

CAROLINGIAN ITALIAN POLICIES

739 - 780

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ABSTRACT

CAROLINGIAN ITALIAN POLICIES: 739-780

By

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In the short period between 739 and 780 the leaders of the Franks became deeply involved in the political problems of Italy as is well known. Historians have attempted to explain why and how the Franks were moved to broaden their political horizon beyond the Alps. These questions are raised again in this study, but the attempt is made to place them in a wider context which many older studies ruled out by the narrower assumptions of legal or Realpolitik history. Both have attempted to separate religious concerns among the Franks from their political activities. At the other extreme are studies that stress religion as the sole factor in the Franks' Italian policies. In search of a middle ground, this study attempts to discover the interaction of political and religious concerns in the formation of Italian policies between 739 and 780 while recognizing that many other factors entered into the decision-making process.

A number of Roman and Frank sources have been consulted. The most valuable source for this study was the Codex Carolinus. Despite certain difficulties, one finds here reflected the major concerns and assumptions that guided the leaders of the Franks in dealing with the problems of Italy. The Liber Pontificalis was also particularly important as a mirror of an influential segment of Roman opinion regarding the Franks' role in Italy.

A major factor affecting the Franks' attitude toward Italy from 739 until 754 was the problem of the "chosen people." This problem could not be resolved satisfactorily in 739 and thereby contributed to the Franks' decision to stay out of the quarrel between the papacy and the Lombards. Further complex political and religious changes opened a new avenue for compromise in 754 which cleared the way for the Franks to intervene in a new papal-Lombard dispute. As a result, leaders of the Franks were committed to keep the peace in Italy by balancing Lombard and papal interests.

The equilibrium in Italy, sustained by King Pepin's efforts, lasted until his death and the death of Pope Paul I once again gave the Lombards the initiative in Italy. Under the influence of Charlemagne the Franks finally took drastic steps to bring peace to Italy. However, the conquest of the Kingdom of the Lombards in 774 did not free the papacy to play the spiritual role in Frankish affairs desired by Charlemagne. Instead the abandonment of the traditional Lombard policy of southward expansion created a political vacuum in Central Italy which Rome could not fill. Between 774 and 780 Charlemagne was forced to seek ways to bring peace to central Italy without compromising the spiritual bond he had formed in 774 with St. Peter and Pope Hadrian I. Though still incomplete in 780, the pattern for peace had been established by that year. New problems, however, were generated by the solutions imposed on old ones, insuring that the Franks would be committed to an open-ended policy in Italy. Charlemagne's attempt to expand the spiritual alliance with the papacy in 774 thus drew him into a complex political situation in Italy which he could not ignore.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	ii
List of Abbreviations	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter I: The Period of Frankish Neutrality 739-741 and the Problem of the <u>Populum Peculiarem</u> . .	12
Chapter II: The Papal-Frankish Alliance of 754 and the Resolution of the Problem of the <u>Populum</u> <u>Peculiarem</u>	31
Chapter III: Equilibrium in Italy	56
Chapter IV: The Destruction of the Equilibrium Policy 767-772	77
Chapter V: The Expansion of the Papal-Frankish Alliance	112
Chapter VI: The Expansion of the Frankish Political Horizon in Italy	145
Conclusion	186
Bibliographical Essay	192
Bibliography	195

PREFACE

I owe many thanks to many people who have assisted me directly or indirectly in the preparation of this study. I cannot adequately state my deep appreciation of the patience and understanding offered by my wife throughout my graduate career. She has served far above and beyond the call of duty. Though they hardly understood my task, even my children deserve a note of thanks for bringing me a smile when they spoke with grave concern of the progress of my "dishertation."

A number of people have played an important role in shaping my attitudes toward the study of history. For their kindness, patience, and wide learning Professors Marjorie Gesner and Eleanor Huzar will retain a permanent place in my list of significant historians. Both always had time to listen despite the demands of a busy teaching schedule. Above all, I wish to thank Professor Richard E. Sullivan. First for convincing me by his enthusiasm that Medieval history was indeed my first love. Secondly, for his patient, kind, and gentle instruction in the intricacies of the Medieval historian's craft. I have been fortunate to meet him as scholar, teacher, and friend.

Finally, a word of thanks is due to my friends at Wittenberg University, and to David H. Miller, at the University of Oklahoma, for encouraging me to persevere in a task that sometimes seemed endless, though never pointless.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>BEC</u>	<u>Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes</u>
<u>BLE</u>	<u>Bulletin de la Litterature Ecclesiastique</u>
<u>BZ</u>	<u>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</u>
<u>CMH</u>	<u>Cambridge Medieval History, ed. J. R. Tanner, C. W. Previte-Orton and S. N. Brooke, 8 Vols. Cambridge, 1936.</u>
<u>DZK</u>	<u>Deutsche Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</u>
<u>DOP</u>	<u>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</u>
<u>FDG</u>	<u>Forschungen zur Deutschen Geschichte</u>
<u>HZ</u>	<u>Historische Zeitschrift</u>
<u>MGH</u>	<u>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</u>
<u>RHGF</u>	<u>Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France ed. par Bouquet; nouvelle ed. de L. Delisle, 19 Vols. Paris, 1869-1880</u>
<u>RH</u>	<u>Revue Historique</u>
<u>ZKG</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</u>

INTRODUCTION

In the forty-two years between 739 and 781, the Franks became deeply involved in the political problems of Italy. From an attitude of near indifference in 739, the Franks under Pepin in 754 accepted a narrow role beyond the Alps which Charlemagne greatly expanded after 774. Why did the Franks modify their attitudes toward their role in Italy's political problems? Why did they allow their political horizon to expand to include eventually all Italy? These questions will be examined in this study of the Frankish involvement in Italy from 739 to 781.

A fresh look at an old problem is in order for a number of reasons. First, although many valuable studies of Papal-Frankish relations have been made, historians have often concentrated their attention on papal history.¹ Since the rise of the papacy as a temporal power and its clashes with the rulers of Europe provides a dramatic theme in medieval history, the interest of historians in papal development is understandable. The need remains for a study that attempts to focus on the question of Italy from the Frankish point of view.

¹Albert Hauck, Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands (5 vols; Berlin, 1954). Walter Ullmann, The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages (2nd ed.; London, 1962). Johannes Haller, Das Papsttum: Idee und Wirklichkeit (5 vols; Basel, 1951).

Attempts have been made to meet this need, but most older interpretations of Frankish attitudes have begun from assumptions too narrow to explain satisfactorily Frankish behavior toward Italy.² Legal historians, for example, have defined Frankish responses to political problems within the narrow framework of Germanic law which was assumed to be at the center of Frankish policy considerations.³ Without slighting the importance of their contributions to our understanding of Germanic law, we must reject the assumption that every situation was subjected to a legal interpretation by the Franks.

Fundamental to the legalists' view of Papal-Frankish relations in the period in question is the notion that the popes were linked by a legal tie with the Franks in 754 when Pope Stephen II commended himself to King Pepin.⁴ A recent study of the pontificate of Pope Paul I has raised serious and convincing objections to this interpretation.⁵

²Englebert Mühlbacher, Deutsche Geschichte unter den Karolingern, 2 Aufl. (Stuttgart, 1896, photocopy, 1959), p. 42. Ludwig Hartmann, Geschichte Italien im Mittelalter (Gotha, 1900), II, ii, 139, 169-171. Robert Holtzmann, Die Italienpolitik der Merowinger und des Königs Pippins (Darmstadt, 1962), pp. 37-38, though useful still proposes to evaluate Carolingian policy by a "worldly standard." The most useful older study of Frankish attitudes, despite its title, is Thomas Hodgkin, Italy and her Invaders (8 vols., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1899-1910), esp. Vols. VII and VIII.

³Karl Lamprecht, Die römische Frage von König Pippin bis auf Kaiser Ludwig den Frommen (Leipzig, 1889), passim. Wilhelm Gundlach, Die Entstehung des Kirchenstaats und der curiale Begriff Res Publica Romanorum (Breslau, 1899), passim. Erich Caspar, Pippin und die römischen Kirche (Berlin, 1914), passim; and Das Papsttum unter fränkischer Herrschaft (Darmstadt, 1956, orig. publ. in ZfK, LIV (1935), pp. 72-175), passim.

⁴David Harry Miller, Pope Paul I and the Roman Revolution of the Eighth Century (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1967), pp. 69-72.

⁵Ibid.

Close analysis of papal correspondence has indicated that certain crucial terms were wrenched out of context to fit the basic assumption of a legal connection in 754.⁶ As the author of the study pointed out, an act of such consequence for the course of Papal-Frankish relations could not have been ignored by the sources.⁷ Yet we find no trace in Frankish or papal records that a ceremony of commendation ever occurred.⁸ The narrow conceptual scheme of the lawyers is inadequate to describe the nature of Papal-Frankish relations in this period.

Equally inadequate as a guide to understanding the Frankish attitude toward their role in Italy are arguments based upon the assumptions of Realpolitik. Those assumptions, as is well known, are grounded in a "toughness of mind" characteristic of the political realism of the nineteenth century.⁹ While many changes prepared the way for the development of this attitude among statesmen in that period, the separation of the state from its religious foundations and the failure of efforts to impose new ideological constructs on the state in the Revolutions of 1848 are two factors that encouraged most significantly the rise of Realpolitik.¹⁰ A further rationale for this position was

⁶Ibid., pp. 70-71.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹See R. R. Palmer and J. Colton, A History of the Modern World 3rd ed. (New York, 1965), pp. 493-95, 521-22, for a good summary of the development of Realpolitik. For a more detailed study of its application in the present see Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (New York, 1949), passim.

¹⁰Palmer and Colton, pp. 493-94.

provided by interpretations of Darwin's findings that suggested a view of nature as a place of struggle rather than harmony among the species.¹¹ "Nature red in tooth and claw" was translated into European political life to indicate that the emerging nation states were engaged, as an ultimate goal, in the struggle to survive.¹²

Survival required that men think in terms of self-interest rather than according to the dictates of an ideology. Practicality, opportunism, pragmatism are the watchwords of Realpolitik, as the career of Bismarck illustrates. The weakness of this position insofar as the writing of history is concerned is that it denies to all men any deeper motives than self-interest. The standards of one age are thus given universal validity and read back upon the past. Motives other than the search for power to secure one's basic material interests were suspect in this view of political activity.¹³ The appeal to religious feeling became merely a mask for deeper drives for domination and power.¹⁴ Reflecting the assumptions of their times, some historians have approached the Carolingian era bent upon discovering the aims and objectives of the Franks in terms of the quest for power. By reading the objectives of the modern state back upon the past, the real concerns of the Carolingians were discovered to be such issues as territorial expansion, the struggle for economic

¹¹Ibid., p. 599.

¹²Ibid., pp. 521-22; Morgenthau, pp. 176-77.

¹³Martin Lintzel, "Der Codex Carolinus und die Motive von Pippins' Italienpolitik," HZ, CLXI (1940), 33-41.

¹⁴Ibid.

resources, the problems of unifying the Frankish nation. That either the Franks or the popes could have pursued policies molded by religious objectives was a notion to be rejected or ignored.

Sigurd Abel's study of Papal-Frankish relations in the time of Charlemagne and Pope Hadrian, though a useful work in many respects, illustrates the assumptions of the Realpolitik position.¹⁵ For Abel, the question of power was at the heart of the relations between Charles and the pope.¹⁶ The lands of central Italy were the concrete manifestations of this struggle for domination.¹⁷ Power as an end in itself was assumed by the author to be the goal of both king and pope. But Abel has forced the student of history into a very narrow framework by ruling out the possibility that men of the eighth century were capable of following policies designed to impose their conception of the right order of things upon the world.

Attempts to shake off the restrictions upon historical inquiry imposed by the assumptions of Realpolitik have been made. In the work of Johannes Haller we are reminded of the need to study an age in the light of its "inner characteristics".¹⁸ The historian must try to interpret the past from the point of view of an epoch's own contemporaries. Haller denied that self-interest, the cardinal rule of Realpolitik

¹⁵"Papst Hadrian I und die weltliche Herrschaft des Romischen Stuhls, " FDG, I, i, (1860), 455-90.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 456.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸"Die Karolingern und das Papsttum, " HZ, CVIII (1912), pp. 52, 65.

statecraft, was the mainspring of Frankish Italian policy.¹⁹ Pointing to evidence that indicated the religious preoccupations of the Franks, Haller concluded that Pepin's invasions of Italy were motivated not by political concerns but solely by religious interests.²⁰

Haller's characterization of Pepin's Italian policy was attacked by Martin Lintzel who rejected religious arguments as mere papal rhetoric that masked the fundamental issue of power.²¹ The differences between Haller and Lintzel's extreme positions indicates another problem that has hampered attempts to depart from the norms of Realpolitik. Their views reflect the natural tendency to identify either religious or political motives and to place them in sharply defined, rigidly separated, compartments. As a practical matter, such divisions usually aid the process of analysis in historical inquiry. In addition, modern historians are perhaps also influenced by the modern inclination to divide secular and religious affairs.

However, if the Franks made no clear distinction between the sacred and the secular, we must assume for this study that political and religious issues were inseparably fused. Political policies were not discussed in the absence of religious concerns, nor were religious concerns able to avoid acquiring the status of political issues. Considering the close ties between the monarchy and the ecclesiastics of the Frankish realm, one should not be surprised to find a merger of the

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 67-68.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 59-60.

²¹"Der Codex Carolinus und die Motive von Pippins' Italienpolitik," HZ, CLXI (1940), 33-41.

political and the religious. It is a basic assumption of this study that religious interests were far more significant than serving as clever rationalizations or masks for deeper motives; religious interests played a critical role in the formation of and changes in the attitudes of the Franks toward their political role in Italy.

The possibilities for fruitful investigation opened by acknowledging the fundamental role of religion in the shaping of Frankish policy are illustrated by a recent study of the relationship between the Carolingian Renaissance and the idea of kingship, presented as the Birkbeck Lectures by Walter Ullmann.²² The author attempts to see the Carolingian Renaissance from the perspective of men of the times, and he suggests that they were not preoccupied solely with a literary movement.²³ The Carolingian Renaissance was instead a total effort to impress upon Frankish society institutions "which originated wholly in the realm of ideas, in the realm of the spirit."²⁴

The roots of the new institutions lay in the norms of Christianity as established by the Roman Church, translated for the Frankish situation by "Carolingian ecclesiastics," and implemented initially by Charlemagne.²⁵ The Carolingian Renaissance was an extension to the whole of Frankish society of the idea of baptism, which stressed the theme of a rebirth of the individual in Christ.²⁶ The significance of this

²²The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship
(London: Methuen, 1969).

²³Ibid., pp. 5-6.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 165-66.

²⁵Ibid. pp. 12, 136.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 6-7.

attempt, as Ullmann states, is that "for the first time at least as far as Western Europe is concerned, we are here confronted by the conscious effort to shape the character of a society in consonance with the axioms of a particular doctrine, here the Christian norms."²⁷

No attempt can be made here to survey the scope of Ullmann's study, which ranged far beyond that of the present investigation. However, our study will underscore Ullmann's central argument that Charlemagne was anxious to institute a European program built upon the rock of Rome.²⁸ As Ullmann implies, Charlemagne found it necessary on occasion to clarify this goal for the pope himself, when Hadrian failed to comprehend its implications. Thus, as Ullmann notes, the Libri Carolini embodies an attempt to "protect the papacy against Pope Adrian" as well as against those less qualified to speak upon matters of the faith.²⁹ We shall point to other instances that reveal the real tensions between Charles and Hadrian on other issues. Since Ullmann fails to deal with Charles's program and the status of Italy under this new dispensation perhaps our study will serve to clarify certain of Ullmann's views.

In connection with the hint of certain tensions between the papacy and the Franks that might have interfered with the smooth transformation

²⁷Ibid., p. 7.

²⁸Ibid., esp. Lecture VI, pp. 135-166.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 141-42. Again, p. 161, Ullmann observes that "the idea of an ideological concept of Europe . . . had come into existence with only a modest amount of active participation on the part of the papacy" which suggests that the Franks had to educate Rome as well as be educated by her.

of European society according to Charlemagne's model, one must mention the problem of the Donation of Constantine.³⁰ So many difficulties surround this topic that a separate study would be needed to explore all the ramifications of the problem. We shall limit ourselves to some observations regarding the possible meaning of the donation to the Franks in the light of their idea of Europe in Chapter VI below.

Another question of equal interest, but again too broad in scope to be treated in detail here, is the problem of the significance of the Byzantine Empire for the Franks in the period before 781.³¹ Pepin, as is well known, shrugged off Eastern claims to lands in Italy in 756, and the Frankish king did not take a major part in the Eastern attempt to establish ties with his family during Paul's pontificate.³²

Regarding the question of Charles's interests in establishing ties with Byzantium before 781, Werner Ohnsorge has proposed that Frankish Italian policy was keyed to this problem by 775.³³ Ohnsorge has argued that Charles's assumption of the title patricius Romanorum

³⁰Miller, Appendix C, pp. 174-179.

³¹See A. A. Vasiliev, History of the Byzantine State (2 Vols; 2nd ed., Madison, 1961), and George Ostrogorsky, History of the Byzantine State (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1957). Also Louis Brehier, Le Monde byzantin (2 Vols; Paris, 1948) for general treatments of this subject.

