

Roman Catholicism and the High Political Offices of Presidency and Vice Presidency

WHEREAS the historic position of the Roman Catholic Church has been opposed to full religious liberty and the separation of the church and state, as evidenced by Pope Gregory XVI's encyclical *Mirari Vos* in 1832 in which he condemned liberty of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and separation of the church and state; and by Pope Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* in 1864 in which he insisted on the supremacy of the church's authority and denied the right of every man to the liberty of his own form of worship; and

WHEREAS the Roman Catholic Church's *ex cathedra* decrees of Popes are regarded as eternally infallible; and

WHEREAS the late Rt. Rev. John A. Ryan of the Catholic University of America and the Rev. Dr. Francis J. Boland of the University of Notre Dame, in their book, *Catholic Principles of Politics*, issued under Cardinal Spellman's *imprimatur* insist: "Error has not the same rights as truth. Since the profession and practice of error are contrary to human welfare, how can error have rights? How can the toleration of error be justified? If there is only one true religion and if its possession is the most important good in life for states as well as individuals, then the public profession, protection, and promotion of this religion and the legal prohibition of all direct assaults upon it must become one of the most obvious and fundamental duties of the state, for it is the business of the state to safeguard and promote human welfare in all departments of life;" and

WHEREAS another Catholic theologian, the Rev. Francis J. Connell, has written: "I believe that the state has the right of repression and limitation (although often it is not expedient to use it) when error is doing harm to the spiritual interest of the Catholic citizens. . . . However much we may praise the American system, as far as our land is concerned, it is not *per se* preferable to the system in which the one true church would be acknowledged and especially favored;" and

WHEREAS in those countries where Catholicism is the predominant religion and enjoys a great measure of state support, as in Spain and Ecuador, Protestants are harassed, restricted, and sometimes also persecuted; and

WHEREAS a Catholic President in America would be subjected to certain pressures for his church;

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches strongly recommend to both the Republican and Democratic political parties that they do not nominate a Roman Catholic for the high offices of the presidency and/or vice presidency of the United States.

*June 20-24, 1960
Long Beach, California*