

## **Catholic Strides toward Control in America**

By *JAMES EARL SHULTZ*, Assistant Professor of Homiletics, Washington Missionary College

[Archives](#) / [1945](#) / [April](#)

Over a third of a century ago it was my pleasure to become well acquainted with Dr. James Patton, secretary of the United States Restriction of Immigration Bureau. Not infrequently would he warn me that the Catholic hierarchy was doing all in its power to make America predominantly Catholic. Once he said to me:

I can't understand the apathy of your people. After that sermon which you preached today, your congregation should follow it up with some concrete plans for protecting America against the loss of her priceless heritage of liberty. Can't you see that American big business has co-operated with the Catholic hierarchy in bringing to our shores millions of its membership from Southern Europe, who will be numerous enough to hold the balance of power in our great cities? They need not have a majority, but only enough voters to hold the balance of power. Such a block under an ambitious priesthood will change our laws and take from your people the very liberty which they so highly prize."

Dr. Patton then went on to tell me of the efforts of large manufacturers in the North to obtain cheap labor. He showed how the hierarchy had bargained with them for such labor, and said, "The time will come when they will influence our social structure and dominate our large cities. It is their purpose to drive a wedge reaching from Boston to Chicago, blunt it so that it will reach down to St. Louis, thence returning to the east coast by way of Washington." He insisted that with this accomplished, the Catholic Church would be in a position to dictate terms to any Administration in Washington, and added: "That is why we are seeking to restrict immigration--to forestall this ambitious plan before it is too late. We do not name the Catholic Church, but she is the one which is profiting by our demand for cheap labor, and the only way to preserve our American ideals is to restrict immigration."

Those arguments did not impress me then as they did years later, when returning from the Orient I began to labor in New England—formerly the citadel of liberty—and to my surprise I saw "idol [image] processions" which differed only in detail from those I had witnessed so often in China and Korea. These processions were especially frequent in Providence, the home of the apostle of soul freedom, Roger Williams. Later, laboring in old Boston, a place that is now predominantly Catholic, I concluded that Dr. Patton was right.

When Harold E. Fey began his series of articles titled "Can Catholicism Win America?" in the November 29, 1944, issue of *The Christian Century*, I picked out the following statement, which again recalled the words of Dr. Patton:

"The last Federal census of religious bodies shows that this body [Roman Catholic] stood first in the number of its church members in thirty-eight of our fifty largest cities. These cities set the pace in our culture ; hence the importance of their predominance is apparent."

Mr. Fey points out "that divergent Protestantism still predominates," but that the Roman Catholic Church, with its "22,945,247 communicants, constitutes a denomination almost three times larger than the Methodist Church—the largest Protestant denomination ; therefore the ideas and intention of this great body are vital to our future." He buttresses this assertion with the evidence that in thirty-five of our forty-eight States the Catholic Church is more numerous than any other single denomination.

The author suggests that there are many forces making for cultural unity in the United States. He observes that mass immigration has ended, but that "the radio, movie, and press are making for cultural unity," and adds, "Universal government, with its expanding social embrace, permits no one to escape." He asks, "Can Protestantism recover its prominent position in molding American culture, which it held before the great wave of Catholic immigration swept over the country? or is this once Protestant nation destined to pass under another and different cultural phase under the religious and social preponderance of the Roman Catholic Church?" He then points out that "the relation between Catholicism and our emerging national character is one which demands careful study, for all the forces which unite to create a cultural unity are capable of being diverted to serve the ends of the Roman Catholic Church." He adds, "Many of them are being so used today. . . . Today the influence of the Roman Catholic Church is greater than it has ever before been in the United States, and it is increasing steadily." Speaking of American Catholics, Mr. Fey continues:

"Unlike the other denominations these millions of American citizens are subject to the direction of an Italian Pontiff, who represents a culture historically alien to American institutions. . The Roman Catholic hierarchy has changed its fundamental strategy in this country in the past generation. The leaders of the Catholic Church have for the first time begun to function and to plan as a unit on questions which affect our national life. They have developed a structure and organization during this period, which enables them to do this systematically, thoroughly, and without intermission. They have cast off their inferiority complex, which naturally characterizes an alien minority, and have begun boldly and aggressively to assert their power."

"It is in this generation that the Roman Catholic Church feels at home in the United States. It speaks the American language and has raised up native leaders who are followed by millions. It is for the first time in a position to make history here—American history. The interests which guide the Roman Catholic Church in America often determine our national policy."

