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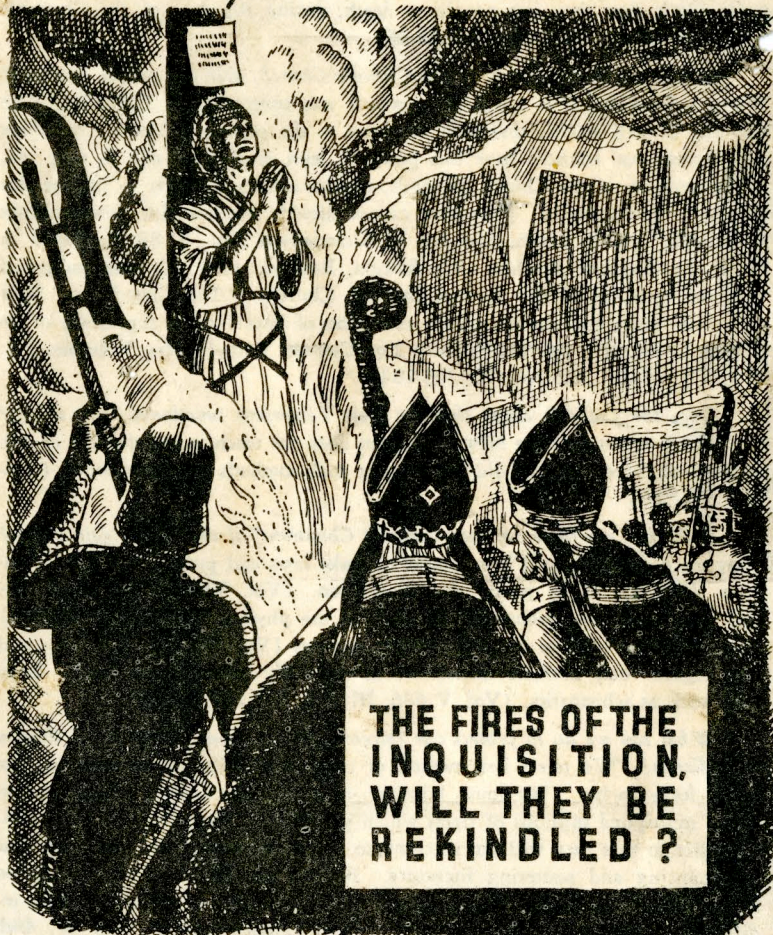
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CATHOLICISM *and* COERCION

by JAMES D. BALES



A Threat To Freedom

What do you mean by Catholicism and Coercion? The attitude of the Catholic Church toward the use of physical force on those in Christendom who teach contrary to her doctrine.

Have they ever put people to death for heresy, i.e. for teaching what they call false doctrine? Yes. Did they imprison and torture people? Yes.

What proof is there for this charge? Catholics in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* admit that they put people to death, during the days of the "Inquisition", for heresy. (Volume VIII:26-36)

Was it the State, instead of the Catholic Church, that put people to death? When a State did it it was a State which was controlled by Catholics. The Catholic Church teaches that with reference to the penalty of death, "the Pope and oecumenical councils have this power at least mediately—that is, they can, if the necessity of the Church demands, require a Catholic ruler to impose this penalty." Furthermore, "that they cannot directly exercise this power cannot be proved." (S. B. Smith, *Elements of Ecclesiastical Law*, p. 89. Published in N. Y. by Benziger Brothers, 4th Edition, Revised, 1881. It was published with the approval of the Roman Catholic Church.) The Church and State sometimes assist one another in the execution of laws "in the supression of rebellion or heresy." (p. 91. See also *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volumes VII: 261; VIII:35-36; XII:266; XI:703-704)

Does the Catholic claim that the New Testament sanctioned such things? No. They admit that the New Testament does not teach it and that the church of the first three centuries did not practice such methods against heretics. (Volume VIII:26)

Will they use force on "non-Catholic Christians" if they again gain power? They teach that they still have power to make laws and punish violators. (Volume VIII:36) They justify the Inquisition. (Vol. VIII:26-36) They say that they have never renounced the right to use physical force. (Vol. XI:703) They claim the right to coerce their own subjects (Vol. XI:703; VII:323), and they regard "non Catholic Christians" as rightfully belonging to them. They view such as schismatics. (Vol. V:686; III:756; VII:261; XI:703)

What can we do to protect our religious liberty from the threat of Roman Catholicism? We reject her method of treating heretics, so we shall not use carnal force on her. We must, however, turn back her onward march by scattering multiplied millions of tracts which will instruct Catholics and warn non-Catholics so that they will not succumb to her propaganda. Do your part now by financing and scattering literature. Beware, lest you wait until it is too late and as a result find that both you and your children suffer for your indifference. Material may be obtained from Christ's Mission, 229 W. 48th Street, New York 19, New York.