³²Miller, pp. 116-119; also, J. Rosenstock-Heussey and J. Wittig, "Die Furt der Franken," Das Alter der Kirche (Berlin, 1927), II, 467.

³³"Der Patricius-titel Karls der Grossen," BZ, LIII (1960), 310, 321.

actually came in 775.³⁴ Charles began to use the title in that year in defiance of the Emperor Constantine V who had bestowed this designation on Desiderius's son.³⁵ Documents indicating that Charles's had begun to use the title in July of 774 are dismissed by Ohnsorge as twelfth century copies and therefore possibly in error.³⁶ However, this assumption, critical for his argument, is in no way demonstrable.

Furthermore, Charles may or may not have negotiated with the Empress Irene in 781 for Byzantine recognition of his legal right to the title.³⁷ Again there is not any way to test Ohnsorge's assumption. In order for his argument to be at all persuasive, one must accept the assumption that Charles's chief concern between 775 and 780 was to establish legal claims against the East. The sources, however, do not indicate clear support for such an assumption. For the time being, we shall cast our lot with those historians who treat the development of the meaning of this title as a western phenomenon.³⁸

As for the development of the legal meaning of the patricius Romanorum, we shall have little to add beyond pointing out, as others have done, that it was a vaguely defined label created by Pope Stephen II in 754 for the anointment of Pepin.³⁹ It was probably intended to convey in concrete terms to a Roman audience that the Franks had agreed to

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., p. 321.

³⁶Ibid., p. 310.

³⁷Ibid., p. 315.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 300-302.

³⁹Miller, p. 72.

defend Rome militarily. There is no sign that Charles began to experiment with its legal meaning until 788 when he attempted to interfere in the election of a successor to the Archbishop of Ravenna, John VII.⁴⁰ Before that year, Charles approached the problems of Italy from a different direction.

The indication that Charles experimented with various means to achieve his goals in Italy suggests that the year 781 is indeed an arbitrary stopping point for this study. Aside from the fact that it is convenient for the writer this date marks the end of a period in which a pattern for Frankish Italian policy had been partially established. The open-endedness of the Frankish commitment in Italy can be explained by pointing to the pattern that Charles and his missi had helped to create.

We shall explore some of the features of that pattern in the later chapters of this study, and we shall attempt to indicate the degree to which Frankish policy in Italy changed in accord with changes in Frankish religious concerns.

⁴⁰See below, Chap. VI.

CHAPTER I

THE PERIOD OF FRANKISH NEUTRALITY, 739-741, AND THE PROBLEM OF THE POPULUM PECULIAREM

In 739 papal envoys brought Pope Gregory III's first appeal for help against Liutprand, King of Lombards, to the court of Charles Martel.¹ Two more letters followed in 739 and 740, but no military help came to Rome.² Instead, the Franks debated the course of action they should take in this novel situation which had temporarily raised their sights from more immediate concerns along their ill-defined borders. They listened to the Lombard side of the story, and they examined the papal argument. As is well known, the Franks decided not to involve themselves militarily in the Papal-Lombard dispute.

¹Chronicorum quae dicuntur Fredegarii Scholastici Continuationes, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH, Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum, II (Hanover, 1888), a. 739, ch. 22, pp. 178-179: "Eo etenim tempore bis a Roma sede sancti Petri apostoli beatus papa Gregorius claves venerandi sepulchri cum vincula sancti Petri et muneribus magnis et infinitis legationem quod antea nullis auditus aut visis temporibus fiut, memoratis principi destinavit, eo pacto patrato, ut a partibus imperatoris recederet et Romano consulto praefato principe Carolo sanciret. Ipse itaque princeps mirifico atque magnifico honore ipsam legationem recepit, munera praetiossa contulit atque cum magno praemio cum suis sodalilius missa, Grimone abbati Corbeinsis monasterio et Sigoberto recluso basilicae sancti Dionisii martyris, itemque Roma limina sancti Petri et sancti Paul destinavit."

²Codex Carolinus, ed. W. Gundlach, MGH, Epistolarum, III, (Berlin, 1892), epp. 1-2, pp. 476-479, to be cited hereafter as Codex Carolinus. Also, see Theodor Breysig, Jahrbücher des frankischen Reiches: 714-741; Die Zeit Karl Martels' (Leipzig, 1869), pp. 91-99.

One historian has suggested that Charles Martel tried diplomacy in support of Rome.³ But most scholars have agreed that the Franks remained neutral since their ties with the Lombards were too strong to be broken in 739 or 740.⁴ Charles and Liutprand were related through marriage to daughters of the Duke of Bavaria.⁵ In addition, they had fought together against the Saracens in Provence only a short time before in 739.⁶ As a gesture of goodwill, Charles had sent Pepin to Liutprand's court to be "adopted" by the king.⁷ Frankish reluctance to aid Pope Gregory has been justified, as a result, as the response of a shrewd master of Realpolitik who saw his interests and rejected the proposal of a Papal-Frankish alliance as inadequate compensation for the loss of Liutprand's support.⁸

³Robert Holtzmann, Die Italienpolitik der Merowinger und des Königs Pippin, (2 Aufl; Darmstadt, 1962), p. 36. The author's case rests upon Charlemagne's comment in the Divisio Regnorum of 806 in Capitulares 45, MGH, Leges, Sectio II, I, 129: ". . . up ipsi tres fratres curam et defensionem ecclesiae sancti Petri suscipiant simul, sicut quondam ab avo nostro Karolo . . .". Also, Walter Mohr, Studien zur charakteristik des karolingischen Königtums im 8 Jahrhundert (Saarlouis, 1955), p. 17.

⁴S. Abel and B. Simson, Jahrbücher der deutschen Geschichte (Leipzig, 1889; Ann Arbor, 1960, photocopy), I, 61. Englebert Mühlbacher, Deutsche Geschichte unter den Karolingern (Stuttgart 1896), p. 42. Ludwig Hartmann, Geschichte Italien im Mittelalter (Gotha, 1900), II, Pt. II, 139, 169-171. Thomas Hodgkin, Italy and her Invaders (Oxford, 1899), VII, 58-59.

⁵Hodgkin, VII, 78-79.

⁶Pauli Historia Langobardorum, ed. L. Bethman and C. Waitz, MGH, Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saeculi VI-IX, (Hanover, 1878) Bk VI, ch. 54, p. 183: "Tunc Carolus legatos cum muniribus ad Liutprandum regem mittens, ab eo contra Sarracenos aux illum poposcit; qui nihil moratus cum omni Langobardorum exercitu in eius adiutorium properavit."

⁷Ibid., ch. 53 p. 183: "Circa haec tempora Carolus princeps Francorum Pipinum suum filium ad Liutprandum direxit, ut eius iuxta morem capillum susciperet."

⁸Mühlbacher, p. 42.

Further support for the view that Charles saw the situation in 739 in strictly modern political terms comes from the argument that close ties to Rome could not be formed at the time because the full impact of St. Boniface's reform of the Frankish Church had not been felt.⁹ Consequently, no "organic form" emerged to give substance to the growing sense that a spiritual-political community was developing in the west.¹⁰ As Schnürer observed, "Charles Martel evidently did not realize the importance of the pope's spiritual authority to himself and his house."¹¹ Not until "the sober and calculating" Pepin's reign would this vital fact be discovered.¹²

Neither argument above has come to grips with the role of religious concerns in the formulation of the Frankish response to Pope Gregory, despite the fact that the pope appealed for help primarily upon religious grounds.¹³ The explanation that the Franks were not

⁹Schnürer, I, 445-446. Theodor Schieffer, Winfried-Bonifatius und die christliche Grundlegung Europas (Freiburg, 1954), pp. 125-126.

¹⁰Schnürer, I, 446.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.; also Hodgkin, VII, 95-96.

¹³See below, p. 13. Caspar, Das Papsttum unter Frankischer Herrschaft, p. 12 argues that the reference to Charles as "amatorem filium beati Petris principis" is a formula like that used to request protection of the Exarch for aid in earlier times. His inference from this that the pope prepared to surrender legal rights over Rome to the Franks does not necessarily follow, however. See Ferdinand Gregorovius, History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages, trans. G. W. Hamilton (2nd. rev. ed.; London, 1902), II, 255-256.

ready for close ties with Rome because Boniface's reforms had not been felt in 739 has much to recommend it. But it fails to shed much light on the character of Frankish spiritual life in the interim which Boniface's good work was gaining momentum. While the nature of Frankish religious life in the era of Charles Martel has been studied,¹⁴ no attempt has been made to see the connection between it and the Frankish decision to stay out of Italy in 739 and 740. Perhaps the following discussion can bring into sharper focus the role played by religious issues in the development of the Frankish policy of non-intervention.

In the absence of clear institutional lines between the Frankish Church and the papacy, the members of the Frankish nobility in Charles's following developed a rather simple substitute for papal spiritual authority. In an age when the differences between spiritual and material reality were not sharply drawn, it was a relatively easy matter to call directly upon St. Peter for the spiritual support which was deemed necessary for the success of Frankish ventures against their enemies.¹⁵ There was, in the estimation of one scholar, a well-established "cult of St. Peter" in Francia by the middle of the eighth century, and its members probably included many of Charles's followers.¹⁶

¹⁴For example, by Schieffer; see above, n. 9.

¹⁵Haller, Das Papsttum: Idee und Wirklichkeit, I, 553. Theodor Zwölfer, Sankt Peter, Apostelfürst und Himmelspfortner seine Vereherung bei die Angelsachsen und Franken (Stuttgart, 1929), pp. 36-45.

¹⁶Eugen Ewig, "Der Petrus und Apostlekult in spätromischen und fränkischen Gallien", ZfK, LXXI-LXXII (1960-61), 215-251.

ready for close ties with Rome because Boniface's reforms had not been felt in 739 has much to recommend it. But it fails to shed much light on the character of Frankish spiritual life in the interim which Boniface's good work was gaining momentum. While the nature of Frankish religious life in the era of Charles Martel has been studied,¹⁴ no attempt has been made to see the connection between it and the Frankish decision to stay out of Italy in 739 and 740. Perhaps the following discussion can bring into sharper focus the role played by religious issues in the development of the Frankish policy of non-intervention.

In the absence of clear institutional lines between the Frankish Church and the papacy, the members of the Frankish nobility in Charles's following developed a rather simple substitute for papal spiritual authority. In an age when the differences between spiritual and material reality were not sharply drawn, it was a relatively easy matter to call directly upon St. Peter for the spiritual support which was deemed necessary for the success of Frankish ventures against their enemies.¹⁵ There was, in the estimation of one scholar, a well-established "cult of St. Peter" in Francia by the middle of the eighth century, and its members probably included many of Charles's followers.¹⁶

¹⁴For example, by Schieffer; see above, n. 9.

¹⁵Haller, Das Papsttum: Idee und Wirklichkeit, I, 553. Theodor Zwölfer, Sankt Peter, Apostelfürst und Himmelspfortner seine Vereherung bei die Angelsachsen und Franken (Stuttgart, 1929), pp. 36-45.

¹⁶Eugen Ewig, "Der Petrus und Apostlekult in spätromischen und fränkischen Gallien", ZfK, LXXI-LXXII (1960-61), 215-251.

The hold of St. Peter upon the Frankish mind is suggested by the steady flow of pilgrims who made their way to worship at holy places in Rome.¹⁷ The Arnulfings were among those who paid special devotion to St. Peter, as Gregory III's first letter to Charles indicated.¹⁸ In the effort to discredit Liutprand, Gregory observed that the gifts from Charles's family to provide lights over the tomb of St. Peter had been stolen by the Lombards.¹⁹ It is probable that Charles, though not himself a pilgrim, was concerned about the safety of Rome as a religious center.

But St. Peter's presence was not confined to Rome. In the forests of Hesse, Thuringia, Saxony, and Bavaria the power of St. Peter was demonstrated many times by St. Boniface and his band of missionaries. The dramatic encounter between St. Peter and the pagan gods at Geismar was perhaps proof enough that Peter acted directly in the world, protecting those who defended his cause.²⁰ By his successful challenge to the pagan gods at Geismar, Boniface might have appeared to the Franks as the direct agent of St. Peter.²¹ Since Boniface built the church at

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Codex Carolinus, ep. #1, pp. 476-477.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 477: "Omnia enim luminaria ad ipsius principis apostolorum, et quae a vestris parentibus vel a vobis offerta sunt, ipsi abstulerunt."

²⁰Vita S. Bonifatii Archiepiscopi auctore Willabaldo presbytero, ed. H. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores, II, (Hanover, 1829) c. 8, pp. 343-344. Haller, Das Papsttum, I, 394-395.

²¹Boniface attended Carloman's synod in 742 without official papal approval. He was described as ". . . Bonafatium, qui est missus sancti Petri." See, Concilia Germanicarum, Concilia aevi Karolini ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH, Leges, Sectio III, II (Hannover, 1896), Pars I,

Fritzlar from the wood of the pagan oak in honor of St. Peter, it was not perhaps difficult for the observer to conclude that Boniface turned directly to St. Peter for protection against the pagans. In this direct relationship there was no clear, immediate role assigned to the pope as St. Peter's Vicar.²²

In keeping with the tendency to fuse spiritual and material into a single reality many Franks thus came to see St. Peter as an active agent in the affairs of men. One of Boniface's letters gives an indication that St. Peter had a powerful hold on his mind.²³ But, unlike his converts, and the Franks as well, Boniface retained his hold upon the idea of hierarchical order of the Church. For the time being, however, the spiritual authority of the pope was dimmed by the dramatic nearness of Peter himself.

On one occasion Boniface had to refute a charge by "ignorant men" that the Roman clergy, sanctioned by the pope, engaged in pagan

Ch. I, p. 3: "Et per consilium sacerdotum et optimatum meorum ordinavimus per civitates episcopos et constitutimus super eas archiepiscopum Bonifatium, qui est missus sancti Petri." Also, Schnürer, I, 403, who explains papal hesitation on the grounds that Zachary had reached an understanding with Liutprand.

²²Richard E. Sullivan, "Early Missionary Activity: A Comparative Study of Eastern and Western Methods", Church History, XXIII (1954), 21-29, discusses the long-term educational objectives behind Boniface's "shock tactics" at Geismar. Initially, however, the pagans and Franks as well perhaps took the simple view that St. Peter was a powerful spiritual force who intervened on the side of right.

²³S. Bonifatii et Lulli Epistolae ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, Epistolarum III, (Berlin, 1892), ep. #35, p. 286: "Sic et adhuc deprecor, ut augeas quod cepisti, id est, ut mihi cum auro conscribas epistolas domini mei sancti Petri apostoli ad honorem et reverentiam sanctorum scripturarem ante oculos caralium in predicando, et quia dicta eius, qui me in hoc iter direxit maxime semper in presentia cupiam habere."

practices which Boniface had condemned.²⁴ While St. Peter was above criticism, the Franks were not afraid to challenge the Roman claims to spiritual authority on moral grounds. Boniface confronted the issue squarely in a letter detailing the charges, and he received a direct reply denying these claims that probably helped him to quash the argument.²⁵ In any case, this is a sign that the Franks resisted Boniface's attempts to focus their spiritual life upon the papacy.

Believing themselves to be Christians, in spite of their attitude toward papal spiritual authority, the Franks could claim a share in Boniface's victories over the pagan gods by virtue of the protection Charles Martel gave him. In turn they were strengthened in their belief that St. Peter protected them in their frequent wars with their pagan neighbors.²⁶ Encouraged by military successes against the pagans and against the Saracens as well, Charles Martel's followers, in moments of

²⁴*Ibid.*, ep. #50, p. 301: "Et quia carnales homini idiote, Alamanni, vel Baioarii, vel Francia, si iuxta Romanem urbem aliquid facere viderent ex his peccatis quia nos prohibamus, licitum et concessum a sacerdotibus esse putant et nobis in properium deputant, sibi scandalum vite accipiunt. Sicut adfirmant: se vidisse annis singulis in Romana turbe et iuxta aecclesiam sancti Petri in die vel nocte, quando Kalende Ianurii intrant, paganorum consuetudine chorus ducere per plateas et adclamationes ritu gentilium et cantationes sacrilegas celebrare et mensas illa die vel nocte dapiluis onerare et nullum de domo sua vel ignem vel ferramentum vel aliquid commodi vicino suo praestare vella."

²⁵*Ibid.* ep. #51, p. 304: "De Kalendis vero Ianuariis vel citeris auguriis filacteriis et incantationibus . . . quae gentili more observari dixisti apud beatum Petrum apostolum vel in urbe Roma, haec et nobis et omnibus christianis destestabile et perniciosum eose indicamus"

²⁶Rosenstock-Huessey and J. Wittig, II, 468 trace the major source of the growing Frankish idea of themselves as a chosen people to the victory over the Saracens in 732. See also Ernst Kantorowicz, Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship (Berkeley, 1958), pp. 57-58 who points out the influence of the Old Testament in the development of this opinion among the Franks.

crisis, probably eschewed a complicated doctrinal position for the simple belief that St. Peter was on their side in their Christian struggles against the enemies of the faith. By such means they could secure the essential religious sanctions for their wars which brought new lands and peoples under Frankish rule. It was this simple view of spiritual authority that came into play during the discussion of Italy in 739 and 740, as we shall see below.

If the views of the Franks had been clearly perceived in Rome, perhaps Gregory III would have approached Charles more cautiously in his appeal for help. The papal letters that have survived in the Codex Carolinus were composed apparently with the confident assumption that the spiritual authority of the pope was widely recognized among Charles's followers. Gregory III overestimated his strength.

