

Savage Cards

# Cheating the Cheater

By Rev. James M. Gillis, C.S.P.

When General Giraud violated his parole (if he was on parole) and got away to Africa; and when Admiral Darlan scuttled the fleet and handed over Dakar, Morocco and a big slice of Tunisia to the Allies, probably with the connivance of Petain, Adolf Hitler was scandalized. It wasn't—*you understand*—what he had lost that hurt him. It was the duplicity, the untrustworthiness, the falsehood of the French. To think that anyone should tell him a lie! Outraged! He who had always been so straightforward, ingenuous, unsuspecting, and so much a man of his word! That they should take advantage of him. It was shocking!

Who was it that made the epigram "Hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue?" Paraphrase it a little to make it read: hypocrisy is the compliment that a lie pays to the truth. So it happens that when Hitler, a notorious liar, finds, or even thinks, that someone has lied to him, he is hypocrite enough to pay tribute to the truth as a virtue, by getting angry and being attacked.

There are, as everyone says, three kinds of liar; and a fourth, the brazen liar, the liar who is proud of his lie: who boasts of his lie; who tells the world that his strategy is to lie. Hitler is that kind. He says so in Mein Kampf. Well then, when someone beats him at his own game, why does he squeal? Does he imagine that to lie is his personal prerogative that no one else may enjoy, his exclusive property that no one else may share? A man who advocates lying as a diplomatic and military weapon should send a letter of congratulation to one who beats him at the game. "Good for you old boy! You put one over on me that time. But wait. I will play you a dirtier trick than you played me. As things stand, score one for you." That's what a liar would say if he were a good sport; if a liar could be a good sport.

A man should have the courage of his convictions, even if his convictions are diabolical. The devil doesn't apologize for lying or trickery, or double dealing, or treachery. If Faust had got the better of Mephistopheles (as he does in some versions of the story) the devil might have said, "You pulled a fast one that time, Doctor Faustus, but watch your step." If the Prince to whom Machiavelli gave instructions on the fine art of lying, had put the advice to good use and played a scummy trick on some other prince, Machiavelli would have said "That's the way! Good for you! You learn quickly. Keep it up and you will some day be a better liar than I am."

So, if Darlan and Giraud, with the connivance of Petain, slipped one over on Hitler, Adolf, if he were as good a sport as the devil, should have sent congratulations, not complaints. To cheat the cheater is an accomplishment. To outlie a champion liar is an achievement. But no! Hitler whines "You can't do that to me."

A successful liar has to be ever on the alert. He must not sleep or even doze. Like a boss gangster, he must be quick on the trigger. Shooting is a game that two sides can play. And so is lying. The gunman must have eyes in the back of his head. The liar must keep his ear cocked, his senses alert, and his wits constantly working. Otherwise someone will get the drop on him.

Hitler must be slipping. No one outlived him in Austria, or Czecho-Slovakia or Poland or Jugoslavia. He had the guns, he had the men, he had the wherewithal for a blitz-conquest. But above all he had the lies that came before the Blitz. He could not only shoot faster, he could lie faster than anyone else. The Frenchmen have outwitted him. He is slipping.

The question is, since he is not so slick as he used to be, how long will it take his own people to catch up with him? Just after the African affair the New York Sun had a pithy editorial from which I quote a couple of sentences: "At some time in the near future, if it has not already occurred, the seepages of the truth into Germany itself may bring into conflict that truth and the monumental body of falsehood created by the Nazis. When that conflict comes, Hitler will not have the refuge of the small-time liar—escape from the consequences of a small lie by telling a bigger one. He has always dealt in superlatives and there will be no way out."

Aye there's the rub. The lie may serve its purpose for a while. But there is something positively uncanny about the power of truth to catch up with the lie and kill it. Even the pagans knew that. Magna est veritas et praevalabit. "Great is the truth and it will prevail" said the Romans even before they ever heard of Him Who said "I am the Truth." The lie is a good "quarter horse," but the truth will overtake the lie in the stretch and win "going away," as I think the phrase is. To take an illustration from another "sport," the lie is a whale of a slugger in the first rounds, but the truth knocks him out later. The lie is good for a hundred yards, but it hasn't the staying power for the mile. The lie is a sprinter, the truth is better in the long run.

So, after all, Hitler's Mein Kampf is not a good manual of strategy for a long war. If everything could be over in one blitz, it might work. But if a war drags on for two or three years, even the folks at home get wise to the liar. They say "he promised us quick and sure victory. Why hasn't it come?" And when, as the Sun says, the truth seeps in, they come to know what everyone else has known for a long time: their idolized, apotheosized Fuehrer has lied to them. They will read Adolf's bible again but the next time the scales will fall from their eyes. They will see in plain black and white that he said he was going to lie. Once a liar always a liar. A liar in one case, a liar in all. A liar to his enemies, a liar to his own people. When that day comes, Adolf had better get going—and quick. But where can he go? Holland? No. Switzerland? Let him try it. Poland? Wouldn't they love it. Czecho-Slovakia? They would tear him apart. One of our humorists has recommended that he bail out over Vesuvius with a sun shade for a parachute. Good idea.

