men fought with beasts, and men fought with men, in bloody clashes that only ended with the death of one of the contestants; and the crowds bayed for more and more blood. And on the stages, plays were put on which entertained people with violence, fornication, adultery, idolatry, heathen mythology, etc. The invention of the motion picture was the next step; and today, at a mere touch, a seemingly endless variety of films are available right in one's own house, at any time one desires.

The name "Hollywood" has become synonymous with the motion picture industry, being the centre of the industry in America and the largest movie production industry in the world; but of course ungodly movies are made in many other parts of the world as well.

Those who profess to be followers of Christ, children of the living God, are duty-bound before God to consider the "entertainment industry" in the light of holy Scripture. Huge numbers of professing "Christians", who can wax eloquent about the precious doctrines of the faith, who speak piously and appear so godly, are *virtual slaves* to the "box", bowing down every evening before what is all too often a modern household god, prostrating themselves before this idol of entertainment. Should it be in need of repairs, a replacement is sought with all the anxiety displayed by Laban when his daughter stole his household images (Gen.31:19-35). Professing "Christians" speak enthusiastically about the latest movie release or the latest "soap" saga

on TV. In one breath they speak of attending a service in their church, and of sitting glued to their seats at home, hungrily devouring some show. It was not uncommon, in the days before it was possible to record a TV show, to hear them bemoaning the fact that some meeting of their church took place at the very time their favourite show was being aired. Some “churches” even re-scheduled their services to ensure that everyone got home in time to lap up an “important” soapie! Such is the power of the “box.”

How many parents – professing to be Christians – rightly condemn the rock music young people listen to, some even forbidding it in their homes, and yet they sit glued to their TV screens, with their children around them, soaking up the vile filth that spues into their living-rooms from that piece of electronic equipment? Hypocrites! Condemning only what suits them! Where are the ministers who speak out against the sinful “entertainment” of Hollywood? One reason almost none do so is because so many of them are slaves to these things as much as their flocks are. Where is the separation from the world that the Bible commands?

Do the Scriptures have anything to say on this subject? They most certainly do! For the Scriptures list, as sins in the eyes of a holy God, such things as fornication, adultery, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sodomy, stealing, covetousness, drunkenness, reviling, extortion, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, revellings, and suchlike (1 Cor.6:9,10; Gal.5:19-21; etc.). And *every single one of these sins is portrayed, and glamourised, and glorified, by the movie industry!* In Romans 1 we find another list of terrible sins in the sight of God (vv.21-31). And then we read these solemn words: “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but *have pleasure in them that do them*” (v.31). Some may argue that they simply watch these things, but do not live that way themselves; yet here we see that those who take pleasure in *others* committing such sins, are guilty as well! No Christian is to take pleasure in even *watching* such things, let alone doing them. This is “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes”, which “is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 Jn.2:16); and we are commanded, “Love

not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 Jn.2:15). Take note: if any man love the world, the love of the Father *is not in him!* It is as simple as that. He is not a Christian, regardless of what he professes.

Those who commit the sins portrayed in the movies will not inherit the kingdom of God, according to 1 Cor.6:9,10 and Gal.5:21. They are the works of the flesh, according to Gal.5:19. And yet we see huge numbers of professing “Christians” actually *taking pleasure* in those who commit such things. And they do so, knowing the judgment of God, that such sinners are worthy of death. Where is the evidence of regeneration in such people? Regardless of their profession of faith in Christ, they give evidence that it is an empty profession. They walk in darkness, not in the light. Away with their pious talk, their praises, their prayers! “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him” (Tit.1:16). They are a blight upon the Church, a disgrace to the Holy One they claim to love and serve.

Let us briefly divide movies into certain categories, and examine these.

There is, firstly, the type of movie known as the *thriller*. Under this category would be found most adventure movies, spy stories, detective stories, war films, and much more. The vast majority of them involve hatred, violence, murder, revenge. These sins, almost without exception, are considered essential ingredients. But the Christian is to love his enemies (Matt.5:44,45), to be gentle (Gal.5:22), to commit no murder, not even in the heart (Matt.5:21,22), and to seek no revenge (Rom.12:19-21) – the very opposite of the essential ingredients of most thrillers! The Christian is not to walk according to this world. He is a citizen of a heavenly country. He is to “think on” such things as are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (Phil.4:8). He is to set his affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Col.3:2). He cannot do this if he is filling his mind with images of unnecessary violence, or murder, or revenge.