St. Boniface perhaps is most responsible for raising Gregory's hope that he could depend on Charles for help. In a letter addressed to Gregory in 739, Boniface attributed much of his success as a missionary to the protection given him by Charles Martel.²⁷ Gregory hoped, as he later wrote to Charles, that Charles's love of St. Peter would be greater than his friendship for Liutprand.²⁸ Perhaps it was,

²⁷S. Bonafatii et Lulli Epistolae, ep. #45, p. 293: "Agnoscentes itaque: in sillabis fraternitatis tuae innotuisti tam de Germaniae gentibus, quas sua pietate Deus noster de potestate paganorum liberavit et ad centum milia animas in sinu sanctae matris aecclesiae tuo conamine et Carli principis Francorum aggregare dignatus est"

²⁸Codex Carolinus, ep #2, pp. 478-479: "Coniuro te in Deum vivum et verum et ipsas . . . claves confessionis beati Petri, quas vobis ad rogam direximus, ut non proponas amicitiam regim Langobardorum amori principis apostolorum"

but Charles had to consult with the nobility, and they did not respond favorably to Gregory's argument.

Further cause to hope that the Franks would support Gregory could be found, and perhaps was found, in the knowledge that papal claims to be the spiritual authority of the west had received some support even among the Lombards. The laws of Liutprand, for example, identified the pope as the spiritual authority for, among other things, Liutprand's modification of Lombard marriage practices.²⁹ What Gregory had not considered was that papal claims impressed themselves upon the peoples of the west with varying degrees of intensity.

The need to oppose the iconoclastic policy of the Eastern Emperor Leo III had encouraged Gregory's predecessor to take a bold stand as the spiritual leader of the west at a time when the Frankish attitude on this score was uncertain at best. Gregory II avoided any direct reference to the Franks in a letter to the Emperor Leo III which asserted that

the whole west has its eyes upon our poor person, and though we are unworthy of it, yet they have great confidence in us and in him whose image you would destroy and abolish, the holy Apostle Peter, whom all the kingdoms of the west reverence as a god upon earth.³⁰

²⁹Haller, Das Papsttum, I, 354. Hodgkin, VI, 393-394.

³⁰Migne, Patrologiae Cursus Completus Latina (Paris, 1850), LXXXIX, 520: *Atque utinam Dei munere nobis cintinqat, ut per Martini viam incedamus tametsi ob plebis utilitatem vivere volumus et super vivere, quando quidem Occidens universus ad humilitatem nostram convertit oculos, ac licet tales non simus nos, illi tamen magno pere nobis confidunt, etineum, cujus denuntias te imagem eversurum atque deleturum, sancti scilicet Patri, quen omnia Occidentis regna velut deum terrestrem habent. . . . Totus Occidens sancto principi apostolorum fide fructus offert. Quod si quospiam ad evertendam imagem miseris sancti Petri, vide, protestamur tibi, innocentes*

The last clause cited above might only have been a piece of papal rhetoric aimed at Leo. On the other hand, as we have tried to indicate above, Gregory II's words bore more than a grain of truth. What he assumed was that the western attitude toward St. Peter also included a strong sense of the hierarchy of spiritual authority in which the papacy occupied a central position. Gregory III apparently operated on the same assumption when he sent his appeal to Charles Martel in 739.

As was said above, Gregory's troubles with Liutprand had driven the pope to Charles. His appeal was simply one more episode in a long and complex, three-cornered struggle among the papacy, the Lombards, and the Eastern Emperors that had been in progress since the sixth century.³¹ The steady decline of the real strength of the East reached its culmination in the eighth century during the pontificate of Gregory II.³² At the same time, the Lombards were led by their most able king who was determined to bring Rome under his authority, possibly as a spiritual buttress for his political position. As Hartmann's study of Italian history makes clear, Liutprand's unification policy was always before him no matter what particular set of allies he chose to

sumus asamquine quem fusuri sunt; verum in cervices tuas et in caput tuum ista recident. Gregory II warned that abuses of St. Peter's image would stir the western peoples to war. Gregory III used the same method to rouse the Franks against the Lombards.

³¹Hodgkin, VI., p. 436.

³²Miller, pp. 11, 18-41.

support at any given time.³³ Central Italy became a battleground between Rome and the Lombards as the pope struggled to preserve the independence of the Duchy of Rome. From Liutprand's succession in 712 until 739 the Romans and the Lombards had been at sword's point most of the time.³⁴

Part of Liutprand's drive to the South was aimed at solidifying his hold on the Duchies of Benevento and Spoleto.³⁵ To prevent the buildup of Lombard power so close to Rome, Gregory III had sided with Duke Transamund of Spoleto and Duke Godschalk of Benevento.³⁶ Liutprand moved swiftly into the Roman Duchy in 739 and took four important cities after which he withdrew to Pavia.³⁷ In the meantime, Gregory sent Anastasius and Sergius by sea to Charles Martel.³⁸

The contents of the letter they brought have been lost, but the Continuer of Fredegar tells us that the papal envoys brought the keys to the tomb of St. Peter, a link from his chains, and many gifts.³⁹ "Such things had never been seen or heard of before", according to our

³³Hartmann, Geschichte Italiens im Mittelalter, II, ii, 126.

³⁴Hans von Schubert, Geschichte der christlichen Kirche im "Frühmittelalter" (Tübingen, 1921), p. 253, and Haller, I, 354 note that Liutprand's peaceful overtures toward Rome were stoutly resisted from the fear that the popes might become simply Lombard metropolitans in a Staatskirche.

³⁵H. Pabst, "Geschichte des langobardischen Herzogtums", EDG, II, (1861) 474-484.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 474-476.

³⁷Hodgkin. p. 437.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹See above, fn. 1

source.⁴⁰ In addition, and perhaps equally astonishing, as Caspar has argued, the pope proposed to abandon the imperial cause and to join that of Charles.⁴¹ The chronicler does not discuss the response of the Franks except to note that Frankish envoys returned to Rome with gifts for Gregory.⁴²

The next letter, also sent in 739, following Gundlach's chronology in the Codex Carolinus, introduced a religious argument to justify the political response expected from Charles. Gregory made it clear that he assumed Charles to bear the same love for the pope that he bore for St. Peter.⁴³ Reverence for Peter should lead Charles to obey the papal command to defend God's church and the populum peculiarem, that is, St. Peter's "special" people, the Romans.⁴⁴

Then Gregory set forth the religious transgressions of Liutprand in an attempt to move Charles to action.⁴⁵ The pope asserted

⁴⁰See above, fn. 1.

⁴¹Caspar, Das Papsttum unterfränkischer Herrschaft, p. 14.

⁴²See above, fn. 1. Also, Breysig, p. 99 and fn. 1. Walter Mohr, Studien zur Charakteristic des karolingischen Königtums im 8 Jahrhundert (Saarlouis, 1955), p. 17 suggests, less certainly than Caspar (above fn. 13), that Charles nominally assumed the role of Rome's protector as shown dimly by the dispatch of the Abbot of Corbie and a monk of St. Denis to Rome. No clear chronology, however, can be established for their journey.

⁴³Codex Carolinus, ep. #1, p. 476: ". . . confidentes, te esse amatorem filium beati Petri principis apostolorum et nostrum"

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 476-477: ". . . et quod pro eius reverencia nostri aboedias mandatis ad defendendam ecclesiam et peculiarem populum"

⁴⁵Ibid.

that the Romans no longer could endure the persecution and oppression of the Lombards.⁴⁶ They had interfered with the gifts offered by "you and your parents" to keep lights burning over St. Peter's tomb.⁴⁷ Furthermore, because the Romans had appealed to Charles for help, the Lombards increased their oppression.⁴⁸

Charles's rewards for abandoning his ties with Liutprand were also to be religious. If he provided for the defense of the church, he would earn the love of St. Peter now and in the future and all the people of the West would know of the "pure faith and love" of the Franks in defending Peter, the pope, and the special people.⁴⁹ We should note in this passage that Gregory's discussion of rewards was couched in terms of St. Peter's protection and in the increase of the fame of the Franks for religious devotion. Nothing is said of the papal role in Italian political life; the letter was probably designed to spur the Franks to action, not to answer their questions. Since the pope commanded the Franks to aid St. Peter's special people, his confidence in his role as spiritual leader had apparently not yet been shaken.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., : "Omnia enim luminaria ad ipsius principis apostolorum et quae a vestris parentibus vel a vobis offerata sunt ipsi abstulerunt."

⁴⁸Ibid., : "Et quoniam ad te post Deum confugiam fecimus, propterea nos ipsi Langobardi in opprobrium habent et apprimunt."

⁴⁹Ibid., : ". . . ut cognoscant omnes gentes tuam fidem et puritatem atque amorem, quae habes erga principem apostolorum beatum Petrum et nos evisque peculiarem populum zelando et defendendo"

Between the time the letter above was written and the letter of 740 was dispatched the Franks had the opportunity to consider the Lombard side of the dispute. We do not know exactly what defense the Lombards employed, but, judging from Gregory's letter, they probably presented their case in terms of a lord subduing a rebellious vassal.⁵⁰

Judging by the contents of Gregory's letter of 740, the Franks had raised at least two questions which they had directed to the pope for answers. Historians have paid more attention to the second answer given in this letter which relates to Gregory's support for the Duke of Spoleto. Gregory urged Charles not to believe the Lombard argument that the king merely attempted to bring the rebel dukes to heel.⁵¹

The truth, according to Gregory, was that these dukes were allied with Rome because they could not agree to Liutprand's proposal that they should make war against God's church and his people.⁵² For this reason, a treaty had been made between the pope and the rebel dukes. Gregory's explanation for his policy thus was given a religious justification.

But the Franks had also apparently raised a religious objection

⁵⁰Ibid ep. #2, p. 478: "Non credas, fili, falsidicis suggestionibus . . . eorundem regum. Omni enim false tibi suggerunt, scribentes circumventiones, quod quasi aliquam culpam commissava habeant eis eorum duces, id est Spoletinus et Beneventanus. . . ."

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.: "Quia contra ecclesiam sanctam Dei evisque populum peculiarem non exercitamus, quoniam et pactum cum eis habemus et ex ipsa ecclesia fidem accepimus."

to aiding Rome that was probably expressed to Pope Gregory in the form of a simple question: Why, if right is on your side, does not St. Peter defend you against the Lombard attacks which have reduced you so low? Where earlier Gregory had emphasized the great rewards that would follow from Charles's defense of the Romans, he now indicated, in answer to the Frankish challenge, that St. Peter had ample power to defend his own, but that he preferred to test the faith of those who claimed to follow him.⁵³

Thus, Gregory's appeal was not solely a test of Frankish-Lombard friendship; it was also a challenge to the Frankish idea of spiritual authority as it had developed under the influences of a corrupt Frankish Church, war against the pagans, and the missionary effort. Attached to Gregory's religious argument was the assertion that the Romans were St. Peter's "special people".⁵⁴ Coming at a time when the Franks were beginning to view themselves as specially protected by St. Peter in their wars against the enemies of Christianity, the papal claim must have grated harshly upon the sensibilities of the Frankish nobility. The Franks were prepared by their experience against the pagans to subject the Romans to the same standard that the Franks had used to judge themselves.

⁵³*Ibid.*: "Potens est, . . . fili, ipse princeps apostolorum per a Deo sibi concessam potestatem suam defendere domum et populum peculiarem atque de inimicis dare vindictam, sed fidelium filiorum mentes probat."

⁵⁴See above, fn. 53, for example. W. Mohr, Die Karolingische Reichsidee (Munster, 1962), pp. 27-28, observes that the question of the chosen people was raised in 739 but he did not explore this theme as it related to the formation of Italian policy by the Franks.

If, in fact, the Romans were the special people of St. Peter, they should have his support against the Lombards. But Gregory's description of the Church as "naked" and "desolate" clearly indicated that St. Peter had deserted them.⁵⁵ Beyond the context of simple self-interest, the Franks were perhaps puzzled to understand how the pope could fail in his efforts to defend against Liutprand if the pope were indeed one of the recognized agents of St. Peter. They could conclude that St. Peter's authority did not reside permanently in Rome and that the Romans were not his specially favored people. On the other hand, the Franks had not been deserted by Peter as their recent victories over the Saracens and their success against the pagans seemed to indicate.

From the standpoint of adherence to or departure from the tenets of orthodoxy, the spiritual life of the Franks can be judged impoverished. But seen within the context of their religious zeal and desire for an authority to sanction their views, the Frankish spiritual life of Charles Martel's era flourished. So powerful was their sense of the immediacy of the spiritual world that they had apparently evolved a much simpler notion of their relationship to St. Peter. He was an active spiritual agent who intervened in the affairs of men directly or through agents always on the side of right. Since he had elected to allow the Romans to be defeated by the Lombards, on this particular issue he had indicated that right lay with Liutprand. In 739 and 740 the Franks found not only arguments from self-interest to justify their refusal to intervene but

⁵⁵Codex Carolinus ep. #1, p. 477: "Unde et ecclesia Sancti Petri denudata est et in nimiam dessolacionem redacta."

also powerful spiritual arguments which led them to the same conclusion. Without the religious foundation their political response could not have been adopted. Now, however, they could assert that to have intervened would have been a brash attempt to reverse a decision made by St. Peter.

The first response of the Carolingians to Italian problems was framed within a very narrow context that had served adequately to define the relations of the Franks to the peoples who encroached upon their ill-defined borders. When Gregory III's envoys failed to win Frankish support for the pope against the Lombards, the pope reached the conclusion that their friendship for the Lombards exceeded their love for St. Peter.⁵⁶ Anger and frustration were influential in driving Gregory to the conclusion that expediency alone was the motive of the Frankish refusal to come to Italy. But Gregory's conclusion plainly ignored evidence that the Franks were extremely conscious of the presence and power of St. Peter in their various undertakings. Modern historians have given Gregory's interpretation much support since they have been willing to accept his view that the Franks in the era of Charles Martel were only slightly responsive to spiritual matters as they pursued the revenues of the lands of their conquered victims. But Gregory's conclusion apparently rested upon his inability or unwillingness to imagine that the Franks refused to endorse the papal interpretation of the proper role of St. Peter and the pope in their spiritual life.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, ep. #2, p. 477: ". . . sed ut conspicimus - dum *indultum a vobis* eisdem regibus est mocione faciendi - quod eorum *falsa* suggestio plus quam nostra veritas apud vobis recepta est."

Because the Franks adopted an ambiguous response to his claims, however, Gregory's assumptions were not well founded. He ended by denying them any concern for St. Peter.

But the above discussion has attempted to show that the Franks in the circle of Charles Martel were zealous if unorthodox in their belief in the nearness and reality of the spiritual world described by Christianity. They simply devised their own interpretation of spiritual authority to reflect their immediate experience. While there were many responses to the search for spiritual authority that accompanied the decay of the Frankish Church, the lay aristocracy turned to St. Peter. They found in him an effective judge who gave moral support to their undertakings against the pagans. Direct, simple, and unorthodox, the Frankish position encouraged them to see themselves as God's chosen people. When Pope Gregory asserted the same claim for the Romans, the Franks applied their simple test. When it appeared that the pope had failed to demonstrate his claims for the Romans by victory in battle against the Lombards, the Franks were reinforced in their growing belief that St. Peter had selected them as his special people.

While Boniface worked to organize new churches in the northeast that would acquiesce in the Roman view of spiritual life, he was confronted by a much more difficult problem in Francia. Subjecting the Frankish Church to the claims of Roman authority was no easy task, while erasing the Frankish conception of themselves as God's chosen people proved impossible. To achieve a compromise the successors of Gregory III had to modify their claims that the Romans were the special people of St. Peter and adjust their views to fit the reality of Frankish power and spiritual conceptions. Continuing conflict and efforts to

reconcile differences between the Frankish and Roman views of the proper source and function of spiritual authority were significant factors that influenced the Frankish response to problems in Italy.

CHAPTER II

THE PAPAL-FRANKISH ALLIANCE OF 754 AND THE RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF THE POPULUM PECULIAREM

Frankish interest in Italian political problems faded swiftly after 741. The death of Charles Martel in that year precipitated a struggle among his heirs that absorbed Frankish attention.¹ In addition, the problems of Italy became less intense because Pope Gregory III's successor, Zachary, employed his diplomatic skill to harness Liutprand's piety to the cause of peace between the Lombards and the Duchy of Rome.² The pope successfully negotiated the return of certain cities in 742 and again in 743 he prevailed upon Liutprand to give up a proposed attack upon Ravenna. As we shall note below, it is possible that Zachary sought to advance Lombard as well as papal interests in Bavaria in 743, perhaps because he needed a political bargaining card or because he was persuaded that the more pious Lombard would make a better protector of the Bavarian Church than Pepin.

The death of Liutprand in 744 dashed whatever hopes Zachary

¹Mohr, Studien zur Charakteristik des karolingischen Königtums, 21-41. H. L. Mikoletzky, "Karl Martel und Grifo", Festschrift für Edmund Stengl (Munster und Cologne, 1952), pp. 130-156.