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# 'Quiz' Corner

When is a good time to start reading the Mass Friday?

You may start the Mass Friday on the first Friday of any month. It might be well to select months during which there will be little probability of a breach in the nice consecutive Fridays. You are the best judge of the most suitable time.

Why are two Apostles of Our Lord called James the Greater and James the Less?

One is called James the Greater from his sanctity in age. He was the son of Zebedee and Mary (sister of Martha). The other called James the Less, also the Just from his great sanctity, and "Brother of the Lord" because, allied to him as a cousin-german, was the son of Joseph and Mary (sister of the Blessed Mother). He was appointed Bishop of Jerusalem soon after our Lord's ascension where he met death at the hands of the Jews, he being cast from the battlements of the temple and then despatched with a blow from a father's club. According to Josephus, the eminent historian, he was distinguished as holy a man that it was commonly believed the final overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem was a divine visitation in punishment for his cruel death. He is the author of the Catholic epistle, which goes by his name.

If a person commits several venial sins, is he then guilty of a mortal sin?—A. O.

Mere multiplication of venial sins can never amount to a mortal sin. Increasing their number does not change their nature. However, venial sin frequently committes disposes the soul to commit mortal sin both directly and indirectly. Directly by forming a habit which becomes stronger and stronger, continually requiring greater indulgence for its satisfaction, which finally leads to mortal sin. This is often seen in such sins as theft and lust. Indirectly because venial sin familiarizes the soul with wrong-doing; lessens the fear of God in the soul, diminishes the fervor of charity, and causes God to withhold those more abundant graces which He would otherwise give, and which would prevent the soul from sin, not without which the soul falls grievously. Venial sin should, therefore, be avoided as far as possible.

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# EDITORIALS

(Continued from Page 14)

day's COURIER. We recommend that you preserve it for future reading and study. A knowledge of its contents will enable you to speak with intelligence and understanding in any group where the question of the coming peace is brought up.

## HIS NAME WAS CALLED JESUS

The Christ child came from heaven. His name also came from heaven. To the Angel of the Annunciation was it given to make known to Mary the name by which her child should be called. Almighty God chose His Son for the Redeemed of mankind: He chose also for Him a name that would fully describe His mission. Jesus, Saviour, was to be His name. The mandate of the Angel was carried out at the time of His circumcision: "His name was called Jesus."

How often that holy name has been repeated since first uttered by Gabriel! Taught by mothers as one of the first words their babies should speak; uttered in prayer of thanksgiving, of petition, of sorrow; first on the lips in morning devotions, closing the day as a word of consolation and comfort and confidence.

Jesus is the name that means most for us in life and in death. Just as our Redemption from sin is the most important grace in our life, so the name of Jesus must be the most important name for all of us. Let us speak it with reverence, with love, with devotion. Let us atone for all abuse of this sacred name! No voice can speak, no heart can frame, nor can the memory find, a sweeter sound than Thy blessed name, O Saviour of Mankind!

## According to the Doctor

**SMOKES TOO MUCH**

Dr. Harold G. Habel, in his book "Industrial Medicine," says that habits of smoking can impair the health of most of us, decrease our energy and nerve, and predispose us to certain diseases. He reviewed the records of 116 executives who were examined over a nine-year period at the Mayo Clinic and found that though they did not consider themselves sufficiently ill to stop working, they all suffered from severe disabilities.

There was apparent an extraordinarily high incidence of hypertension in a group of comparatively young men. And the annotations in the diagnostician's record read thusly: "Physical and mental exhaustion," "Most indiscreet in drinking, dining and smoking habits," "Smokes too much," "Hasn't had a vacation in two years," "Nervous, high strung."

People with desk jobs — they needn't be executives in the top hat sense — are likely to have bad working, eating, smoking and drinking habits. Their recreation isn't even good, for they go at it injudiciously and as strenuously as they do their work.

Cool down, if you're among the nail-biters, the chain-smokers, the nip-takers, the snarling servants fly-off-the-handle crowd. You'll live longer. You'll make life pleasant for yourself, for others. Experiment to convince yourself, if need be. Stop smoking for say—just one day. A week later—try it for two days. Notice how different, how fresh you feel. And notice the horrible let-down when you take that first drag on a cigarette after this lay-off. Enough of this kind of health tests and you'll appreciate moderation, and practice it.

## Five Years Ago--

—in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From Dec. 26, 1937, Edition

Proclaiming 1938 a Holy Year during which the nineteenth century of Christ's passion, death and resurrection would be observed, His Holiness Pope Pius XI, in a Christmas message expressed the hope that the world during the coming year would benefit by cessation of talk about reparations, debts, armaments, disarmament, war and other troubles, and turn its thoughts to "expiation" and "reform."

From Dec. 26, 1937, Edition

In one of the most vigorous statements he had made to date relative to the condition of the Church in Germany—a statement which he termed, and "of protest, very high protest," His Holiness, Pope Pius XI assailed the Nazi regime, definitely charging persecution of religion in the Reich.

