

about Hans D.

DeLarue Jacques:  
The Fortaps, 1964

1965

### Pope Pius Involved in Anti-Hitler Plot, Historians Told

San Francisco, Dec. 31 (UPI) — With reports circulating that Pope Paul VI is deeply involved in current peace moves, historians meeting here yesterday heard an intriguing tale of an earlier Pope's cloak-and-dagger role in an unsuccessful plot to overthrow Hitler before World War II.

Pope Pius XII was secretly involved in the intrigue involving a few German military leaders late in 1939 and early in 1940, according to Prof. Harold C. Deutsch, of the University of Minnesota. He told a meeting of the American Historical Association that he had assembled the story from numerous interviews with about 20 persons who knew something about it first hand.

When the plot failed, he said, the Vatican was so concerned about its role that everyone involved received "fervent pleas from the Holy See to destroy all evidence."

#### FRANCE WARNED

Dr. Deutsch said he has established for the first time that Pius XII personally advised French Ambassador to the Vatican, Francois Charles-Roux, that Hitler planned an offensive against the West nearly two months before it came.

The plot by the German military men to overthrow Hitler has been reported by

other historians, but Dr. Deutsch has traced the key Vatican link between the Germans and Britain.

He said a Munich attorney, Josef Mueller, was used as the contact between the German "opposition" and the Pope. Col. Hans Oster and Hans Vondonanyi, two of the plot leaders, asked Mueller to "persuade the Vatican to act as intermediary with the British government," Dr. Deutsch said.

#### 'X-REPORT'

Mueller, communicating with the Pope thru the Pontiff's intimate companion, Fr. Robert Leiber, S.J., transmitted the German terms and later carried back from the Vatican the British reaction — the so-called X-report," the historian said.

The "X-paper," recounted the entire course of the Vatican exchanges and climaxed in a description of the British commitments. Dr. Deutsch said. He said that after an exhaustive search for this document in Europe he learned that it was captured by the Nazis in 1944 and "will probably never be found unless possibly among the captive material in Washington."

At any rate, said Deutsch, the German "opposition" leaders delayed an answer and early in 1940, the Pope "after months of risk and anxiety must have felt himself compromised in the eyes of the western powers."

Dr. Deutsch said his research convinced him that the Pontiff decided in mid-March of that year to extricate himself from the affair by warning the western powers that a German offensive was coming.

He was ~~probably~~  
James P  
son



Detailed story  
NY Times Dec. 31-1965