²The following summary of Papal-Lombard relations is taken from Hodgkin, VI, pp. 491-497, VII, pp. 117-118, 165, 163, 171-174.

might have had of a Papal-Lombard alliance. Five years later a strong anti-Roman faction deposed King Ratchis apparently because they disliked his willingness to seek an accommodation with Zachary. Not only did Ratchis back away from an attack upon the city of Perugia at Zachary's request, but also he apparently was influenced by his Roman wife to try to break down some of the cultural barriers that separated the two peoples. In 749, Aistulf, an old enemy of Liutprand, forcibly displaced his brother Ratchis, and a new era of hostility and tension opened between the Lombards and the Romans.

Scorning the policies of his immediate predecessors, Aistulf sought to bring Rome under his jurisdiction by threats of force. In 751 Aistulf captured Ravenna and placed himself in a position to demand tribute from Rome. Meanwhile a new pope, Stephen II, had replaced Zachary. Stephen continued to seek an accord with the Lombards, but his missi repeatedly failed to reach an agreement with Aistulf, except on his own harsh terms.

The Papal-Lombard situation continued to deteriorate and sometime in 753 Stephen turned toward Francia for help. Pepin was now King of the Franks, thanks to Pope Zachary's endorsement of the usurpation of the Merovingian crown in 751. Responding favorably to papal overtures, in 753 Pepin sent missi to Rome bearing an invitation to Stephen to come to Francia. Aistulf was unable to block Stephen's journey, and after a difficult winter crossing of the Alps, the pope arrived at Pepin's court, hoping to persuade the Franks to aid the Romans in their struggle with the Lombards.

In 754, Pepin formed an alliance with Pope Stephen. Following a course that had become clear in 751 with his usurpation of the

Merovingian Crown, Pepin attempted to employ the spiritual power of the papacy to strengthen his hold upon the throne and to assure the succession of his heirs as we shall discuss below. By the papal anointment of 754 Pepin could claim St. Peter's support for his rule and thus undermine rival challenges to his position.

But St. Peter did not grant his support lightly. Instead of passively granting his favor to those upon the side of right in battle, Peter now pressed certain claims of his own upon his followers through his vicar, the pope. Pepin accepted the obligation to defend his patron by supporting Pope Stephen in his dispute with the Lombard king, Aistulf.³ At the placitum following his anointment Pepin attempted to persuade the Franks to share the burden of this obligation. For one long critical moment it appeared that "certain leading Franks, with whom he customarily consulted . . ." would scuttle the alliance by their violent opposition to his policy.⁴

Pepin and Stephen managed to overcome the objections raised by these powerful nobles in Pepin's following. What their objections were and how Pepin and Stephen met them are questions that must be examined. In the process perhaps some light can be cast again upon the influence of religion in the development of the Frankish attitude

³See below, pp. 50-53.

⁴Einhardi Vita Karoli Imperatoris, c. 6, ed. G. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores, II, (Hanover, 1829), p. 446: "Quod prius quidem et a patre eius, Stephano papa supplicante, cum magna difficultate susceptum est, quia quidam e primoribus Francorum cum quibus consultare solebat, adio voluntate eius renisi sunt, ut, se regem desurtures domumque redituros libra voce proclamerunt: susceptum est tamen tunc contra Haistulfum regem et celerime completum."

toward their political role in Italy.

Einhard's account, from which we learn of the threatened defection of some of Pepin's followers, provides no clues to answer either question raised above. He does stress, however, that the most serious threat to the implementation of the alliance came, not from rivals, but from within the ranks of Pepin's trusted advisers.⁵ Since Einhard spoke frankly of Charlemagne's problems with rivals later in this source we have no reason to think that the author tried to hide Pepin's troubles with challengers to his rule.⁶ Pepin, we must assume, would not have "customarily" sought the counsel of his enemies, leading to the conclusion that Einhard referred to men who had cast their lot with Pepin in his struggles to control the kingdom. Thus, they should not have opposed Pepin's attempt to increase his power since their own position was made more secure in the process.

Einhard's description of these men as "leading Franks" (primoribus Francorum) suggests that they were men of some years who had built their position over the course of time. Since they opposed Stephen, they clearly did not belong to the circle of bishops active in reforming the Frankish Church. They were probably older members of the lay nobility who perhaps had been young men in the service of Charles Martel and had participated in the discussions of

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid. c. 20, p. 454: "Erat ei filius nomine Pippinus, ex **C**oncubina editus, cuius inter caeteros facere mentionem distuli; **f**acie quidem pulcher, sed gibbo deformis. Is cum pater, bello **C**ontra Hunos suscepto, in Baivaria hyemaret, aegritudine simulata, **C**um quibusdam e primoribus Francorum, qui eum vana regni **P**romissione inlexerant, adversus patrem coniuravit."

Italy in 739 and 740.

During those discussions, we may assume that they had joined in the rejection of Pope Gregory's appeal for help. In 754 they were again resisting the papacy. The difference was that in 754 they were won over to Pepin's position. What factors persuaded them to abandon their opposition? To discover an answer to this question we shall have to review the religious and political changes that affected the attitude toward Rome of the Frankish nobility who supported Pepin between 741 and 754. In addition, we must examine the famous letter from St. Peter which, in part, reiterates an argument probably first advanced at the placitum of 754 to overcome the objections based on religious grounds raised by his followers.

In the preceding chapter, it was suggested that the Frankish nobles assigned a vital religious and political role to St. Peter. They believed that he entered directly into the affairs of the world either through his agents, like Boniface, or by siding with the just cause in battle. Great success on the battlefield gave weight to the idea that the Franks were St. Peter's chosen people. These beliefs, drawn from one order of experience, were applied to a unique situation in 739, and the Franks consequently rejected Gregory III's appeal for aid based on the claim that it was the Franks' duty to protect the Romans who were Peter's "special" people.

The reformation of the Frankish Church went far to restore the spiritual authority of the pope through whom St. Peter made known his will.⁷ Pepin in particular responded favorably to this development

⁷Haller, HZ, CVIII (1912), 42 and fn. 1.

partly from a desire to harness papal spiritual authority to his political needs and also probably from a genuine personal piety that had been reinforced during his education at St. Denis.⁸ In 743, as we shall see below, Pepin and Pope Zachary pursued opposing political policies in Bavaria. Once again the test of victory was advanced as an infallible indication of St. Peter's support. But Pepin chose to follow a more moderate course regarding the role of papal spiritual authority.

Political conditions in 743 were quite different from those of 739. The death of Charles Martel in 741 encouraged the peoples he had subjected to Frankish rule to break away.⁹ In Bavaria, Duke Odilo tried to withdraw the duchy from Frankish influence.¹⁰ Pepin and Carloman, lacking their father's great prestige among the Frankish nobility, could not tolerate Odilo's policy. The loss of Bavaria would have been too severe a blow to their already tenuous position, thereby strengthening rivals, like their half-brother Grifo, and fostering further political instability in Francia.

In addition to feeding the fires of internal strife, the loss of Bavaria would have been an invitation to Liutprand to extend Lombard power in the duchy. Bavaria had been the scene of rivalry between the two powers before, until Liutprand and Charles Martel apparently had

⁸Schieffer, Winfrid - Bonafatius und die Christliche Grundlegung Europas, pp. 260-261.

⁹Hodgkin, VII, 99-102. Nikoletzky, 130-137.

¹⁰Hodgkin, VII, 99.

agreed to cooperate rather than fight in the area.¹¹ Now that Charles was dead, it is possible that Liutprand felt fewer qualms about further meddling in Bavaria. This seems particularly likely since Liutprand's southward expansion had stopped short of incorporating the Duchy of Rome. Pope Zachary's diplomacy, which entailed abandoning papal support for the rebel dukes of Benevento and Spoleto, had removed any pretext for further Lombard action against Rome.¹²

Although concrete proof is lacking, it is quite possible that Pope Zachary's attempt to prevent the Frankish invasion of Bavaria in 743 was intended to support Lombard aspirations there.¹³ If the Lombards could be turned northward, the Duchy of Rome would be more certain of remaining independent. Thus, it is conceivable that Liutprand found Zachary willing to intervene on his behalf against the Franks. An additional concern of the pope was perhaps the fear that the lands of the Bavarian Church would be exploited as the lands of the Frankish Church had been by Charles Martel.¹⁴ Thus it was that the papal missus Sergius came to prevent the Franks, who were poised to strike across the Lech River, from making war on Odilo.¹⁵

¹¹Pauli Historia Langobardorum, VI, c. 53-54, p. 183; See above, Chap. I., p. 7, fn. 7, 8, for texts.

¹²Vita Zacharias, ed. L. Duchesne, Liber Pontificalis, I, (2nd ed.: Paris, 1955), pp. 427-428 ". . . et pacem cum ducato Romano ipse rex in viginti confermavit annos."

¹³Schnürrer, I, 403, suggests that Zachary "had come to an understanding with the Lombards" in part because he rejected the plan of Popes Gregory II and III to form a political union with the northern countries which presupposed an alliance against the East.

¹⁴Hodgkin, VII, 103.

¹⁵Annales Mettenses, a. 743, ed. G. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores,

The Franks ignored the papal missus and routed the Bavarians in a surprise attack.¹⁶ Sergius was taken prisoner in the course of the fighting and was eventually brought before Pepin. Instead of challenging the pope's authority to speak on behalf of St. Peter, Pepin followed a more moderate course. Sergius's credentials as a papal missus were denied on the ground that since St. Peter had given victory to the Franks, he must have supported their cause.¹⁷ If Sergius had been a legitimate papal missus, he would have endorsed the Frankish campaign since the pope spoke the will of St. Peter. By following this line of argument, Pepin avoided a repetition of the debate of 739 and 740 in which it appeared that St. Peter had actually deserted the papal cause.

While personal convictions might have played a large part in Pepin's response, practical considerations probably had their place in his decision to avoid a confrontation over papal spiritual authority. Since Zachary was already on good terms with Liutprand, Pepin had no

I, (Hanover, 1826), p. 328: "Captus est autem in eodem proelio Sergius presbyter, missus domni Zachariae papa, qui pridie quam bellum committeretur, ab Agdilione Karlomanno et Pippino directus fuerat, falsoque ex acutoritate domni apostolici bellum interdixerat, et quasi ex praecepto supradicti pontificis Francos a Baiocriis discedere persuaserat."

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid. : "Cui Pippinus princeps sedato pectore dixit: 'O domine Sergi, modo cognovimus, quice non probaris esse sanctus Petrus apostolus, nec legationem illius ex veritate geris. Dixisti enim nobis hesternae die, quod dominus apostolicus ex auctoritate sancti Petri et sua nostram institiam de Baioariis contradixisset. Et nos diximus tibi, quod nec sanctus Petrus nec dominus apostolus te istram legationem misisset dicere Idcirco autem scias, quia si sanctus Petrus cognovisset, quod nostra institia non fuisset, hodie in isto bello nobis adiutorium non praestitisset. Nunc vero certus esto, per intercessionem beati Petri apostolorum principis et per iudicium Dei, quod subire non distulimus Baioariam Baioariosque ad Francorum imperium pertinere.'"

desire to take a stand that would have driven the pope even closer to the Lombards. Liutprand's piety, already evident to Pope Zachary, would have contrasted sharply with Pepin's impiety, making closer ties with the Lombards an attractive alternative for the pope. Furthermore, tact was necessary since a direct challenge to papal authority might have alienated the leaders of the reform party in Francia. Restoring papal spiritual authority over the Frankish Church was one of Boniface's major goals as is well known. Pepin has troubles enough without creating more.

Thus, for political as well as religious reasons Pepin chose to temper his claim that St. Peter had given proof of his support for the Franks by giving them the victory over Odilo. It was probably easier for Pepin to take this moderate course because one element was missing in 743 that had affected the situation in 739 and 740. Since the focus was on Bavaria, not Italy, the problem of Roman and Frankish claims to be the chosen people never came up. The tensions produced in 739 and 740 by conflicting papal and Frankish views on this issue had sharpened Frankish resistance to the papal appeal. The absence of these tensions in 743, combined with the other conditions described above, enabled Pepin to steer a middle course.

Despite the inauspicious encounter in Bavaria, Pepin drew closer to Rome. To encourage their support for the reform movement, Zachary wrote to Pepin and Carloman in 745 urging them to support Boniface.¹⁸

¹⁸S. Bonifatii et Lulli Epistolae, ep. #61, p. 326: ". . . nulla gens ante vestrum conspectum stabit, sed corruent ante faciem nestram omnes paganae gentes, et eritis victores"

Their support would be rewarded, according to the pope, by further victories over the pagans.¹⁹ A further sign that Zachary sought ways to increase respect for the spiritual authority of the papacy, especially among the nobility, is found in the responsum of 747.²⁰ There he recognized that one source of Frankish resistance to papal authority was rooted in Frankish pride.²¹ Zachary praised Pepin for his cooperation and pointed out that there was "no need to blush", that is, to feel ashamed, in turning to Rome for spiritual guidance.²² He followed this observation with the argument that proper observance of the faith was essential if the Franks expected to continue to receive God's favor in their battles against the pagans.²³ Furthermore, this goal could only be achieved if the Franks sought wise religious counsel.²⁴

At the same time Zachary made a small concession to the tendency of the Franks to identify themselves with the chosen people of

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #3, pp. 479-487.

²¹Ibid. p. 480: " . . . scriptum est enim . . . 'Accedite ad eum, et illuminamini, et vultus vestri non erubescunt.' "

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., : "Principes et seculares homines atque bellatores convenit curam habere et sollicitudinem contra inimicorum astutiam et provinciae defensionem, praesulibus vero sacerdotibus adque Dei servis pertinet salutaribus consiliis et oracionibus vacare, ut, nobis orantibus et illis bellantibus, Deo presstante, provincia salva persistat, fiatque volis in salutem laudem et mercedem perpetuam. "

²⁴Ibid.

the Old Testament.²⁵ He asserted that there was a distinct similarity between Pepin and Moses insofar as both girded themselves for war by prayers.²⁶ Perhaps no more than papal flattery, these remarks were probably aimed at a familiar theme among the Franks. However, the pope was very cautious in his praise; he did not refer to Pepin as a "new Moses". Perhaps the pope avoided a direct endorsement of the Frankish view of themselves as a chosen people because it would have run counter to the Roman contention that the Romans were specially chosen by St. Peter. But, again, this issue did not emerge to hinder the advancement of the reform effort.

By establishing himself as a leader of the drive to reform the Frankish Church, Pepin enhanced his ability to resist his rivals.²⁷ Throughout the period from 741 until 753, Pepin's half-brother, Grifo, led a rival faction against both Pepin and Carloman.²⁸ When all efforts to placate him failed, Grifo was confined, only to be released in 747 after Carloman's withdrawal to monastic life. Grifo promptly

²⁵Ibid. : "Etnim vobis in vera confessione et simplici corde ad Deum accedentibus, sicut Moyeses ille amicus Dei orando pugnabat et Jesu Nave, cum populo Israel bella Domino preliando vincebat, ita vos agere oportet, karissimih mihi, ut sitis adiutores populo vestro orando et bonis actibus inherendo"

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Schieffer, pp. 245-258, notes that Pepin upset Boniface's plan to bring the Frankish Church under papal authority through a system of metropolitan bishops responsible to Rome. Pepin did not support this system, and in 746 he involved himself directly in Church affairs, a move which Zachary did not challenge as his responsum of 747 (Codex Carolinus, ep. #3, pp. 479-487) indicates. Boniface's influence gradually subsided and Frankish influences replaced Anglo-Saxon ones. See also, Schnürer, I, 408-411.

²⁸See above, fn. 1 for detailed treatments of the problem of Grifo.

renewed his effort to gain a larger share of the kingdom. At the same time, Pepin ignored Carloman's heirs and attempted to wield power over the whole kingdom, thus creating still another faction among the nobles, according to one interpretation.²⁹

In 750 Pepin sought to end these challenges to his authority by seeking support from Pope Zachary for the deposition of the Merovingian king, Childeric, and the transfer of the royal title to Pepin's family.³⁰ Papal authority, supported by the Frankish bishops in Pepin's following, was called upon to compensate for Pepin's lack of proper blood ties to the Merovingian house. Zachary, who was having trouble restraining the Lombard king, wished apparently to foster good relations with the Franks and consequently he gave his judgment in favor of Pepin's cause.³¹ However, even Zachary's endorsement and the anointment of Pepin by Boniface were not enough

²⁹Karl Rodenberg, Pippin, Karlmann, und Papst Stephen II (Berlin, 1923), pp. 11-18.

³⁰Annales Regni Francorum, a. 749, ed. F. Kurze, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, VI, (Hanover, 1895), p. 8.: "Burghardus Wirzelburgensis episcopus et Folradus capellanus missi fuerunt ad Zachariam papam, interrogando de regibus in Francia, qui illis temporibus non habentes regalem potestatem, si bene fuisset an non. Et Zacharius papa mendavit Pippino, ut melius esset illum regem vocari, qui potestatem haberet, quam illum, qui sine regali potestate manebat; ut non conturbaretur ordo, per auctoritatem apostolicam iussit Pippinum regem fieri."

³¹Vita Stephanus II, LP, I, 456, fn. 9.

to bring Grifo to heel.³² In addition to securing recognition of the legitimacy of his rule, Pepin had to consider steps to insure that his heirs would not be denied their place upon the Frankish throne.³³ It was perhaps with these domestic political problems in mind that Pepin began to turn to Stephen, possibly in early 753 or perhaps even in late 752; the chronology is obscure.

