

CORNWELL'S RETREAT

John Cornwell, the author of the diatribe against Pope Pius XII, *Hitler's Pope*, was the subject of a formal complaint in Italy as soon as his book went on sale. Emma Fattorini, professor of contemporary history at Rome's La Sapienza, has accused Cornwell of misrepresenting historical facts in service to his politicized agenda.

Cornwell has tried to make hay about a comment he alleges Pius XII said about a particular Jewish Bolshevik. The British journalist has claimed that his little anecdote is a "time bomb" concealed by the Vatican. Well if it is, it just blew up in his face.

Simply because Pius XII is alleged to have said that the Jewish activist was "pale, dirty, with expressionless eyes," Cornwell concludes that the pope must have been anti-Semitic. But since Cornwell has spoken in the most disparaging personal terms about Pius XII, it would appear that his definition of a bigot is self-indicting.

No matter, as Fattorini has shown, the document referred to by Cornwell is no "time bomb" as she herself previously discussed it in her own book, *Germany and the Holy See: The Pacelli Nunciature between the Great War and the Weimar Republic*." Furthermore, as she documents, the words attributed to Pius XII were actually spoken by someone else, the nunciature's auditor.

As Mississippi law school professor Ronald Rychlak has pointed out, this is not the first time Cornwell has been shown to be a propagandist. Cornwell says that another author, Robert Katz, was involved in a legal dispute in Italy over Pius XII that resulted in an "inclusive" manner. Not true. Katz, who has authored two anti-Pius XII books, was sued for libel by the Holy Father's niece after a movie based on one of Katz's

book appeared in Italy. There was nothing inclusive about the finding of the Supreme Court: Katz was fined 400,000 lire and given a 13-month suspended prison sentence.

Those who want to read a great book on Pius XII are urged to read Rychlak's book, *Hitler, the War and the Pope*, published by Our Sunday Visitor. See page 15 for information on how to order a copy.