The writer offers as a case in point, "our support of fascism in France's Spain." He asserts that "our Government's attitude was decisively influenced by the Catholic hierarchy." Religious editors of America can support Mr. Fey's assertion, as several hundred of them sent a joint telegram to our Government, asking that republican Spain be spared. They were little impressed by the beautifully lithographed pretentious magazine *Spain* which was furnished them gratuitously by some well-financed propaganda agency. That magazine was notoriously pro-Franco and pro-Catholic.

Mr. Fey further observes, "It is feared that it [the hierarchy] is playing the same decisive game with respect to our attitude toward Italy." He then asks concerning "our representative at the Vatican." "Why is this man there? How can he be other than the representative of the nation

when his expenses are paid by the nation? He is there in the face of the disapproval of the majority of our population." The author then *goes* on to show that Catholic influence is seen in our dealings with Mexico. He asserts that which many of *us* already know—that "Catholic influence directs our labor policies," that it defeated national prohibition, interferes with "Protestant missionaries in Latin America," influences laws relating to child labor, and that the "Catholic Legion of Decency has gained power over the motion-picture industry by starting with the censorship of lewdness and ending with the present output of pro-Catholic films."

"When the Catholic Church exerts determinative pressure on local, State, and national officials, particularly in social and educational welfare, it is giving shape to future American culture in which we live," asserts Mr. Fey. Then he adds, "Its cumulative influence on newspapers, radio, art, music, and literature is a factor which no intelligent person can ignore." Turning to the political field the writer observes:

"To mention these things means to be regarded as a bigot and to be charged with intolerance. Perilous though the task may be, it is less perilous than to trust these forces to benevolence when the controversy may be ended adversely during a period of national tension and international conflict. That ignorance exists on all levels of society is not open to doubt. But ignorance is not a bulwark, as evidenced by the work of the Ku Klux Klan. Did this ignorance do more harm than the illusion of the liberals, who attributed all criticism of the Catholic Church, the so-called 'Church of the Workingman,' to bigotry and prepared the way for the betrayal of the Spanish loyalists by Britain and America, and permitted the crucifixion of Ethiopia on the cross of national expediency?

"Policies and activities of the Roman Catholic leaders entail consequences which reach far beyond the confines of the church. Protestants owe it to themselves and to the country as a whole to learn what these leaders intend and to understand how they aim to function in *relation to the total community*. *Acknowledging* the right and even conceding the obligation of the Roman Catholic Church to use its power with zeal and efficiency in the pursuit of its objectives, Protestants must, however, claim it as their own right and responsibility to appraise these aims, to form a judgment on the methods which are used to attain them, and to support or to oppose their realization. Even Catholics may differ from the hierarchy on political and social matters, if they are prepared to pay the price for the difference. Certainly Protestants should not hesitate to do so when their inalienable rights are being jeopardized.

"In discussions of Roman Catholic policy, Protestants are usually long on tolerance or intolerance and short on facts. Rightly to appraise the vast organism which the Catholic Church has become requires an accurate knowledge *of* how its policies are determined and the means by which they are carried out."

From this point on, Mr. Fey minutely examines the operations of agencies having the approval of the hierarchy and support of the Roman Catholic laity, which have wrought such a change in Roman Catholic action in America. He tells you why her school system is succeeding, how her newspapers are growing in importance and influence, and with what support, and why a Catholic chapel can be built, staffed, and operated in a new munitions community where as few as ten Catholics work and reside.

The writer's appeal for a careful study of the implications of the movement for Catholic social and political control of our nation has brought expressions of approval and disapproval from responsible sections of American thought. One leading American weekly devoted three columns to a brief review of the series of articles. It was offered as rebuttal, based principally on the charge that the author had not sufficiently documented his articles. That the charge was unfair will impress those who read the entire series of eight articles. Ministers approving of his presentation are in some instances advertising eight Sunday night lectures, when they present in substance the articles which appeared in *The Christian Century*. Doubtless moved by the evidence of a concerted plan to change our social structure and form of government contained in Mr. Fey's articles, the moderator of the Presbyterian Church announced that he would preach ten sermons in ten different cities of the United States, indicating the intentions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to make America predominantly Catholic.

Every Seventh-day Adventist worker should obtain, read, and annotate the articles by Mr. Fey\*, for they not only attest to the fulfillment of prophecy relating to the United States of America, but give point to our special commission found in [Revelation 14:9-12](#). Let it not be said of us that we are ignorantly intolerant.

*\*\*Significant are the ties which exist between the church and the political machines which rule many of our cities and carry their pollution to the very center of our national government. Almost without exception the cities which harbor and nourish the corrupt combinations are cities in which the Roman Catholic Church is the predominant religious body. The same ties often extend in labor unions, social welfare agencies, and teachers' organizations. Even the farm organizations are not free from their influence.*