Meanwhile, Pope Stephen had problems of his own. Aistulf had recovered control of the southern duchies, and in 751 he had taken Ravenna.³⁴ Pope Stephen tried to negotiate a peace with the Lombards, but he failed.³⁵ Four months after concluding a forty

³²Annales Regni Francorum a. 748, pp. 7-8: ". . . Grifonem vero partibus Niustriæ misit et dedit ei XII comitatos. Inde iterum Grifo fugiens Wasconiam petit et ad Waifarum ducem Aquitaniorum pervenit." From this refuge Grifo apparently continued to cause Pepin trouble until, in 753, Ibid, p. 10: ". . . nuntiatum est ei (Pepin), quod Grifo, qui in Wasconiam fugitus est, germanus eius, occisus fuisset." Mohr, Studien zur Charakteristic des karolingischen Königtums, pp. 34-35.

³³Holtzmann, pp. 6-18, contends that Pepin possessed a keen sense of history that led him to seek a renewal of Frankish overlordship over the Lombards and also to follow a path to the imperial title. But, following Haller, HZ, CVIII (1912), 52, Pepin had enough problems at home without seeking more abroad. Lintzel's view in HZ, CLXI (1940), 33-41, that Pepin sought war in Italy to distract attention from opponents at home is hardly satisfactory in view of the nobility's opposition almost from the first in 753. We follow L. Levillain, "L'avenement de la dynastie carolingienne et les origines de l'état pontifical," BEC, XCIV (1933), 269 in stressing the succession problem.

³⁴Hodgkin, VII, 163.

³⁵Vita Stephani II, L. P., I, 441: ". . . (Stephanus), tertio apostolatus ordinationis duae mense, disponens suum germanum . . . Paulum diaconum, atque Ambrosium primicerium, plurimus cum muneribus ad eodem Langobardorum Aistulfum regem ob pacis ordinandum atque confirmandum foedera misit. Qui praelati viri ad eum coniugentes, impertitis muneribus, quasi facilius eadem pro re apud eum impetrantes, in quadraginta annorum spatia pacti foedus cum eo confirmaverunt."

year peace with Aistulf, the Lombard king demanded that the Romans pay him tribute.³⁶ Unwilling to thus compromise the independence of the Duchy of Rome, Stephen tried to negotiate once more but his missi were not received by Aistulf.³⁷ When Eastern help proved ineffectual, Stephen prepared to turn to Pepin, addressing a letter to the king which a Frankish pilgrim carried to Francia.³⁸ Pepin, as was noted above, was prepared by now to respond favorably.

The king sent missi to Rome apparently with an invitation to Stephen to come to Francia.³⁹ These missi returned with a letter for

³⁶Ibid. "At vero isdem protervus Langobardorum rex, antiqui hostis invasus versutia, ipsa soldera pacis post poene IIII menses; in perjurii incidens reatu, disruptit; multas iamfato sanctissimo viro vel cuncto populo Romano ingerens contumelias varias illi minas dirigens. Cupiens quippe, Deo sibi contrario, cunctam hanc provinciam invadere, honerosum tributum huius Romane urbis inhabitantibus adhibere nitebatur; per unumquemque scilicet caput singulos auri solidos annue auferre iniabat et sui jurisdictione civitatem hanc Romanam vel subiacentes ei castra subdere indignanter asserebat."

³⁷Ibid. pp. 441-442: "Cernens vero isdem sanctissimus papa valide praefati regis perniciose imminere servitia, magnopere ad se accersitis venerabilium monasteriorum sanctorum Vincentii et Benedicti religiosus abbatibus, sua vice eidem crudelissimo misit regi, obnix per eos postulans pacis foedera et quietum utrarumque partium populi Dei obtinere confirmandum. Quos numpe suscipiens, omnino contemptu habens, eorum sprexit monita et ad suae animae detrimentum sine effectu causae confusos ad propria absolsit monasteria, obtestans eos minime ad praefatum sanctissimum papa declinari."

³⁸Ibid. p. 442-444: ". . . coniunxit Roma Iohannis, imperialis silentarius, . . . (Stephanus) cernens prasertim et ab imperiale potentia nullum esse subveniendi auxilium; tunc quemadmodum praecessores eius . . . Carolo . . . direxerunt, petentes sibi subveniri propter oppressiones ac invasiones . . . clam per quendam peregrinum suas misit litteras Pippino"

³⁹Codex Carolinus, epp. #4, 5, pp. 487-488.

Pepin, and for the nobles, after which Pepin sent another invitation.⁴⁰
Meanwhile, Stephen prepared to negotiate once more with Aistulf.
Franchish missi arrived before these negotiations and accompanied
St **e**p~~h~~en to Pavia, and when Aistulf continued to reject Stephen's terms,
es **C**orted the pope to Francia.⁴¹

Frankish opinion regarding Pepin's desire to form closer ties
wi**th** Rome apparently lagged behind that of the king. In 753 Stephen
se**nt** a letter to all the leaders of the Frankish people in which he warn-
ed **th**at they would have to give an account of their behavior before
God's heavenly tribunal.⁴² Therefore, he urged them not to block Pepin
in **h**is effort to act usefully on behalf of his protector, St. Peter.⁴³
St **e**p~~h~~en's letter to the nobility indicated that Pepin had, in a perhaps

⁴⁰Vita Stephani, II, p. 444: "Ad hunc etiam nec cessavit
dirigens ut suos hic Roma ipse Francorum rex mitteret missos, per
quos ad se eum accersire fecisset. Et dum valide ab eodem
Langobardorum rege civitates et provincia ista Romanorum
apprimerentur, subite missus conirenxit iamfati regis, Francorum,
nomine Trottigangus abbas, per quem misit in responsis omnem
voluntatem ac petitionem praedicti . . . papae adimplere."

⁴¹Ibid. p. 445: ". . . direxit ad eundem blasphemum regem
suum missum pro sua et qui cum eo ituri erant indemnitatem; ipsoque
reverso, extemplo et missi iamfati Pippini . . . coniunxerunt, id
est Rodigangus episcopus et Autcharius dux, quatenus praedictum
. . . papam, iuxta quod petendo miserat, ad suum Francie regem
deducerunt"

⁴²Codex Carolinus, ep. #5, p. 488 : ". . . idcirco
Obseciamus atque coniuramus vestram sapientissimam caritatem
per Deum et per dominum nostrum Iesum Christum et diem futuri
examinis, in quo omnew pro nostri facinoribus erimus reddituri
rationem ante tribunal aeterni vidicis"

⁴³Ibid.: ". . . ut nulla interponatur occasio, ut non sitis
adultores **ab** obtinendum filium nostrum a Deo servatum, Pippinum,
excellentissimum regem, pro perficienda utilitate fautoris vestri,
bea~~ti~~ apotolorum principis Petri"

general way, decided to help the pope. That a general letter admonishing all the nobles to cooperate was necessary does not seem to suggest that Stephen was confident of the submission of the Franks to papal spiritual authority. Pope Zachary might have softened Frankish opposition to the Romans, but more work remained to be done.

Naturally, Pepin's enemies among the nobles would have opposed any move that would increase Pepin's hold upon the Frankish throne. Historians have also argued for a pro-Lombard faction who recalled the good old days of Charles and Liutprand and hoped to continue the Frankish-Lombard alliance.⁴⁴ Mixed with this group perhaps were men who were hostile to Rome and thus chose to support the Lombards. Where did Pepin's dissident advisers fit into this picture?

It is possible that Pepin's advisers rejected his policy because they read the political situation differently from Pepin. The death of Grifo, which came possibly in the midst of Pepin's initial invitation to Stephen to come to Francia, might have persuaded these men to challenge Pepin's decision to seek further aid from Rome. Grifo, far more than the heirs of Carloman, had posed the greater threat to Pepin's rule. Old enough to rule and the son of Charles Martel, Grifo seemed to have more supporters than the faction supposedly advancing the claims of Carloman's young heir.⁴⁵ Grifo's death in 753

⁴⁴Levillain, BEC, XCIV (1933), 291-93.

⁴⁵We hear nothing of Carloman's heirs in the sources, while Grifo's career receives considerable attention. See above fn. 1.

was a fortunate event, in the assessment of Pepin's advisers, because his supporters, having no strong candidate to substitute, could be counted on to rally to Pepin. All this could be achieved without the help of Stephen II.

From the point of view of Pepin's advisers, with the disintegration of the stronger faction the need for Pope Stephen's support disappeared. From Pepin's point of view, however, the problem of securing the succession for his heirs remained, and papal spiritual authority could be helpful in this process. Thus, he was able to ignore the complaint that the price for papal support was too high to pay.

Furthermore, it has been argued that Aistulf had begun to fish in Francia's troubled waters.⁴⁶ Grifo apparently had been headed for Italy before his death.⁴⁷ In addition, Pepin and Aistulf shared none of the common concerns that had drawn Liutprand and Charles Martel together. Since the Lombard-Frankish alliance had been more a matter of the ties between two strong leaders reinforced by the Saracen threat, the deaths of Liutprand and Charles Martel plus the easing of the Saracen danger had greatly weakened the bonds between the two kingdoms. If Pepin knew of Lombard efforts to interfere in Bavaria in some way in 743, then the king had even less reason to be on friendly terms with Aistulf. These changes in Frankish-Lombard relations made it easier for Pepin to look favorably upon the papal cause.

⁴⁶Rodenberg, pp. 13-18.

⁴⁷Ibid.

According to one opinion, Pepin's advisers returned to the fold and abandoned their violent objections when Carloman appeared at the 754 placitum to speak against Frankish intervention.⁴⁸ In the account given by the papal biographer, Aistulf forced the abbot of Monte Cassino to dispatch Carloman to Francia.⁴⁹ Carloman was supposed to assure the Franks that no harm could come to Rome from the Lombard protectorate.⁵⁰ Rodenberg has argued that Carloman was only too willing to cooperate in this task mainly because he saw an opportunity to give support for his family whom Pepin had ignored or even to make an attempt to return to power himself.⁵¹ That Carloman was a threat to Pepin, according to Rodenberg, is seen in the fact that Pepin refused to allow him to return to Italy.⁵²

By urging Carloman to return to Francia, Aistulf perhaps had hoped to exploit or to create tensions between the brothers. Instead,

⁴⁸Joseph Calmette, Charlemagne sa vie et son oeuvre (Paris, 1945), pp. 27-28.

⁴⁹Vita Stephani II, p. 448: "Interea . . . Aistulfus Carlomannum . . . a monasterio beati Benedicti . . . diabolicis eum suasionibus suadens, Franciae provinciam ad obiciendum atque adversandum cause redemptionis sancte Dei ecclesiae reipublice Romanorum direxit."

⁵⁰Ibid.: "Dunque illuc coniunxisset, nitebatur omnino et vehementius decertabat sanctae Dei ecclesiae causas subvertere, iuxta quod a praefate nec dicendo Aistulfo tyranno fuerat directus."

⁵¹Rodenberg, p. 51.

⁵²Ibid., p. 52. However, Pepin might simply have been trying to avoid reprisals against Carloman from Aistulf.

it is argued, the Frankish nobility joined solidly behind Pepin.⁵³ This change in the political situation certainly must have encouraged Pepin's advisers to reconsider their favorable view of the Lombards.

However, the possibility remains that part of their opposition was based on their hostility to Rome rather than a liking for the Lombards. The chief source of this hostility probably derived from ethnic differences like those that had accentuated the conflict between the papacy and the Lombards.⁵⁴ But those differences, in their Frankish setting, had been cast in a religious mold, and in 739 they had flared up in the dispute over the chosen people.⁵⁵ Between 741 and 754 this problem had remained buried since it was to the advantage of both Pepin and the popes to avoid it. The question remained unsettled in 754. When the focus of attention once more centered on Italy the door was opened to raise the issue.

We do not know how the problem of the chosen people came up at the placitum of 754. However, since the Franks were being called upon to defend the Roman people against the Lombards it seems reasonable to assume that the issue was raised. Furthermore, there are signs in the later letter from St. Peter, read to the Franks

⁵³Calmette, pp. 27-28.

⁵⁴Mohr, Studien, pp. 27-29 takes a position very close to this view in discussing the conflict between the Franks and the Romans over the chosen people. However, he does not attempt to relate this issue to the events of the 754 placitum although he does assert that Pope Stephen made "special" people of the Franks. On the Roman view of the Lombards as "barbarians" see Miller, pp. 15-16, and below Chapter III.

⁵⁵See above, Chap. I.

assembled at the Mayfield of 756, that the issue had been raised and resolved.⁵⁶ Historians have assumed that the Franks asked hard political questions at the placitum: What right did the pope have to Ravenna? Why should the Franks fight a war from which they stood to gain little or nothing?⁵⁷ We have no evidence to indicate how Pepin answered them. But scholars have generally ignored the possibility that religious concerns also affected the formation of political policy at the 754 placitum.

The dissenters among Pepin's advisers perhaps asked why they should defend the Romans since St. Peter had withdrawn his support. In addition to their political objections this religious question must have seemed appropriate to ask. In a kind of spiritual pride, akin to nationalism, perhaps these nobles objected to rescuing a people who perhaps looked upon the Franks as no less barbarous than the Lombards. Obviously, if the Romans were St. Peter's special people he would not abandon them. It remained for Pope Stephen and Pepin to find an answer to these objections which had been a stumbling block for Gregory III in 739.

The papal argument used in 754 against Pepin's dissident advisers can be at least partially reconstructed from the famous letter

⁵⁶Codex Carolinus ep. #10, pp. 501-503, possibly written by Abbott Warnachar, a Frank, (Haller, HZ, CVIII (1912), 60, fn. 4.) or equally possible, the product of Stephen's grasp of Frankish, religious psychology acquired in his long sojourn among the Franks.

⁵⁷For example, Haller, HZ, CVIII (1912), 52, although he implies, and we agree, that questions of "right" regarding territory were not too carefully examined. See Miller, pp. 73-74 for a discussion of the vagueness of Stephen's territorial claims, and below, Chap. III.

from St. Peter which was used to mobilize the Franks for a second campaign against Aistulf in 756. Stephen not only reminded the Franks in 756 that St. Peter spoke through his vicar but also that the Frankish people had received special recognition from him - St. Peter had made the Franks his "adopted sons".⁵⁸ They had been adopted for the specific purpose of defending St. Peter's relics and the Roman people from contamination by the Lombards. The Franks had promised to undertake this task and, as a result, were now viewed as a "special people" themselves.⁵⁹ Since they were the "adopted sons" of St. Peter, who placed them before all other people, they now shared with the Romans the position of St. Peter's "special people".⁶⁰ The Romans and the Franks had become brothers by the special act of St. Peter.

Stephen does not describe the process by which the Franks became St. Peter's adopted sons. However, the anointment of Pepin

⁵⁸Codex Carolinus, ep. #10, p. 501: ". . . et per me omnis Dei Catholica et apostolica Romana ecclesia, capud omnium ecclesiarum Dei, ipsius redemptoris nostri sanguine super firmam fundata Petram, adque eisdem almae ecclesiae Stephanus presul. . . ."; ibid.: "Ideoque ego, apostolus Dei Petrus, qui nos adoptinos habeo filios, ad defendendum, de manibus adversariorum hanc Romanam civitatem et populum mihi a Deo commissum seu et domum. . . ."

⁵⁹Ibid. p. 502: "Nequaquam aliter teneatis, amantissimi, sed pro certo confidite: per memet ipsum tamquam in carne coram vobis vivus adsistens per hanc adortacionem validis constringimus atque abligamus adiuracionilius, quia secundum promissionem, quam ab eodem domino Deo et redemptori nostri accepimus, peculiare inter omnes gentes vos omnes Francorum populas habemus." and Ibid. p. 503: "Declaratum quippe est, quod super omnes gentes, quae sub celo sunt, vestra Francorum gens prona mihi, apostolo Dei Paetro, extitit. . . ."

⁶⁰Mohr, Studien, p. 28.

and his sons probably provided the basis for Stephen's argument. At the placitum of 754, faced by the threatened desertion of some of the leading Franks, it became necessary to explain the importance of the anointment for the whole Frankish people. By arguing that the anointment of Pepin and his family meant that St. Peter had adopted all the Franks as his sons, Stephen conceded the Frankish claim that they too were Peter's chosen people without abandoning the Roman claim to the same honor.

By recognizing the Frankish claim in this way, Stephen made the older and simpler view of St. Peter as a just judge who gave victory to the side in the right invalid insofar as it applied to Rome. In place of this simpler position, Stephen asserted that the Franks were recognized as sons of St. Peter because they had promised to defend his tomb against the Lombards. They now had a duty to aid the Romans since they were, by Peter's action, equal spiritual partners. Again and again in this letter Stephen called upon the Franks to aid their brothers, the Romans, driving home the point that the anointment of Pepin had radically altered the position of the Franks in relation to the Romans.⁶¹

The concession of equality was not mere rhetoric on the part of Stephen. The Franks had secured something from the Romans that

⁶¹Codex Carolinus, ep. #10, p. 502: "Prestate ergo populo meo Romano, mihi a Deo commissio in hac vita, fratribus vestris, Domino cooperante, presidia totis vestris viribus. . . ."; ibid. ". . . et populum meum peculiarem, fratres vestros Romanos"; ibid. p. 503: "Liberate eam et eius Romanum populum, fratres vestros. . . ."; ibid.: "Subvenite populo meo Romano, fratribus vestris. . . ."

the Lombards, in spite of their piety and devotion to papal spiritual leadership, had never been able to wring from the popes.⁶² The stigma of being "barbarians" was now removed from the Franks. To those Franks who had resisted Pepin's decision to ally with Rome on grounds that the Franks were being asked to sacrifice much in return for very little, Pepin could now argue that the alliance meant far more than simply securing the succession for his heirs. The whole Frankish people had been acknowledged by St. Peter as his chosen people. The anointment of Pepin created a wholly new relationship between the Franks and spiritual reality. At the center of that relationship were the ideas of Franco-Roman equality and their role as Peter's chosen people. Thus, the way was paved at the placitum of 754 for the Franks to take an active role in the political problems of Italy by a spiritual compromise in which Frankish religious views regarding their role as a chosen people were reconciled with similar Roman claims.