Then, too, thrillers usually contain such things as fornication, adultery, and other sexual sins. Not only are such scenes shown – that would be evil enough – but such sins are actually glorified. The Lord Jesus said, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,

Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt.5:27,28). Adulterous scenes are constantly portrayed in movies, inciting lust in the viewers. Merely to look at a woman (or man) with lust is to commit adultery, and yet night after night so-called “Christians” do precisely that. But the holy God that they claim to love and worship sees all, and His judgment will not tarry forever.

This type of movie also often contains scenes glorifying drinking, and drunkenness (see Prov.20:1; 23:29-35; 1 Cor.6:10), and various other sins, such as blasphemy and profanity. The child of God has no excuse, no justification, for watching such things.

Besides all that has been said above, there is another point that must be made: what constitutes heroism in our eyes? People refer to the “hero” of the movie. *Is he a true hero? Is it heroic, to do what he does? To kill, to hate, to lust? In the life of our Lord upon the earth, we see true heroism. Yet He was the very opposite of the so-called “heroes” of the screen.*

Secondly, there is the category of movie known as the *love story*. The world cannot teach the Christian about true love. “Love”, to the worldly, usually means *lust*. And so-called “love stories” are usually filled with adultery, fornication, divorce, hatred and bitterness, etc. Such things are dreadful sins!

Women, in particular, are devotees of this type of “entertainment”. It is fantasy, escapism, a time in which women close out their own real world, with all its problems and struggles, and fill their minds with the standards and values of the ungodly. Tragically, so widespread are such sins as divorce, adultery, etc., today, that many women are living miserable lives, and they seek escape for a few hours in soaking up such movies. Only at the feet of the Lord Jesus can peace and joy be found. The Christian woman must spend much time in studying the Word of God, not in idly sitting in front of the TV screen, taking in the devil’s trash.

Thirdly, there is that category known as science fiction. In addition to being filled, for the most part, with the usual violence, adultery,

blasphemy, profanity, and other sins found in virtually all types of films today, films in this category promote the absolutely unscriptural concept of life on other planets. The Bible tells us that God created life on earth; but we are not told that there is life anywhere else in the physical universe. In fact, the Bible positively precludes any such notion. When God created the heaven and the earth, He immediately focused upon earth alone (Gen.1:1,2). The sun, moon, and stars were created, firstly, for God's pleasure (Rev.4:11); secondly, for the benefit of man and other creatures upon the earth: for signs, and seasons, and days, and years; to give light upon the earth (Gen.1:14-19); thirdly, to declare the glory of God, and show His handiwork (Psa.19:1), leaving men without excuse (Rom.1:20), so that it is indeed the fool who says in his heart, There is no God (Psa.14:1). But no life is to be found anywhere else. The Lord Jesus Christ came to earth alone, to die for men and women ordained to eternal life; He left heaven's glories, and came to earth; and when His work was done, He returned to heaven. He went to no other planet, He redeemed no other creatures. The notion of life in outer space, advocated by science fiction tales, promotes the diabolical theory of evolution, for of course, if life could spontaneously evolve here on earth, then conceivably it could do so elsewhere in the universe. But for those who believe the Holy Scriptures, it is quite evident that there is no life anywhere else; and they should derive no pleasure from such ungodly fantasies as are portrayed in science fiction films.

Fourthly, the comedy must be mentioned. This type of film is often considered "innocent" by many professing "Christians"; but they should know better. Such films almost always contain foul language, filthy jokes and filthy behaviour. They are far from being innocent entertainment. For a comedy to be successful in this sinful world, it must almost always make fun of sexual matters. Such wickedness should never be entertaining to Christians. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb.13:4); and yet marriage is mocked, and adultery and fornication are treated lightheartedly, in this type of film. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of

thanks” (Eph.5:3,4). Many innocent things are amusing, and there is a time to laugh (Eccl.3:4); but to laugh at sin is itself sinful.

Sexual matters in particular, but in fact all Christian truth, God Himself, and the Lord Jesus Christ, are mocked in many comedies. The blessed Name of the Lord is used as a curse-word on the lips of wicked men and women. What true Christian can sit through such vileness, and be entertained? Can the true Christian bear to hear his Lord’s Name used thus? He is a hypocritical liar who says that he loves the Lord, but can tolerate, and even *laugh* at, such things! To hear the worldling make fun of the One before whom he will stand on the judgment day is a cause for weeping, not laughing. It is a tragedy, not a comedy.

