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# Italy, Playground of the Vatican

Statement by the FdCA Council of Delegates

Federazione dei Comunisti Anarchici

15<sup>th</sup> January 2006

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Wide-scale interference in public affairs in Italy by popes, bishops, cardinals and various catholic ministers is reaching truly embarrassing levels. Just a few months ago we were being told how the clash of cultures was being won by the superiority of western civilization which, on the contrary to islamic states, was able to make a clear distinction between civil affairs and religious affairs. Now, however, not a day goes by without having to listen to some lofty pronouncement from the Vatican on a whole range of issues.

Those who had hoped for a media-unfriendly pope, penalized by the charismatic nature of his predecessor, were not entirely wrong: this pope is, and remains, particularly unpleasant.

But to make up for this, he does seem to be going for quantity if not for quality, and he is being ably abetted by the state television network which is only too happy to serve him up to us every single day, in one form or another.

But just why is the Shepherd-in-Chief so worried about his Italic flock, so much so that he and his clergy are “forced” to intervene at every step?

Having abandoned the slippery slopes of ecumenism, now outmoded in these times of mounting revanchism of identity, and with expansionist plans for Africa (once the promised land as far as the growth of the church was concerned, but which is losing out steadily in the contest between fundamentalist catholicism and fundamentalist islam) in deep crisis, growing difficulties in South America (where catholicism is losing ground to the evangelical churches and where catholic control over society is fast becoming a distant memory), and the countless sex scandals involving the clergy all over the world (leading to hefty financial awards for damages), the catholic hierarchy no longer knows which saint to turn to for protection!

Thus we are seeing what is apparently a geographic retreat from the universality of the message of catholicism: going back to the Old World, or to be more precise, back to Italy — a country which has long past the stage of being dictated to by the clerics, but which is still superstitious enough not to openly challenge them. And in Italy, they can still count on a right-wing political class that is still loutish enough to ride the clerical-fascist bandwagon and on a left-wing political class that is too preoccupied with trying to seem left-wing to declare itself as openly secular. All this garnished with an intellectual class that always seems to be on the verge of converting, orphaned by marxism and all too willing to cling to the nearest (priest's) skirt they come across. And all of them more than willing to bung the Vatican a few financial benefits (like exemption from property tax or jobs in state schools for religion teachers) in return for the chance to be seen by one and all taking communion in church with their second wives. In other words, this “pitch invasion” on the part of the church, this interference with the right to choose, with sexual freedom, with self-determination, with secu-

larism, is the beginning of a return to our catholic roots, in all their hypocritical and holier-than-thou glory.

Against this we can be more than justified in promoting a healthy dose of scorn and contempt, not to mention liberal sprinklings of irony.

You'll die laughing? Well, maybe. If we can stay awake during the sermons...