

EDITORIAL

## ALL HONOR TO MERRI DEL VAL.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**C**ARDINAL MERRI DEL VAL, the Papal Secretary of State and chief official, has, almost since the election of Pius X who immediately appointed him, been coming in for large rounds of abuse. Some say his diplomacy is that of a third rate power; others call him a schemer; still others say he is ignorant;—all these agree in abusing him.



**CARDINAL MERRI DEL VAL**  
(1865–1930)

Cardinal Merri del Val is neither an ignoramus, nor a twister. His diplomacy is all-embracing, such as befits the temporal power it serves.

Cardinal Merri del Val is a man of convictions, and his convictions run on no low plane. He is convinced of the wisdom of and the necessity, for the world's welfare, of theocratic rule, and that rule all-embracing, the universal empire, run by a hierarchy of dependents upon a central and infallible head. So holding Cardinal Merri del Val unflinchingly pursues his policy and meets every problem that presents itself with his own standard.

Does a Roosevelt attempt to treat the Vatican upon the same footing that he treats the Methodist settlement in Rome? Some truckling politician, with an eye to temporary appearances, would shut his eyes to the incongruity. As one political system excludes all others within it, so does the creed manifestation of political rule. The Vatican can tolerate Methodism as little as Russian Tsarism could tolerate a republic within its jurisdiction.

Does the republic of France, logically enough from its premises, deny political functions to Papal subalterns in France? As logically does the head of the aspirant Universal Empire with headquarters at the Vatican deny the principle that France

is not a province of the said Universal Empire, and he acts accordingly to the extent of his physical power.

And now in Spain. Do the material needs of a majority of the Spanish people clash with the material needs of the Vatican, and does the Spanish Government apply the principle of religious tolerance as the entering wedge to a readjustment of the material interests of her people with the material interests of the Vatican? The Vatican stoutly resists the entering wedge.

Cardinal Merri del Val may pursue a wrong ideal. Socialism holds he does and will resist him. But wrong though the ideal may be, credit is due to the man, who, in these days of subterfuge and double dealing, holds out his ideal clear as a pike. The ideal of the Roman Catholic political machine is made clear by the policy of Cardinal Merri del Val. The Spanish incident is the clearest.

The ideal of the Roman Catholic political machine, as now illustrated in the Spanish troubles, is that, though believers in other creeds need not be hanged, quartered or burned at the stake, as was once the practice, they shall not be allowed to indulge in their views publicly. What the Vatican would now enforce in Spain it would enforce in every country where it may acquire the power. Those who prefer any creed other than the Roman must turn their places of worship into a sort of speak-easy—enter them only by backdoors, or side entrances. Seeing that the goal of the Vatican is the Universal Empire, such conditions would be the conditions of the whole world—with no country to flee to for refuge.

Perhaps this ideal is the ideal one for mankind—all honor to the man who holds out the ideal in all its purity. Perhaps the ideal is the worst for mankind—all honor to the man who does not insinuate it with false pretenses.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
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