Finally, we will mention so-called “Christian” films. The medium of film is not *automatically* sinful, and certain historical films, depicting the lives of various Christians of the past or even other historical events, can be profitable, if they are accurately made, and exalt the Lord. But the great majority not only fail to meet these criteria, many of them are positively sinful. They are made by Hollywood producers who only have profit in mind, and for this reason distort the truth and focus on those things which will attract audiences.

Furthermore, films depicting the life of Christ, with some actor portraying the holy Son of God, are contrary to the Word of God, which makes it clear that any representations of any of the three divine Persons of the Trinity are sinful (Exod.20:4-6; Acts 17:29). Although the eternal Son became flesh, we have no idea what He looked like, and thus any representation of Him is purely imaginary, and inaccurate; and even if we did know exactly what He looked like, we still could not depict Him, for His divine glory, which the apostles beheld (Jn.1:14), cannot be depicted; and yet, if only His humanity was depicted, then His nature would be divided – and that is heretical. Furthermore, as Christ is the image of the invisible God (Col.1:15; Heb.1:3), so that He could say to those who saw Him that they had seen the Father (Jn.14:8,9), it follows that if we attempt to depict Christ, we attempt to depict the invisible God; but as we can only depict Christ inaccurately, we would thereby depict the invisible God inaccurately. And in doing so, we would have made a similitude of God as a man, which would be

sinful (Deut.4:15,16). The apostles, who knew Him in the days of His earthly ministry, never attempted to depict Him in art. No Christian should think that he is wiser than they. Films in which some sinful man attempts to portray the Lord Jesus Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of His Person, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, should be shunned by all true Christians as utterly contrary to the will of God.

In conclusion, faithful pastors must insist on separation from all such filth on the part of their church members, with those refusing to turn from such things facing the same disciplinary measures they would face for other sins. For that is precisely what the watching of the type of motion pictures described above constitutes: sin! Where are the pastors who will take such a stand? They will be very unpopular, their churches will be much smaller, but they will be honouring the Lord.

Perhaps the reader is thinking to himself that even to own a TV must then be sinful. But this is not the case at all. The TV itself is merely a box of electronic parts. It is what is displayed on its screen that is either sinful or not. It can be used to educate. It can be used to inform us about the world we live in. It can have these positive uses, and to view such things is not sinful. But no Christian should ever spend a moment of time watching films which are ungodly and immoral. To do so is to sin grievously against the Lord.

Huge numbers of TV and movie devotees *claim* to be Christians. They *claim* to worship the true God, and that they seek to depart from iniquity. The Bible commands all who profess to be Christ's to examine themselves, whether they be in the faith (2 Cor.13:5); and we urge all those who prostrate themselves towards Hollywood every evening with the same blind zeal as the Muslims who prostrate themselves towards Mecca, to earnestly examine their profession of faith in the light of God's Word. A lover of Zion cannot be a lover of Hollywood; he who is on a life-long pilgrimage to the heavenly city cannot simultaneously be on a pilgrimage to the shrines of the "stars" in Hollywood. No man can serve two masters.

And – as has been shown in this book – the believer should not put himself under the power of an industry which has done so much to promote Roman Catholicism, liberalism and Marxism – *and continues to do so.*

For the true Christian, the answer to the depravity of the movies is not to pin his hopes on government censorship. To do so is to grant the government more power than it should ever have, in areas it has no business becoming involved in, which leads to all kinds of other problems including possible persecution; and besides, it will never solve the problem anyway. Nor is the Christian to trust in worldly movie ratings systems, nor religious ratings systems for that matter. The answer is far more simple: the child of God must simply stay away from these movies, just as he or she should stay away from all other evils. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Pet. 2:11). Be separate from the world and its ways! “*I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes*” (Psa. 101:3).



END NOTES:

