



## **EXCERPT: American Democracy and the Vatican: Population Growth and National Security**

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### **Chapter 7: The Origins of Vatican Power in America: A Guide for Population and National Security Specialists**

American Protestants are taught as children that you simply never criticize another person's religion, that you should not think about the negative aspects of another person's religion, that freedom of religion means that other people have the freedom to do whatever they want to do in their religion, that criticism of religion is always inappropriate, that we should be tolerant.

Roman Catholicism was a relative latecomer to the United States. At the time of the American Revolution, Catholics accounted for less than one percent of the population. Catholics had virtually no influence on the creation or form of the American government. It was not until the great migrations of the late 1800s and early 1900s that the proportion of Catholics became significant. Until then, the United States was a nation of Protestants. A complete taboo on criticizing another person's religion had become a strong national ethic before the arrival of a significant Catholic presence.

Surrendering the freedom to think that another person's religion might have certain negative implications in a Protestant America seemed to have produced no ill effects. However, with the arrival of a significant presence of the Catholic Church, this national ethic was soon to be exploited by a church with a long history of lust for political power. It had already become dominant in a province in Canada, as well as in Mexico, Central and South America, most of Europe,

much of Africa, and the Philippines, and had tamed many Asian countries including India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia, and, until recently, Vietnam.

This was fatal to two other cherished freedoms. When some people in this country became aware, at last, of the negative influence of the Catholic Church hierarchy on American democracy, the freedoms of speech and the press were diminishing. The Vatican had succeeded in exploiting an innocent America. How? What characteristics of the Catholic Church led to this exploitation?

The totalitarian character of the Roman Catholic Church has been noted for some time. In 1948, Karl Barth, a leading European Protestant theologian wrote of the kinship between Catholic and communist political policy in a comment he made to a Jesuit journalist: Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical, *Chief Duties of Christian Citizens*, stated that Catholics owe “complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, *as to God Himself*.” The pope sits on the throne of St. Peter and, as television has shown Americans, is worshipped as a king. The infallible spokesman of God, he is also worshipped “as God Himself.” This is by intention.