# Milestone Of Revolution

By Rev. Benedict Egan

Life will go on much the same in 1943, with peace and civilization changing some of our habits, but with our minds pretty much the same. But all the while the revolution will be going on, and the consummation of a transformation which will become the last thing that many people will see.

I cannot think of our coming into 1943 except as a meeting further into the revolution. We cannot see the hand of the clock, and we cannot see the movement of history, which is a steady march toward revolution. History cannot stand still. For history is the unfolding of the mystery of personality, and a divine spark must be kindled in the fullness of his perfection. He cannot see the history of the human soul, for it is only a shadow of better possibilities. It must give way to these better possibilities.

The history of a man is a revolution. The revolution of the soul is the revolution of the spirit. The revolution of the spirit is the revolution of the soul. The revolution of the soul is the revolution of the body. The revolution of the body is the revolution of the mind. The revolution of the mind is the revolution of the heart. The revolution of the heart is the revolution of the will. The revolution of the will is the revolution of the intellect. The revolution of the intellect is the revolution of the soul.

Such is man before he enters into his eternity. He is subject to change. If he accepts the divine ordination of his life, and works with it, his change and constant revolution of his circumstances will work toward his perfection. Otherwise, it will bring him to deterioration and ruin. For differences from the true man, but within him, the faculty of choosing or rejecting his final perfection.

Such also is the history of the world. All its changes and revolutions, despite countless hopes and reverses, have toward its original state, it has moved along under God's hand toward the perfection of its destiny. It takes a series of the human order to direct through all the stages of human conduct the slow movement of the soul toward its final destiny. Through all the changing of the seasons in the springing, only the constant movement can sense the movement of the waters to the sea.

Sometimes the movement of history is slow, sometimes it is fast. Sometimes it is precipitated by natural revolutions, sometimes by material revolutions, sometimes by both together. But always the pattern of life is being changed, and always new energies from them will new perceptions and understandings. Sometimes he may look for this with the loss of earlier perceptions and understandings, as that his later state is less advanced than his earlier state. As in those cases, however, you can reach an advanced state. Much it seems to me, was the revolution of the Renaissance and the Reformation, from which man emerged with a renewed sense of certain forgotten values, but at the expense of others, and a synthesis which alone gave those values meaning and protection. Much, too, is every material revolution when it is advanced from spiritual ideas. But then it always seems to happen that a later revolution makes good the loss and pain gains are welded by it into a new unity.

The trouble we have with the word "revolution" is that it was only after much study and experience that I could shake off my notion of the world as something limited to dynamics and accidents. Now I know that accidents and dynamics are not revolutionary. They are after the catalysts of revolution. They are like bolts and lightning, largely focusing the discharges of the body politic. Their breaking out sheds the poison. But the real revolution comes when the healthy blood begins to circulate again to invigorate the paralyzed body.

I know now what the real revolution is, though I find it hard to define it clearly or to explain its early measurements. For one thing, it is a revolution which is affecting, and will continue to affect, both the body and the soul of society. I find that of the millions of the war-dead killed off to battle and hunger, and torture, and reprisal, if you think of the privations and heroic endurance of the men who are ranged against the enemy, then you can surely call it a violent and bloody revolution. But, bitter as it is to contemplate such a sacrifice for such a gain, the gain is only a negative one. The military phase of the revolution, costly and bloody and horribly wasteful of life and material, is only for the purpose of stopping the enemy from advancing his "revolutions" of the revolution. The military victory, if it is ours, will not accomplish the revolution. Its object is simply to remove the impediment to the true revolution.

What is this revolution? For the answer I give you may call me a "crackpot," but I am in good company. On its economic and social side, it is a revolution from land-consciousness to air-consciousness, from land-and-sea-traveling to globe-circling, from difficult communication to intimate association, in which geography will count for less and the uncharted skyways for more; in which we shall no longer have to speak of days and weeks between the points of the globe, but of hours, in which the whole tone of life and custom will undergo a change even greater than that which came to the 15th and 16th centuries after Columbus began that amazing series of discoveries which opened to new waterways and continents to Western man.

On its spiritual side, it is a correlative revolution, in which man's outlook is changing from isolationism to the full meaning of common brotherhood under the fatherhood of God. It will do us little good for the airplane to span the frontiers and narrow the ranges and oceans and to help us think of the world better than ever before, as a globe, if impenetrable frontiers remain in the souls of men—hatred, prejudice, mobbishness, racial spite, imperialism, class-strife. But the signs are hopeful, and none more so than that modern revolution of Catholic consciousness by the full meaning of our solidarity in the Body of Christ in which there is not "Gentile and Jew, Barbarian and Scythian," "slave and freeman," but Christ is all things and in all.

(To be continued)

"Though thousands of people die from malarial fever every year in India, the number who die from malarial accidents in the United States, relative to the population, is six times greater." —Pittsburgh Courier Letter