

East Asia Office

The Council on Middle East Relations

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Cardinal Pietro Parolin
The Secretary of State
Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano,
Via del Pellegrino
Citta del Vaticano 00120
Roma
Italy

COPY

GPO Box 1885
Canberra, ACT 2601
Australia
Tel: 61 403500103
Fax: 61 249343692
Email:
info@thecmer.org
Website:
www.thecmer.org

Your Eminence ,

Should the Vatican renew its pact with the Chinese Communist Party, then in the words of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, the Holy See will "jeopardises the church's moral authority."

To the chagrin and embarrassment of Christians worldwide, the CCP-Vatican pact puts the church, especially Pope Francis, who is primarily responsible for it, on the wrong side of history. It reinforces the widespread perception that this first Jesuit pope is not only ignorantly arrogant, but is also spiritually bankrupt. His shameful refused to meet Hong Kong's Cardinal Joseph Zen, who made the trip to External City to discuss renewal of the pact, speaks of a man who has little humility.

As you will be aware, one of Zen's concerns is the appointment of a new bishop for Hong Kong to fill a vacant post. He fears the church in the former British colony, which recently lost its fight to preserve the freedoms it was guaranteed under the "one country, two systems" principle in the 1997 handover, is to be ruled by a bishop who has China's support but not that of the local flock.

The CCP-Vatican deal has never been sighted. Transparency is not a strong point of either Beijing or under this Papacy. Yet it hands the Chinese state considerable power over bishops' appointments.

Such power was not even part of the notorious Reichskonkordat of July 1933 between the Vatican and the newly formed Nazi government in Germany.

Until now, that shameful pact, signed by Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (the future Pius XII), Vatican secretary of state under Pope Pius XI, was the last time the church made such a blunder with a totalitarian regime.

The East Asia Office explores the multidimensional relations between the Middle East and East Asia through scholarly analysis of cross-regional economic, political, security, and social/cultural interactions and their implications. It seeks to foster collaborative research on these issues as well as forging institutional partnerships.

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Less than four years later, in March 1937, Pius XI backpedalled in an encyclical (the highest form of papal letter) *Mit Brennender Sorge* (with Burning Anxiety). He condemned racial theories and the mistreatment of people on the grounds of their race or nationality. It did not refer to Hitler or the Nazis by name but the letter was addressed only to the church in Germany.

This time, the church still has a chance to get out while it can. If it fails to take it, it will wear the historical opprobrium. As Zen says, if and when, sometime in future, "people will gather to plan the new China, the Catholic Church may not be welcome".

The portents were bad when the pact was finalised on September 22, 2018. And much has deteriorated since. We Australians are well aware of China's aggression in the South China Sea and towards Taiwan, its persistent cyber-attacks and "soft power" incursions into universities and politics, the problems of the "Thousand Talents" and its manipulative Belt and Road program.

Francis is vocal about climate change and condemning market capitalism, but his silence about China's human rights record, including religious freedom, is deafening. There are over 380 internment camps for the Uighur Muslim minority in far western China, despite Chinese claims that "re-education" was winding down. Witnesses attest to widespread forced abortions and sterilisations. Vatican apologists for the secret pact like to claim it brought to fruition the work of previous popes St John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Both wanted progress with China. But neither was prepared to make the compromises this pact entails.

Today throughout China the Communist authorities are subjecting Muslims to an unprecedented amount of surveillance, shutting down or bulldozing Christian churches, forcing monks to pledge allegiance to Marxist-Leninism, forbidden children to hear or read the word of God, and rewriting the New Testament to say that Jesus stoned to death innocent men and women.

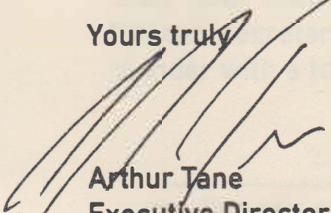
Under Xi Jinping's "sinicisation of religion" diktat religious signage and imagery are being destroyed or replaced. Mao instead of the Virgin Mary; Xi instead of Jesus.

This is an utter abomination and the work of minds possessed by Satanism.

Should the CCP-Vatican pact be renewed by Pope Francis then this infamy will stain the walls of the Church with the blood of the innocent.

Either the Church understands the significance of its mission or it itself has become a temple of money changers. For in the words of Jesus "It is written that my house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'" – Matthew 21:12-13.

Yours truly



Arthur Tane
Executive Director