The compromise devised by Stephen was adequate to meet the religious objections of Pepin's followers. The influence of the suspicion that Aistulf might be preparing to meddle in Frankish affairs was a further incentive for them to abandon their complaints about the alliance. The combined effect of religious and political influences gave Pepin the support he needed to begin to meet his obligation to St. Peter and his vicar.

The changes in Frankish spiritual life since 741 had created a new atmosphere within which Stephen was able to encourage a change

⁶²See above, fn. 54.

in the Frankish attitude toward a political role in Italy. From the point of view of the Frankish nobility the most effective arguments for their support of papal spiritual authority had perhaps been that used by Zachary.⁶³ The pope had equated continued military success with proper observance of the faith and able religious counsel.⁶⁴ With this foundation firmly laid Stephen had a better chance to clear away a final obstacle to an alliance between the Romans and the Franks. By his spiritual authority he recognized the Frankish claim to be a chosen people and fused it with the argument that the Franks had a religious duty to perform in Italy. Although a campaign against Aistulf certainly would be a political act, Stephen justified it in religious terms. Once the argument over the chosen people had been resolved to the satisfaction of Pepin's powerful advisers, the way was cleared for a Frankish role in Italy.

However, the adoption of the Franks by St. Peter was at best a tenuous bond between Rome and Francia. Pepin still had to move cautiously apparently in order to appease a pro-Lombard faction who were unconvinced that war with Aistulf was necessary.⁶⁵ Aside from the argument that Aistulf did not represent a clear political threat, the pro-Lombard faction perhaps pointed out the dangers of making war upon Christians. St. Peter gave his support against pagan enemies, but whether he would support the Franks against the Christian Lombards

⁶³See above, fn. 23.

⁶⁴See above, fn. 23.

⁶⁵Levillain, BEC, XCIV (1933), 269.

was an open question.⁶⁶ While Pepin and his followers carried the day at the placitum of 754, they would pursue a cautious policy with respect to the Papal-Lombard quarrel. Caution was the keynote of Pepin's Italian policy from 754 until his death in 768.

⁶⁶Vita Stephani II, L. P., I, 449:

CHAPTER III

EQUILIBRIUM IN ITALY

For the remainder of his reign, Pepin's central objective in Italy was to secure a workable, lasting peace. Peace in Italy was essential because problems closer to home, in Saxony and Aquitaine, absorbed Frankish military resources, and because the Frankish nobility's readiness to fight a third war beyond the Alps was questionable at best. Since Pepin's plan for the succession of his heirs hinged upon papal support, his stake in the alliance with Rome was perhaps greater than that of the rest of the nobility. Aided by time, the spiritual bonds between Rome and Francia grew stronger;¹ but, meanwhile, Italy remained the personal problem of Pepin.

Between 754 and 768, as we shall see in the following discussion, Pepin's political role in Italy passed through three stages. From 754 until the opening of the second war against Aistulf in 756,² Pepin

¹Mohr, Die Karolingische Reichsidee; p. 27-29, discusses Pope Paul's development of Pope Stephen II's theme that the Franks were a "holy people". See also, Miller, pp. 126-132 where it is made clear that Paul tried to insure the continuity of the alliance by cultivating Pepin's sons. Paul's success can be measured by the new direction taken by Charles in 774, see below, Chap. V. Hadrian observed of Charles, Codex Carolinus, ep #62, p. 590: "Nunquam enim credimus . . . poterit tuam firmissimam excellentiam segregare a caritate et amore, quam a cunabulis tuis beate Petro principi apostolorum habuistis"

²Following Levillain's chronology in BEC, XCIV, (1933), 225-295.

sought a quick diplomatic solution to the papal-Lombard territorial dispute. From the summer of 755 until May of 756 was the most critical period for the survival of the Papal-Frankish alliance. Following the crucial initial phase, Pepin attempted to dictate a territorial settlement after the second war in 756 and thereby remove further causes for war in Italy. This second stage lasted only a short time. Changes in papal and Lombard leadership prepared the way for the final phase of the development of Pepin's role in Italy. From 757 until his death in 768 Pepin relied upon diplomacy to head off potential clashes between the new pope, Paul I, and the new Lombard king, Desiderius.

The first campaign against Aistulf in 755 was prefaced by a year-long effort to negotiate a settlement.³ Three separate attempts were made in order to persuade Aistulf to come to terms with Pope Stephen.⁴ However, they accomplished nothing except perhaps to encourage Aistulf to think that the Franks would not fight in Italy.

Aistulf refused to negotiate perhaps because he interpreted Pepin's overtures as a sign of timidity. It is also possible that Aistulf expected Pepin's opponents to hamstring any serious attempt actually to make war in Italy. The delay in order to negotiate might have been

³Ibid. pp. 270-272, attributes these efforts to pressure from a pro-Lombard faction.

⁴Vita Stephani II, p. 449: "Porro . . . Pippinus . . . direxit suos missos Aistulfo . . . propter pacis foedera et proprietatis sanctae Dei ecclesie reipublice restituenda iura; atque bis et tertio, iuxta sepefati . . . pape ammonitionem, eum deprecatus est et plura ei pollicitus est munera ut tantummodo pacifice propria restitueret propriis. Sed ille peccato imminente oboedire distulit."

read as a sign that Pepin planned to abandon Stephen now that the Frankish king had obtained papal support for his political aspirations. This reasoning was misguided, if in fact, Aistulf employed it in assessing Pepin's motives.

As Pepin must have realized, the pope could take back what he had given in 754 since he had tied the promise of aid to the anointment of Pepin and his heirs.⁵ The succession of his heirs depended upon the fulfillment of his obligation, although the precise nature of that obligation was not defined very clearly as we shall see. Furthermore, a vow to defend his patron, St. Peter, could not be taken lightly. The Frankish king had committed himself and his heirs as well to a political role in Italy that involved, in 754, the effort to bring Aistulf to terms with Rome. For the time being, at least, Pepin also had the support of his own following among the Frankish nobility.

The Lombard king had miscalculated in his stubborn resistance. In 755 Pepin gathered his army and marched into Italy. After a short siege of Pavia, Aistulf surrendered. The peace terms apparently included a promise from Aistulf to restore cities taken from Rome.⁶

⁵Clausula de Pippini in Francorum Regem Consecratione, RHGF, V, 9-10: ". . . Postea per manus ejusdem Stephani Pontificis die uno in beatorum praedictorum Martyrum Dionysii, rustici et Eleutherii Ecelesia . . . in Regem et Patricium, una cum praedictis filiis Carolo et Carlomano in nomine sanctae Trinitatis unctus et benedictus est."

⁶Annales Mettenses, a. 754, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, X, (Hanover, 1905), pp. 46: "His minus Haistulfus perterritus per manus Pentapolim, Narnia et Cecanum et reliqua debita, quae Sancto Petro deleverat missus domini Pippini regis per vadium reddidit et XXX milia solidorum Pippini tribuit." Haller, Das Papsttum I, 425-426, argues that Pepin returned far less than promised at Quierzy, which caused Stephen to oppose the peace and to continue to press earlier claims, but the author's assumption of a precise territorial definition before the invasion cannot be established. The terms were vaguely defined, judging by the renewal of the Papal-Lombard dispute that followed the 755 settlement.

It has been argued convincingly that Pepin did not make a formal, legal "donation" of territory to the papacy.⁷ Stephen did not seek lands in the Exarchate of Ravenna based on Pepin's right of conquest since that would have been an admission that the lands in question had belonged originally to Aistulf.⁸ In 755 and again in 756 the territorial dispute was settled "by two tri-partite treaties in which Aistulf promised to restore land to the republic and Pepin guaranteed Aistulf's performance of that obligation."⁹

Exactly what cities were claimed is a matter of debate created in part by Pepin's apparent lack of concern for such details. In addition, since Stephen perhaps did not specify a particular number of cities, the absence of limits beyond claiming old imperial lands in general left room for further debate.¹⁰ In 755 Pepin apparently expected Aistulf and Stephen to work out these details; but, as Stephen soon complained, these negotiations produced no results.¹¹

Leaving Fulrad behind, perhaps as a reminder of the Frankish interest in the peace settlement, Pepin and his troops withdrew from Italy. But Aistulf perhaps continued to hope that the pro-Lombard

⁷Miller, 73-74.

⁸Ibid., p. 73.

⁹Ibid., pp. 73-74.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 74.

¹¹Codex Carolinus, ep. #7, p. 491: "Tradidimus enim corpus et animam nostram in magnis laboribus in tam spatiosam et longinquam provintiam; valde fisi in vestra fide, per Dei nutum illuc profecti sumus, adflicti in nive et frigore, aestu et aquarum inundatione atque validis fluminibus et atrocissimis montibus seu diversis periculis."

Franks would come to his aid by preventing Pepin from any further attempt to intervene in the dispute with Rome. To strengthen that faction, Aistulf dispatched missi to Pepin in order to present the Lombard side in the territorial dispute.¹²

The introduction of Lombard counter-claims ended Pepin's hope for a simple, speedy settlement of the Papal-Lombard dispute. From the point of view of the Franks, perhaps especially those who had opposed the alliance from the beginning, the attempt to drag Pepin into the process of settling disputed claims carried the Franks far beyond the commitment to defend Rome. The very narrowest interpretation of the promise of 754 left no room for Pepin to serve as a referee in Italy.

Frankish reluctance to take a larger role in Italian affairs might have been reinforced, at the same time, by Aistulf's attempts to demonstrate the validity of his claims upon disputed territories. The details of these negotiations are not available for study, but one could guess that the Lombards supplied documents or else advanced claims based on the right of conquest exercised against imperial rather than papal lands.

Pope Stephen supplied no evidence based upon charters or other documents to support his claims, as far as we can tell from his letters to Pepin. Perhaps he had no proof, or perhaps he did not want Pepin

¹²Ibid., ep. #6, p. 490: ". . . et nequaquam iam ipsius nequissimi regis nel eius indicum seductuosa verba et illusionis mendatia credatis. Ecce enim patefactum est eius mendatium, et nequaquam ulterius vires credendi habere possit; sed magis, cognito eius iniquo ingenio et iniqua voluntate, eius fraudantur insidie."

to arbitrate the dispute. The pope simply expected and demanded Pepin's unqualified support of the papacy against Aistulf on religious grounds.¹³

Aistulf's attempts to undermine Stephen's alliance with Pepin came dangerously close to bearing fruit.¹⁴ While Pepin saw the alliance with Stephen as permanent, his opponents were entitled to view the whole affair as Pepin's part of a quid pro quo which the invasion and peace treaty had fulfilled. Pepin, taking a wider view than this, still seemed inclined to regard his obligation to Rome strictly as a military duty. As long as Rome was safe, it was up to the pope to establish with Aistulf papal claims to obscure cities in the Exarchate or Pentapolis.¹⁵

This attitude was reflected in Stephen's second letter of 755. After stressing the rewards due to one who would defend the Church and St. Peter, and after reminding Pepin that God had put him on the Frankish throne to exalt the Church, Stephen insisted that he had

¹³Ibid., p. 490: "Et quod semel beato Petro polliciti estis et per donationem vestram manu firmatam, pro mercede anime vestre beato Petro reddere et contradere festinate." Haller, HZ, CVIII (1912), 59-60.

¹⁴Ibid., ep. #7, p. 491: "Videns namque suam deceptionem iniquus Haistolfus rex, cum suis Deo destructis indicibus per blandos sermones et suasiones atque sacramenta inburserunt prudentiam vestram, et plus illis falsa dicentibus quam nobis veritatem asserentibus credidistis." Ibid., p. 492: "'Melius non vovare, quam vovere et votum non reddere.'"

¹⁵Ibid., p. 492: ". . . depredationes seu devastationes in civitatibus et locis Petri facere sua imperatione nec cessavit nec cessat." This charge might have been at least partially effective in mustering support among the Franks who took the position of Pepin.

spared no effort to reach an agreement with Aistulf.¹⁶ Papal missi had endured every hardship to no avail.¹⁷ Since the pope had con- signed all the causes of St. Peter to Pepin's care, Stephen now called for help.¹⁸ Obviously, "defense" in the papal use of the term implied much more than simply military assistance.¹⁹ Pepin's work was not finished; Aistulf had given up nothing to Rome.²⁰

While Stephen boldly asserted that Pepin had committed him- self to regard all causes of St. Peter as his own, the pope seemed to fear that Pepin had thrown his support to Aistulf.²¹ It is possible that Pepin was under great pressure either to support Aistulf or at least to remain neutral. Literally interpreted Pepin as patricius Romanorum, was only obliged to supply military help against overt attacks on Rome. The Franks had done this and could not now be held responsible for

¹⁶Ibid., p. 491: "Ideo namque excellentissimam et (a) Deo protectam bonitatem vestram super turbes populorum et multarum gentium isdem rex regum et dominus dominantium salvos vos instituit, ut per vos sancta Dei ecclesia exaltetur," and above fn. 11.

¹⁷See above, fn. 11.

¹⁸Codex Carolinus, ep. #7, p. 491: "Etenim, dum vestris mellifluis obtutibus presentati sumus, omnes causas principis apostolorum in vestris manibus commendavimus"

¹⁹Stephen now added the task of securing "justice" to that of defense. Ibid.: ". . . et vos beato Petro polliciti estis eius iustitiam exigere et defensionem sanctae Dei ecclesiae procurare"

²⁰Ibid., p. 492: "Etenim, sicut primitus christianitati vestrae ediximus, iniquus Haistulfus rex, . . . omnia, quae per sacramentum beato Petro per vestros missos restituenda promisit, irrita fecit et nec unius palma terrae spatium beato Petro reddere voluit."

²¹See above, fn. 18, 14.

defending papal territorial claims that perhaps now seemed doubtful in the light of Aistulf's case.

Pepin's vow to St. Peter, narrowly interpreted, was not really broken if he chose to reject the view that the Franks had agreed to defend all causes of St. Peter. The argument is perhaps too ingenious, but Stephen might have been faced with it. In answer, he pointed out that such hair-splitting would not stand up before God on the day when the Franks were called to account for their behavior.²² Rather than rely on "ingenious excuses", Pepin should speedily and without impediment effect the return of cities and territories with their hostages and captives that he had promised.²³ Stephen's request implied that the Franks should launch another war against Aistulf although perhaps the pope hoped that an order of compliance from Pepin would be sufficient to bring Aistulf into line.

Pepin faced a painful dilemma. On the one hand, if he failed to take a larger view of his role in the Papal-Lombard dispute, Pope Stephen threatened his soul with perdition. On the other hand, if Pepin tried to go to Stephen's aid he risked the rebellion of the pro-Lombard faction and the possible loss of his throne since his reluctant followers had probably been influenced by the Lombard case

²²Codex Carolinus, ep. #7, p. 493: "Coniuro vos excellentissimi et a Deo protecte filii, per Deum omnipotentem . . . atque per tremendum iudicii diem, ubi omnes constricti ad reddendum de nostris factis rationem adsistere habemus, ubi nulla est ingeniosa excusatio: velociter et sine ullo impedimento, quod beato Petro promisitis per donationem vestram, civitates et loca atque omnes obsides et captivos beato Petro reddite vel omnia, quae ipsa donatio continet"

²³Ibid.

against papal claims, perhaps originally accepted on faith.

The Lombard claims apparently brought an element of precision to the discussion of territory that had been lacking during negotiations with the pope in 754. If Stephen had made vague claims to old imperial lands, that is, Roman Italy, then perhaps Aistulf countered these claims when it came to details by defending his hold on certain cities long held by the Lombards. It is possible that the lack of precision in papal claims cast doubt upon the validity of those claims. If so, it was perhaps easier for the opponents of further and broader participation in the quarrel to make a case against Rome as the source of Italy's, and Pepin's, troubles.

If Aistulf had been more patient he might have destroyed the Papal-Frankish alliance. But he was unwilling to continue the stalemate. Why he abandoned his attempts to undermine Stephen at Pepin's court cannot be determined. Fulrad's return to Francia with a report on the papal case might have been influential in Aistulf's abrupt change of tactics,²⁴ but no certain cause can be established.

