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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Cologne, Germany,
March 3, 1939.

Confidential.

Dear Moffat:

Even at the risk of duplication from other sources, may I transmit to you the following information concerning the new Pope.

I knew Pacelli in Berlin when he was there as Papal Nuncio. Two years ago when I was in Rome on a holiday, I found the Sistine Chapel closed on the only day I was free to see it. I appealed to Pacelli, then Cardinal Secretary of State for special permission to see the Chapel. I got the permission but I did not see the Chapel after all as the Cardinal detained me for three solid hours and we discussed the situation in Germany.

His views, while they are well-known, surprised me by their extremeness. He said that he opposed unalterably every compromise with National Socialism. He regarded Hitler not only as an untrustworthy scoundrel but as a fundamentally wicked person. He did not believe that Hitler was capable of moderation and in spite of appearances would end up in the camp of the left-wing Nazi extremists when he began his career. He told me that he supported the German Catholic bishops in their anti-Nazi stand. The risk of losing a large

part

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part of the Catholic youth in Germany, he said, was not as great as the consequences to the Catholic Church in general throughout the world in surrendering to the Nazis. At that time - it was two years ago - he did not want the German Catholics to do more in their opposition than to practice their religion openly and devoutly but, he added, "if the time comes, and there is no way out of the dilemma, they (the German Catholics) will know how to grasp stronger measures". Pacelli never gave me the impression of being a "peace at any price advocate"!

He was formerly in favor of the Bavarian monarchist movement which plans to unite Bavaria with Austria under the aegis of a monarch. He always believed that a strong federal Germany was a real danger to the peace of Europe, and hence to the Church. He liked the German people and appreciated their good qualities but feared them as a strong united nation regardless of the circumstances.

Pacelli, too, was prominent in the Vatican's Russian policy. It was in this connection that I first learned to know him. At that time, I was working on Russian affairs. He ordained priests and even a bishop in his private chapel in Berlin, whereupon they left incognito for Soviet Russia. Their mission was to train and ordain priests in Soviet Russia. He was responsible, too, for a private college in Berlin for the preparation for the Catholic priesthood of Russians, formerly members of the Russian orthodox church. The Church plans to use them in Russia when "Der Tag" comes along. A good many starved Russian ex-officers and noblemen were enlisted, not only in Germany, but in other European countries. Among them is a Prince Obelensky, a distant connection of Mrs. Klieforth. *Pacelli's* early anti-Communist slant seemingly trained him for his later anti-Nazi one.

With my greetings and best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

A. W. Klieforth

A. W. Klieforth
American Consul General

Personal, Private Views" of Cardinal Pacelli on Nazism

In the September 1, 2003 issue of America, Mr. Charles R. Gallagher, S.J., examines the personal and private views of Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli on Nazism based on two newly discovered secret documents never before made public. America, the national Catholic weekly, is published by Jesuits in print and online www.americamagazine.org.

The first document, a 1939 U.S. State Department report from Alfred W. Klieforth, the U.S. consul general in Berlin, describes a 1937 three-hour meeting "to discuss the situation in Germany" with Cardinal Pacelli. "He opposed unilaterally every compromise with National Socialism," the report states. "He regarded Hitler not only as an untrustworthy scoundrel but as a fundamentally wicked person. He did not believe Hitler capable of moderation, in spite of appearances, and he fully supported the German bishops in their anti-Nazi stand."

- document
attached

The second document, discovered by Mr. Gallagher among the diplomatic papers of Joseph P. Kennedy in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, has been out of sight for 65 years. It is a report prepared by Pacelli and given on April 19, 1938, to Ambassador Kennedy, who was given permission to pass "these personal private views of mine on to your Friend"--a cryptic yet clear allusion to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain also saw the report. From 1938-40 Kennedy served as the U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain. In the report, which Mr. Gallagher describes as "essentially a Vatican policy paper and private blast at Nazi 'pro-paganism,'" "

Pacelli made clear that the Nazi program struck at the "fundamental principle of freedom of the practice of religion," and indicated the emergence of a new Nazi Kulturkampf against the church. Sounding beleaguered and perhaps a bit frightened, Pacelli expressed the view that the church "at times felt powerless and isolated in its daily struggle against all sorts of political excesses from Bolsheviks to the new pagans arising among the young 'Aryan' generation." Nevertheless, he assured Kennedy that any political compromise with

the Nazi regime was "out of the question."

Mr. Gallagher argues that Pacelli, who would become Pope Pius XII, made both open diplomatic and political declarations as well as conducted private and secret discussions in the tradition of 19th-century diplomacy in which he was trained.

Mr. Charles R. Gallagher, S.J., who received his Ph.D. in American Catholic history from Marquette University, is now studying philosophy at St. Louis University and writing a biography of the Vatican diplomat Archbishop Joseph Patrick Hurley, who worked with Eugenio Pacelli from 1934-40. N.B. "Mr." is correct; he is a Jesuit scholastic studying to be a priest.