CHAPTER ONE: THE JESUIT USE OF THE DRAMATIC ARTS

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4. *Occult Theocracy*, by Lady Queenborough, pg.311. The Christian Book Club of America, Hawthorne, California, USA. Reprinted 1980.
5. *Footprints of the Jesuits*, by R.W. Thompson, pgs.42-8. Hunt and Eaton, 1894.
6. *The Secret History of the Jesuits*, by Edmond Paris, pg.24. Chick Publications, Chino, California. Undated, but translated from the French in 1975.
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8. *Les Jesuites*, by J. Huber, pgs.71,73. Sandoz et Fischbacher, Paris, 1875. Quoted in *The Secret History of the Jesuits*, pg.26.
9. *Footprints of the Jesuits*, pg.51.
10. *Footprints of the Jesuits*, pgs.57-9.
11. *Fourteen Years a Jesuit*, by Count Paul von Hoensbroech, Vol.I, pg.117, and Vol.II, pg.320. Cassell and Company Ltd., London, 1911. Also *Footprints of the Jesuits*, pg.61.
12. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, by René Fülöp-Miller, pg. 417. George Braziller, Inc., New York, 1956.
13. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 28.
14. *Catholics in the Movies*, edited by Colleen McDannell, pg. 210. Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, 2008.
15. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 409.
16. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pgs. 409-410.
17. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 417.
18. *Catholics in the Movies*, pg. 210.
19. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 411.
20. *English Churchman*, May 18 and 25 2001, No. 7559. English Churchman, Wedmore, Somerset, England. Article: "Hang a Jesuit and he'll make off with the rope!"
21. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 411ff.

22. See *The Pagan Festivals of Christmas and Easter*, by Shaun Willcock. Bible Based Ministries, reprinted 2004.
23. See *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop. Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, New Jersey, USA, 1959.
24. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pgs. 413-4.
25. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 414.
26. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 416.
27. *The Power and Secret of the Jesuits*, pg. 28.

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120. *Sin and Censorship*, pg.67.
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123. *Hollywood and the Catholic Church*, pg. 47.
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CHAPTER FIVE: JOSEPH I. BREEN AND THE CODE

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130. *Catholics in the Movies*, pg.17.
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 243. *Hollywood and the Catholic Church*, pg.29.
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CHAPTER EIGHT: THE 1940s: CHALLENGES TO THE CODE AND TO ROMAN CATHOLIC DOMINATION

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345. *The Catholic Crusade Against the Movies*, pg. 91.

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 394. *The Catholic Crusade Against the Movies*, pg.164.
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 420. *Hollywood's Censor*, pg. 329.
 421. *The Catholic Crusade Against the Movies*, pgs.214-217.
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 428. *The Catholic Crusade Against the Movies*, pg.191.
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THE JESUITS: THE SECRET ARMY OF THE PAPACY

The New Testament abounds with warnings of wolves in sheep's clothing: men pretending to be part of Christ's flock, but in reality ministers of Satan, infiltrating the churches of Christ and bent on destroying them.

For centuries a ruthless secret army has served the global conquest objectives of the Roman Papacy: the Jesuit Order. This is the most diabolical and dangerous of all Roman Catholic orders. It stops at nothing in the relentless pursuit of its goal: to destroy all enemies of the Papacy. History is filled with Jesuit intrigue, deception, duplicity, plots, murders, etc. And against Protestantism, in particular, the Jesuits have always directed their energies, by infiltration of Protestant churches, posing as Protestant ministers, undermining the true faith, etc. The shocking state of professing Protestant "Christendom" is ample testimony that they have been all too successful.

This is a time when so little is known of the Jesuits, and yet so much needs to be known. And this is the purpose of this book.

SATAN'S SEAT

There is a powerful and sinister institution at work in the world, claiming to be Christian but in reality antichristian, which is all the more deadly because it appears so beautiful and holy to so many. According to the Word of God, fully supported by the historical evidence which perfectly fits the prophetic picture, this is the *Roman Catholic institution*. This biblical truth has been believed by countless numbers of God's people through the centuries, but it is not believed by the multitudes of modern-day "Protestants," caught up in the pursuit of "unity" with the Roman Catholic institution. It is the purpose of this book to bring the truth to light.

Satan's Seat traces this masterpiece of the devil from its origins in ancient paganism to its final prophetic destruction. It has been written so that the Christian reader will have, in his hands, a book which gives

a panoramic view of centuries of history. Fully documented and easy to read, it also presents the Gospel to Roman Catholics, Protestants, and others.

THE MADNESS OF MULTICULTURALISM

Cultural relativism is the false doctrine that all cultures are equally valid and good. And multiculturalism is the false doctrine that everyone must respect everyone else's culture, and tolerate and even celebrate all cultural practices, so that all humans will live together in harmony as one big, happy, tolerant, multicultural family. But this is neither possible nor sensible. The fact is, *multiculturalism is madness*.

When we evaluate and judge cultures and cultural practices by the light of the Bible, we find that all cultures are definitely *not* equal; that those cultures which were once greatly influenced by Protestantism were superior to all others; and that no true Christian should respect cultural practices that are degraded and sinful. Cultural relativism and multiculturalism are simply two more weapons in Satan's modern arsenal in his ceaseless war against the Lord Jesus Christ.