The attack on Rome swept the territorial dispute into the background. The situation now required Pepin to perform his military duty as Patricius Romanorum. Even a very narrow view of Pepin's obligation could not readily deny that the Franks were now required to act. Rome had been under siege for fifty-five days when Stephen

²⁴Ibid., ep. #6, p. 490: "De omnibus tribulationibus nostris, quas passi sumus nunc denuo patimur, Deo auxiliante Fulradus filius (noster), vester consiliarius, et eius socii enarrant vobis." Ibid., ep. #7, p. 493: He was followed by a papal missus, Wilharium,¹¹ . . . qui vobis omnia de nostra tribulatione et causa beati Petri proprio ore enarret"

dispatched three letters to Francia early in February, 756.²⁵

The first was directed to Pepin. In it Stephen related the plight of Rome created by Aistulf's breach of faith. The Lombards were outside the gates of Rome. While they waited for the Romans to open their gates, Aistulf and his allies from Beneventum indiscriminately burned homes and churches outside the walls, abused monks and committed many murders.²⁶ Reports of Lombard abuses had come to Stephen and he passed them on to Pepin. In Stephen's view the Lombards were worse than any pagan people who had ever threatened Rome.²⁷ If the Franks had had any compunctions about war against the Lombards because they were Christians, then Stephen's account should have removed them.

Stephen urged Pepin to hurry to Rome's aid. He warned the king not to desert the Romans or God would desert him.²⁸ Pepin should not reject the Romans if he did not want God to reject him

²⁵Ibid., epp. #8, 9, 10, pp. 494-503.

²⁶Ibid., ep. #8, p. 495: "Et omnia extra urbem praedia longe lateque ferro et igne consumperunt, domos omnes conburentes poene ad fundamenta destruxerunt. Ecclesias Dei incenderunt et sacratissimus sanctorum imagines in ignem proitientes suis gladiis consumpserunt Servos Dei monachos, qui pro offitio divino in monasteriis morabantur . . . et sanctaemuniales feminas et reclusas . . . abstrahentes cum magna crudelitate polluerunt Et tanta mala in hac Romana provintia fecerunt, quanta certe nec pagane gentes aliquando perpetrare sunt, quia etiam, si dici potest, et ipsi lapides nostras dissolutiones videntes, ululant vobiscum."

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., p. 496: "Non nos derelinquas: sic non te derelinquat Dominus in omnibus tuis actibus et operibus."

when the king invoked his aid.²⁹ By separating himself from Rome, Pepin cut himself off from the hope of eternal life, according to Stephen.³⁰ On the other hand, by speedily coming to the aid of the Romans who had committed themselves to his protection, Pepin would not only insure the safety of his soul but also would receive many rewards in the form of victories over all the barbarous peoples by the intercession of St. Peter.³¹

The second letter perhaps sent with the first, was addressed to Pepin, Charles, and Carloman plus bishops, abbots, monks, dukes, counts and the whole Frankish army.³² According to the heading the letter was sent from Stephen and all the bishops, priests, deacons, cartularii, counts, tribunes, and all the people and soldiers of Rome. Except for the different heading, this letter relates substantially the same information and arguments for Frankish aid.

²⁹Ibid.: "Non nos spernas: sic non te spernat Dominus invocantem eius potentiam."

³⁰Ibid.: "Ne elonges a nobis auxilium tuum, . . .: sic non elonget Dominus auxilium et suum proteccionem a te tuaque gente . . ."

³¹Ibid., pp. 497-498: ". . . et ad liberandum nos de manibus Langobardorum, inimicorum nostorum, nimis festinanter occurrere digneris, ut, fructum afferens copiosum, victor, intercedente beato Petro, super omnes barbaras nationes efficiaris et vitam aeternam possideas."

³²Ibid., ep. #9, pp. 498-500: "Dominus excellentissimus Pippino, Carolo et Carlomanno, tribus regibus et nostris Romanorum Patriciis, seu omnibus episcopis, abbatibus, presbyteris et monachis seu gloriosis ducibus, comitibus nel cuncto exercitui regni et provincie Francorum Stephanus papa, et omnes episcopi, presbiteri, diacones seu duces, cartularii comites, tribiuntes et universus populus et exercitus Romanorum, omnes in afflictione positi."

The third letter was from St. Peter, speaking to the Franks directly through his vicar. We have already discussed the significance of the argument presented here for the placitum of 754.³³ Now, in 756, Stephen attempted to recall that argument in a broader appeal for help. His opening remarks constituted a brief lesson in the relationship between Peter and the Roman Church and the rest of the Churches of the West. Peter had been appointed by Christ himself to be the rock upon which the church was built and he sent his blessing through Pope Stephen and the Romans committed to his care to all the Franks.³⁴ That the Franks needed such elementary reminders is perhaps an excellent indication of the tenuous thread that bound Pepin to Rome.

Stephen swiftly retreated into the background and let Peter speak for himself.³⁵ After reiterating his importance to the faith, Peter asserted that he had adopted the Franks as sons to defend his city, his people, and his relics buried there from the hands of Rome's adversaries.³⁶ He now called upon the Franks to defend

³³See above, Chap. II.

³⁴Codex Carolinus, ep. #10, p. 501: "Petrus vocatus apostolicus a Jesu Christi, Dei vivi filio, - qui, ante omni secula cum patre regnans in unitate spiritus sanctus . . . et per me omnis Dei catholica et apostolica Romana ecclesia, capud omnium ecclesiarum Dei, ipsius redemptoris nostri sanguine super firmam fundata Petram, adque eisdem almae ecclesiae Stephanus presul: Gracia, pax et virtus ad eruendam eandem sanctam Dei ecclesiam et eius Romanum populum mihi commissum de manibus persequentium plenius ministratur a domino Deo nostro vobis"

³⁵*Ibid.*: "Ego Petrus apostolus"

³⁶See above, Chap. II.

these things from contamination by the Lombards.³⁷ They had promised to do so and he had recognized them as superior to all other peoples of the west as a result.³⁸

Following the theme of the other two letters, Peter condemned the Lombards as perjurers and violators of the precepts of Scripture.³⁹ The very roots of the faith were about to be torn away by the Lombards.⁴⁰ God had made Rome the center of the faith, and now that center was in danger of contamination by the impious Lombards.⁴¹ The Roman fear of "contamination" by the Lombards appeared far too real to be treated simply as a vehicle by which the popes planned to win independence from the East, as Ullmann has argued.⁴² On the contrary, as Duchesne asserted, cultural tensions led the Romans to seek an escape from the Lombards in this period.⁴³ Further vivid signs of

³⁷See above, Chap. II.

³⁸See above, Chap. II.

³⁹Codex Carolinus, ep. #10, p. 502: ". . . ab ipsa Langobardorum gente, qui tanto flagito periurii rei existunt et transgressores divinarum scripturarum probantur."

⁴⁰Ibid.: "Currere, currere . . . currere et subvenite, antequam fons vivus, unde sciati et renati estis, arescat; antequam ipsa modica stilla de flagrantissima flamma remana, ex qua vestram lucem cognovistis, extinguatur"

⁴¹Ibid. "Et defendite adque liberate eam sub nimia festinatione de manibus persequentium Langobardorum, ne, quod absit, corpus meum, quod pro domino Jesu Christo tormenta perpassum est, et domus mea, ubi per Dei presecionem requiescit, ab eis contaminetur"

⁴²Growth of Papal Government, pp. 50-53.

⁴³Duchesne, Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes, p. 26.

this basic Roman concern are found in Stephen's letter protesting Charles's marriage to Desiderata, and, more dimly perhaps, in the papal biographer's delight in the success of Roman efforts to make the Spoletans over into the Roman image which was momentarily done in 773.⁴⁴

Peter forcefully expressed another theme that had also been part of the other two letters. If the Franks cut themselves off from Rome they cut themselves off from heaven as well.⁴⁵ Furthermore, unless the Romans were liberated Peter could not promise his help when someday Frankish lands might also be invaded.⁴⁶ The Franks might suffer the same fate as the Israelites if they allowed Rome to fall into Lombard hands.⁴⁷ God would scatter the Franks just as he had done to the Hebrews. The chosen people could be punished as well as aided by God.

But Peter had commended his people into Frankish care because, before all other peoples under heaven, the Franks were first.

⁴⁴See below, Chaps. IV, V.

⁴⁵Codex Carolinus, ep. #10, p. 502: "Prestate ergo populo meo Romano, . . . Domino cooperante, presidia totis vestris viribus, ut ego, Petrus vocatus Dei apostolus, in hac vita et in die futuris examinis vobis alterna impendens patrocinia . . . atque praemia aeternae retributionis et infinita paradisi gaudia vobis pollicens ad vicem tribuam"

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 503: "Liberate eam . . . et nequaquam invadi permittatis a gente Langobardorum: sic non sint invase provincie et possessiones vestre a gentibus, quas ignoratis."

⁴⁷Ibid.: "et ne dispergantur . . . populum Romanum: sic non vos dispergat et proitiat Dominus, sicut Israheliticus populus dispersus est."

Peter had always given his aid to the Franks and would continue to do so if they freed his city. The rewards were great if the Franks gave their help, just as the risks were many if they chose to ignore St. Peter himself.

Now that it was clear that the Franks were being called to defend the seat of Christendom against corruption by men as evil as the worst pagans, rather than applying force to resolve a territorial quarrel, no further delay occurred. The second phase of Pepin's involvement in Italy began as the Franks marched against Aistulf, and after another short siege, arranged a new treaty with the Lombard king. He surrendered a third of his treasure and had to submit to Pepin as his overlord.⁴⁸

More important, Pepin attempted to guarantee the return of certain territories to the papacy by leaving Fulrad and a contingent of Frankish troops in Rome. Apparently not all the cities claimed by Stephen were returned, judging from his letter in 757.⁴⁹ However, those that were restored had to give hostages and keys to the city to Fulrad who turned them over to Stephen.⁵⁰ Pepin obviously took a stronger hand in the dispute by attempting to impose a final territorial settlement on both parties. On what basis he determined the

⁴⁸Fredegarii Continuationes, c. 38, p. 185; Vita Stephani II, p. 454.

⁴⁹Codex Carolinus, ep. #11, p. 505: ". . . ut civitas reliquas, quae sub unius domini ditione erant connexe atque constitutae fines, territoria, etiam loca et saltora in integro matri tuae spiritali . . . restituere praecipiat" See Miller, p. 86.

⁵⁰Vita Stephani II, p. 454. In all, twenty-four cities were thus turned over to the papacy.

cities to be restored to Rome we cannot say. We only know that Stephen considered the territorial issue still open.⁵¹

With the situation thus brought under control, Pepin returned to Francia without visiting Rome. The following year, 757, Pepin received disturbing news from Pope Stephen. King Aistulf had died in a fall from a horse, and a succession dispute had developed.⁵² Stephen had thrown his support to Desiderius, a Tuscan noble, who opposed the attempt of the former king, Ratchis, to abandon his monastic vows and return to power.⁵³ Since Desiderius seemed to lack a wide following among the Lombards, he turned to Stephen for help, holding out the promise of the recovery of the remaining cities, as Stephen phrased it.⁵⁴

Stephen seized the opportunity to re-open the territorial question. At the same time, Stephen tried hard to involve Pepin in questions that went far beyond the Papal-Lombard dispute. In the

⁵¹See above, fn. 49.

⁵²Codex Carolinus, ep. #11, p. 505-506.

⁵³Ibid., p. 506: "Nunc autem Dei providentia per manus sui principis apostolorum beati Petri simulet per tuum fortissimum brachium, precurrente industria Deo amabilis viri Folradi . . . ordinatus est rex super gentem Langobardorum Desiderius, vir mitissimus." Vita Stephani II, p. 455.

⁵⁴Vita Stephani II, p. 455: "Ad haec . . . Desiderius obnixè praelatum beatissimum pontificem deprecatus est sibi auxilium, quatenus ipse regalem valeret adsumere dignitatem, spondens iureiurando, omnem praelati beatissimi pontificis adimplere voluntatem; insuper et reipublice se redditurum professus est, civitates quae remanoerant, immo et copia daturus munera." Codex Carolinus, ep. #11, p. 506: "Et in praesentia ipsius Folradi sub iureiurando pollicitus est restituendum beato Petro civitates reliquas"

same letter describing Desiderius's promise, Stephen observed that he had secured the submission of the Dukes of Beneventum and Spoleto to Pepin.⁵⁵ Perhaps the second invasion of Lombardy had persuaded Stephen that the Franks had accepted the papal view that their promise to the pope meant the acceptance of all the causes of St. Peter.

Had Stephen lived long enough he would have discovered that Pepin's interests in Italy did not stray from the Papal-Lombard dispute. Papal troubles in Spoleto would not be taken up, even tentatively, until 770 by Charlemagne.⁵⁶ Beneventum escaped serious Frankish attention until 786 when Pope Hadrian I's earlier efforts to stir Charles to action finally bore fruit.⁵⁷ Pepin allowed Desiderius to restore Lombard control over both in 758.⁵⁸

On the contrary, instead of broadening his interests in Italy, Pepin tried to narrow them even further by imposing strict limits on

⁵⁵Codex Carolinus, ep. #11, p. 506: "Et tam ipsi Spoletini quam que etiam Beneventani omnes se commendare per vos a Deo servate excellentiae tuae cupiunt et imminent anhelantius in hoc deprecandum bonitatem tuam." Chronicon Salernitanum, c. 9. p. 475: "Tamen in initio suo regni Spoletini et Beneventani rebelles fuerunt"

⁵⁶See below, Chap. IV.

⁵⁷See below, Chap. VI, p.

⁵⁸Codex Carolinus, ep. #17, p. 515: "Sicque Spoletinus et Beneventanus, qui se sub vestra a Deo servata potestate contulerunt ad magnam spretum regni vestri desolavit atque ferro et igne eorundem ducatum, loca et civitates devastavit." Desiderius brought Duke Arichis to power in Benevento. See H. Belting, "Studien zur beneventanischen Hof im achte Jahrhundert," Dumbarton Oaks Papers, XVI (1962), 143-145.

the amount of military support the Franks would provide for papal claims against the Lombards.⁵⁹ From 757 until his death in 768, Pepin's Italian policy, or rather his policy in the Papal-Lombard dispute, attempted to preserve a balance of power through diplomacy. The deaths of the headstrong Aistulf and the no less aggressive Stephen contributed a large part to the success of Pepin's peace-keeping efforts since their places were taken by men for whom moderation was either more natural or necessary.

King Desiderius knew from the vivid memory of Aistulf's fate that the Lombards could not expect to force their will upon Rome. Whether or not he thought in constitutional terms, Pepin had, in effect, guaranteed the independence of a papal "state" in Italy. Perhaps, however, Pepin had a less clearly defined idea of that state than has been assumed. In any case, Desiderius proved far more responsive to Pepin's diplomacy than had Aistulf.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, Pepin urged Pope Paul to take a less intransigent attitude toward Desiderius.⁶¹ Although the Lombard king had failed

⁵⁹Codex Carolinus, ep. #21, p. 523: "Et eis denique a bovis directis syllabis nos certos et in omnibus reddidistis: vos paratos addesse in adiutorium et defensionem sanctae Dei ecclesiae, in quibus necessitatis ingruerit." Martens, p. 90.

⁶⁰Miller, pp. 103-104.

⁶¹Codex Carolinus, ep. #38, p. 551: Quod quidem si ipse excellentissimus vir in vera dilectione et fide, quam vestrae excellentiae et sanctae Dei Romane ecclesiae spopondit permanserit, utique et nos in caritate firma et stabili pace cum eo permansuri erimus, observantes illud dominice praeceptionis documentum: 'Beati pacifici, quoniam filii Dei vocabantur.'" Miller, p. 97.

to restore the cities he had promised to Stephen for Roman support, Pepin refused to allow this new quarrel to lead to war. Paul had to be persuaded to back away from these claims. Eventually the pope allowed Desiderius to escape from his promise since the papacy could not count on Frankish arms to back its claims.⁶² By 760, Pepin's attempts to settle this dispute had borne fruit. Desiderius had agreed to return some lands involved in the treaties with Aistulf but not returned in exchange for his release from the promise to Stephen in 757,⁶³

When the Lombard king then delayed the return of these new lands, Frankish missi were called upon to obtain a settlement. Between 761 and 765 repeated attempts to secure Desiderius's cooperation were made until finally the dispute seems to have been settled to papal satisfaction.⁶⁴ Peace between Rome and Pavia had been assured for the time being.

As was indicated above, Pepin's determination to preserve peace in Italy was encouraged by at least two conditions. First, the continued presence of a pro-Lombard faction imposed limits on Pepin's ability to make war in Italy on Paul's behalf. Except for a clear threat to the safety of Rome, Pepin could not be sure that the Franks would agree to a war in Italy. Paul's recognition of this fact of life made the chances for peace much greater after 757. Secondly,

⁶²Ibid., pp. 29. Miller, p. 98.

⁶³Miller, p. 98.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 101.

Pepin's military resources were absorbed along the borders of his kingdom from 757 until 767. After 763 Pepin's resources were especially strained in the all-out attempt to subdue Aquitaine.

Pepin sought an equilibrium between the papacy and the Lombards in order to free himself for activities closer to home that the Franks regarded as more important. Perhaps then it was necessity, more than a willingness to serve as an "officer" in the papal "state", as some have argued, that required Pepin to take the role of referee in the Papal-Lombard dispute. His followers' attitude toward the alliance with Rome, though not precisely clear, appears to have advanced enough to have accepted this burden.

Although Pepin was shrewd enough, and also pious enough, to turn to Rome for support for his political position as king, he did not develop a larger role for the papacy in Frankish affairs, Frankish border wars were fought without reference to Roman spiritual support. Apparently the old standard still operated in that the Franks called directly upon St. Peter for his support. The spiritual resources of the Frankish Church supplied an adequate prop to these ventures.

