

# Vatican Magazine Edition Devoted To Pope's War Role

VATICAN CITY (AP) — A Vatican weekly magazine devoted to a special 8-page issue to defend the Second World War role played by Pope Pius XII. It said he faced Nazi death threats.

L'Osservatore Dell Domenica, weekend edition of L'Osservatore Romano, published what amounted to an unofficial white paper in the current controversy over the Roman Catholic ruler.

"Today a posthumous trial is being carried out of Pius XII," the magazine said in an introductory editorial. "But too many persons have forgotten that Pius XII had fought with all his strength to avoid a world conflict."

"History crushes lies and errors without pity," said a second editorial. "It leaves only truth, and truth now puts and will put into relief the role of Pius XII."

The special issue—containing articles by Roman Catholics

and non-Catholics, as well as photographic copies of previously unpublished documents—appeared amid growing public discussion of Pius' war role resulting from Roy Huchthof's controversial play The Deputy, and a number of recent books and articles.

**STATEMENT PUBLISHED** — One published statement Friday came from Albrecht Von Kessel, a war-time member of the German Embassy staff at the Vatican, who is mentioned

in the Huchthof play. Von Kessel wrote: "Hitler was capable of any outburst and crime. He always aired the possibility of making the pope a prisoner and deporting him to the reich . . . had the pope opposed such a measure, there even existed the possibility that he might have been shot 'whilst attempting to escape'."

The Deputy suggests Pius might have done, more to halt Nazi persecution of the Jews. Vatican officials have maintained he did all he could.

Roman Catholic churches in Italy have complained the Communist party was using the controversy as a weapon against the church. In a pointed reference to this, Federico Alessandrini, deputy director of L'Osservatore Romano, wrote in the special magazine issue: "The fact is that in that tragic August of 1939, when the leaders of the Soviet Union and world Communism were pushing Hitler on the road of war, assuming a grave co-responsibility for all the horrors which stemmed from it, Pope Pius XII was fighting with all his strength to avoid a world conflict."

**PROOF REPRODUCED** — One of the documents reproduced in the magazine was a printer's proof of the encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* (with burning thoughts), issued by Pope Pius XI in 1937 to protest Nazi treatment of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany.

L'Osservatore said the proofs bore corrections in the hand

writing of Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli, Vatican secretary of state, who became Pope Pius XII. Vatican prelates previously have said Cardinal Pacelli prepared the encyclical for Pius XI.

A number of Cardinals, priests, and non-Catholics wrote articles for the special issue, reporting on their personal war-time experiences. They generally declared Pius was deeply concerned about the fate of mankind and the suffering of the Jews.

**AIR FORCE TAKES OVER** — International air traffic at the two Paris airports was returning to normal Friday after the government moved in air force personnel to replace striking control tower workers. The strike, which began Monday, halted many take-offs and landings at Orly and Le Bourget. The strike was called to protest the disciplining of a worker accused of falling to respond to an order. They also want higher wages.

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