Thus, the papacy did not suggest itself as a useful ally in other ventures in which Pepin found himself involved. The campaign in Aquitaine, for example, was begun and carried out without reference to Rome's potential spiritual aid. Just as Pepin restricted his interests in Italy to the Papal-Lombard conflict, so he also defined a narrow role for Rome in Frankish affairs. Though Pepin did not try to avoid his commitment to Rome, he did not see it in the same broad terms that Stephen and Paul had suggested. Nor did the Frankish

king carry the Papal-Frankish alliance into other areas of his domestic policy. Further changes were necessary before the Papal-Frankish alliance acquired a wider significance in the political life of the Franks.

CHAPTER IV

THE DESTRUCTION OF PEPIN'S EQUILIBRIUM POLICY

767 - 772

The deaths of Pope Paul in 767 and King Pepin in 768 were severe blows to the precarious equilibrium that had been created between the Franks and the papacy on one side, and the Lombards on the other. A disputed succession to the papal office and factional strife surrounding the compromise pope, Stephen III, threatened to tear Rome to pieces after 767. Not until the election of Pope Hadrian I in 772 did the situation appear to return to normal. Conditions in Francia after 768 were only slightly less turbulent. The rivalry between Pepin's heirs, Charles and Carlomann, brought the divided kingdom to the edge of civil war, hampering efforts to cope with the new situation that arose in Italy. Not until Carlomann's death in late 771 could the Franks again present a united front to the problems facing them.

In the interim between 767 and 772, Desiderius the King of the Lombards, seized the initiative in Italy from the Franks. Although we can only dimly see the breadth of his vision for the future of Lombard influence in Europe, Desiderius seems to have pinned his hopes upon papal support for what appears to have been his larger program. Cautiously, at first, and then boldly, Desiderius moved to bring the papacy under Lombard influence in these years. We shall return to the details of his policy, insofar as we can discern them, in the following pages.

However, the primary task before us is to determine the ways in which the Franks were led to develop a new, hostile attitude toward the

Lombards. Only gradually, after a period of painful experimentation with old ideas did the Frankish attitude toward the Lombards finally change. Here again, it is impossible to divorce religious concerns from political issues in this process. Thus, as we shall see below, the foundation for the eventual conquest of the Kingdom of the Lombards by Charles in 774 was laid in the period between 767 and 772. Seen in this perspective, the change in the Frankish attitude toward the Lombards was as decisive a development for the future of the West as was the anointment of Pepin in 754.

The first sign of new troubles in Italy came from Rome. Pope Paul had barely breathed his last in June, 767, before a group of disgruntled lay nobles, led by Duke Toto of Nepi, moved to capture the papal office.¹ After a brief show of force, Toto made the papal curia accept his brother as Pope Constantine II.² Two officials of the curia, Christopher and Sergius, who would play a key role until their deaths in 771, were unable to prevent the nobility from achieving their objectives in 767. They were soon sent away from Rome upon giving their word that they would retire to

¹Concilium Romanum, a. 769, MGH, Leges, Sectio III, I, i, ed. A. Werminghoff (Hanover, 1896), 83-84: "Contigit per transactum quintam indiccionem mense Iunio die vicesima nona . . . domnum Paulum papam de hac luce divina vocatione fuisset subtractum. Dum vero in eadem decumberet infirmitate, de quae et vitam finivit illico areptus a diabolo quidam Nempesini oppodi ortus Toto nomine cum suis germanis atque aliis nefarius complicitibus nitebantur eum interficere quod mea infelicitatis audiens, hoc fieri prohibui . . . his vero peractis et cunctis propriis domibus revertentibus, repente adgregantes ipsi nefarius Toto vel eius germanus Constantinus universam rusticorum cohortem brachio forti, hisdem. Constantinus laicus existens cum armis apostolicam invasit sedem et clericus in eodem partriarchio effectus est." Vita Stephanus II, pp. 468-469.

²See above, fn. 1.

a monestary in Spoleto.³ Later, no doubt Constantine regretted his lenient treatment of these two men who became the architects of a successful plot to depose him in July 768.

Meanwhile, however, the succession dispute apparently did not produce a vigorous response from the Franks. Fully absorbed in his war against Duke Waifar in Aquitaine, which had occupied the Franks since 764,⁴ Pepin did not even learn of Paul's death until six months after he died. The news came to Pepin when he returned to his winter quarters at Bourges.⁵ Whether or not he learned the details surrounding Constantine's election we cannot say. However, some of Paul's missi still in Francia from an earlier mission might have alerted Pepin to the role played by the nobles.⁶

Furthermore, Pepin also knew from past experience that a discontented body of lay nobles existed in Rome. Pepin had helped Pope Paul prevent an attempt by this group to gain control of the papacy in 757.⁷ At that time Paul had been challenged by Theophylactus who was

³Vita Stephanus III, p. 469.

⁴Annales Regni Francorum, a. 764, p. 22: "Tunc rex Pippinus habuit placitum suum as Wormatia et nullum iter aliud fecit, nisi in Francia resedit, causam pertractabat inter Waifarum et Tassilonem."

⁵Annales Einhardi, a. 767, p. 25: "Reversus que Bituricam exercitum in hibernia dimisit, ipsem ibi considens natalem Domini celebravit. Eo anno Paulus papa Romanus defunctus est, civis rei nuntius ibi ad regem pervenit."

⁶Codex Carolinus, ep. #99, p. 653: "Itaque hoc excellentiam vestram petimus: ut iubeas . . . rex . . . ad nos absolvere revertendum . . . fratrem nostrum Georgium episcopum atque dilectos filios nostros, Marinum et Petrum prysbiteros qui ad vestram precellentiam a nostro predecessor, dommo Paulo papa, directi sunt."

⁷Miller, pp. 142-147.

probably an instrument of the nobility.⁸ A Frankish missus, Immo, was on the scene, however; and his presence squelched any open moves against the papacy.⁹ On Immo's recommendation of Paul's spiritual credentials, Pepin had dispatched a warning to the Romans against making trouble.¹⁰ Intimidated by the Franks and repressed throughout Paul's pontificate, the lay nobility had bided their time until the papacy was once more vulnerable. Paul's death had given them their chance. Unobstructed by the presence of Frankish observers, the nobility, led by Toto, carried out their plan to capture the papal office.

In the winter of 767, confronted by a fait accompli, on the part of the lay nobles, Pepin probably had no choice but to accept the situation in Rome. The Franks were pressing their war in Aquitaine almost to the exclusion of other concerns. They had already allowed Duke Tassilo of Bavaria to withdraw his support for Pepin in 763.¹¹ This serious breach of a vassal's duty to his lord had perhaps not gone unnoticed, but it had gone unpunished. If the Franks could so readily ignore Tassilo's defection, then Pepin could be reasonably certain that the problems of the Romans would not capture Frankish attention sufficiently to divert them from the war in Aquitaine. Pepin's hands were tied. The Papal-Frankish

⁸Ibid., pp. 144-145.

⁹Codex Carolinus, ep. #12, p. 508: "Et dum haec agerentur, convenit Romam, Immo, . . . tuae missus. Et cum eo loquentes, una cum nostri obtimatibus optum prospeximus eum hinc detineri, donec Dei providentia sacra apostolica benedictione inlustrati fuisset; et tunc plenius satisfactus de nostra vel cuncta populi puritate et dilectione, quam erga tuam . . . et cunctam gentem Francorum gerimus eum ad vos . . . absolveremus."

¹⁰Ibid., ep. #13, p. 509.

¹¹Annales Regni Francorum, a. 763, pp. 20, 22. Annales Einhardi, a. 763, pp. 21, 23. Abel, Jahrbücher, pp. 50-52.

alliance, from the Frankish nobility's point of view, seemed still to have been more a matter of Pepin's private concern than any affair of theirs. To be sure, Pope Paul had gone far to strengthen the ideological bonds with the Franks,¹² but these apparently were still not strong enough to divert them from a task much closer to home and heart, the subjugation of Aquitaine.

Unable to change the situation in Rome, if he had desired to, Pepin chose not to act at all to support the new pope. Pope Constantine sent two letters to Pepin, possibly early in 768, in an effort to restore normal relations.¹³ The new pope tried to prove his spiritual worthiness for the high office he held, and he also urged Pepin to enter into a discussion of certain unnamed problems that were pressing in upon him.¹⁴ Pepin did not respond favorably, if at all, to these overtures. By his failure to show any sign of support for Constantine, Pepin indirectly insured the continuation of strife in Rome.

While Constantine had been seeking Pepin's support, Christopher and Sergius had turned to the Lombards for aid. With the protection of the Duke of Spoleto, they made their way to Desiderius's court and secured the

¹²Miller, pp. 125-133

¹³Codex Carolinus, epp. #98, 99, pp. 650-653.

¹⁴Ibid., ep. #98, p. 650: "Itaque . . . bone rex et noster Dei nutu defensor, interim diversis nobis immentibus causis nulla extitit possibilitas, donec missi, qui alluc ad vos directi sunt revertantur, alios ad vos dirigendum missos."

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king's promise of support.¹⁵ Accompanied by Waldipert, apparently an agent of Desiderius, Christopher and Sergius returned to Rome.¹⁶ They brought with them a small Lombard force raised along the way and led by the Duke of Spoleto.¹⁷ On 29 July 768 this group attacked Rome, and after a brief struggle managed to enter the city and to depose Pope Constantine. In the confusion that followed, Waldipert apparently tried to steal a march on Christopher and Sergius. Without their knowledge, Waldipert hastily advanced an obscure monk named Philip for the approval of the Romans.¹⁸ For a brief moment it appeared that Lombard influence had gained the upper hand in Rome.

¹⁵Vita Stephanus III, p. 469: "Et cotidie in flectu et lacrimis perdurantes simulaverunt se monacho fieri Quibus properantibus atque in finem Langobardorum coniungentibus velletque abbas iamfati monasterii eos in eodem monasteri deduci, declinaverunt ab itinere isdem antefatus Christophorus . . . et eius filius Sergius . . . adiurantes firmiter Theodicium ducem Spoletinum ut eos trans Paum ad Desiderium suum deducisset regem Langobardorum, nitentes ob hoc redemptionem sanctae Dei ecclesiae perficere, eosque isdem Spolitinus dux ad suum deportavit regem. Et dum eius obtutibus praesentati fuissent, obnixi eundem regem deprecati sunt eis auxilium tribui ut talis novitatis error ab Ecclesia Dei amputaretur."

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 469-470: "Dum vero haec agerentur, coniunxerunt antefatus Christophorus et Sergius in civitate Reatinam, absoluti a Langobardorum rege. Et praecedentes Sergius et Waldipertus presbiter cum Reatinis et Furconinis atque aliis Langobardis ducatus Spolitini, coniunxerunt subito ac repentae in hanc Romanam urbem, XXXIII die iulii, mensis"

¹⁷Ibid., p. 470.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 470-471: "Alio vero die dominicorum, congregans Waldipertus presbiter, ignorante praedicto Sergio, aliquantos Romanos, pergentesque in monasterio beati Viti, abstulerunt exinde Philippum presbiterum, quem elegentes et cum laudum vocibus adclamantes 'Philippum papam sanctus Petrus elegit!' eum in basilica Salvatoris more solito deduxerunt"

What lay behind this Lombard attempt to effect a bloodless coup in Rome? No certain answer can be found, but it is possible that this was an important part of Desiderius's more ambitious project to expand the range of Lombard influence in the West. One sign of his larger interest that remains is the marriage alliance between Duke Tassilo of Bavaria and Desiderius's daughter.¹⁹ No date can be fixed for this important event, but the general impression of historians is that it occurred sometime between 764 and 769.²⁰ Whatever the exact date might have been, it is probable that Desiderius had had his eye upon Bavaria for some time. The precedent for his interest is not far to seek. Liutprand had explored the possibilities of extending Lombard influence into Bavaria in 743. We have already discussed in Chapter II the strong possibility that Liutprand had won Pope Zachary's support for the Lombard venture there. Desiderius appeared ready to revive his predecessor's policy at a time when the Franks were fully absorbed with Aquitaine in the West. The important difference was that Desiderius did not stand on the same comfortable footing with the papacy. Thus, the monk, Philip, was advanced by Waldipert to help remedy that serious defect.

But Desiderius was denied an easy victory. Christopher and Sergius managed to prevent the Lombards and their sympathizers among

¹⁹The date is not known precisely. We follow Abel, Jahrbucher, pp. 57-58.

²⁰Ibid.

the Romans from gaining the upper hand.²¹ Philip's brief sojourn as pope ended as quickly as it had begun. Instead, Christopher engineered the selection of a compromise candidate, Pope Stephen III.²² Apparently it was hoped that he could be guided from behind the scenes by Christopher. The Lombard faction among the curia probably expected to be able to do the same. What perhaps neither side expected was that Stephen would eventually attempt to steer his own course in the stormy sea of curial politics.

The Franks were apparently not aware of or deeply concerned by the events of late July described above. For them the summer of 768 was a continuation of the war against Duke Waifar. This year their efforts were rewarded. Pressed on all sides by the Franks, Waifar was finally killed.²³ But before Pepin could fully savor his triumph, he became ill. In search of a cure, he visited holy places in Francia, and finally returned to St. Denis. There it became evident that he would not recover, and he

²¹Vita Stephanus III, p. 471: "Post paululum vero coniungens eodem die sepefatus Christophorus primercerius, cognitaque causa electionis ipsius Philippi, ilico in magna ascendens ira iureiurando coram omnibus Romanis adfirmabat dicens se Romam minime ingressurum quousque Philippus presbiter de Lateranense expulsus fuisset patriarchio. Qui et per scalam quae ducit ad balneum descendens, cum magna reverentia ad suum reversus est monasterium."

²²Ibid.: Sique praefatus Christofores primercerius alio die aggregans in Tribus fatis omnes sacerdotes ac primatus cleri et optimates militiae atque universum exercitum et cives honestos, omnisque populi Romani coetum, a magno usque ad parvum, pertractantes, pariter concordaverunt omnes una mente unoque consensu in persona praefati . . . Stephani"

²³Fredegarii Scholastici Continuationes, c. 52, p. 192: "Rex Pippinus in quattuor partes comites suos, scaritos et leudibus suis aspersequendum Waiofarium transmissit. Dum hec ageretur ut adserunt sosillia regis factum fuisset - Waiofarius princeps Aquitanie a suis interfectus est."

called his sons Charles and Carloman, and his wife, Bertrada, to him. Advised by his nobles, Pepin divided the kingdom according to Germanic custom, and late in September, 768, he died.²⁴

In the relatively short time allotted to Pepin in 768 to ponder the future of his kingdom, one suspects that Italy entered his thoughts. There is some indirect evidence to indicate that Pepin expected Carloman to maintain the equilibrium policy in Italy.²⁵ According to Einhard, Pepin followed his nobles' advice and divided the kingdom equally between his sons, but historians have disputed that claim.²⁶ Carloman actually received the greater share of the kingdom, thus suggesting that he would have more resources at his command than Charles. In addition Carloman's portion put him in a geographical position to deal with two areas - Bavaria and Lombardy - that had been problems for Pepin.

²⁴Ibid., c. 53, p. 192: "Inde promovens cum praedicta regina Bertradane et filios Carolo et Carolomanno usque ac Parisus ac monasterio beati Dionesi marterio veniens, ibique moratus est aliquandiu. Cernensque, quod vite periculum evadere non potuisset, omnes procures suos ducibus vel comitibus Francorum, tam episcopis quam sacerdotibus ac se venire precipit. Ibique una cum consensu Francorum et procerum suorum seu et episcoporum regnum Francorum, quod ipse tenuerat, equali sorte inter predictis filiis suis Carolo et Carlomanno, dum adhuc ipse viveret, inter eos divisit: idest Austrasiorum Regnum Carolo seniore filii regem instituit; Carlomanno vero iuniore filio regnum Burgundia, Provintia et Gotia, Alexacis et Alamania tradidit; Aquitania provintia, quam ipse rex adquesierat, inter eos divisit."

²⁵Mühlbacher, Deutsche Geschichte, pp. 89-97.

²⁶Vita Karoli Magnus, c. 3, MGH, Scriptores, II, p. 445: "Franci siquidem facto solemniter generali conventu ambos sibi reges constituunt, ea conditione praemissa, ut totum regni corpus ex aequo partirentur" See above n. 15. See, for example, Mohr, Karolingische Reichs idee, pp. 30-31. Abel, Jahrbucher des Frankischen Reichs, p. 29, and Holtzmann, Die Italienpolitik, pp. 40-42.

Aside from a geographical position that gave him control of the passes into Italy, Carloman also acquired members of Pepin's court who had been key figures in carrying out the policy of equilibrium. Fulrad was the principal figure in Pepin's court who moved into Carloman's circle of advisers.²⁷ One recalls that Fulrad had represented Pepin in Italy after the second war with Aistulf. It was also Fulrad who had been present to hear King Desiderius promise to live in peace with Pepin during the Lombard succession struggle in 757.²⁸ His presence among Carloman's advisers suggests strongly that the younger son of Pepin had been called upon to preserve the policy of his father.

The role that Pepin expected Charles to play in problems concerning the papacy and the Lombards is not clear. We cannot say that Charles was to be excluded from such matters. On the contrary, as Pepin well knew, Charles was regarded by Rome as patricius Romanorum, the same as Carloman. But though equals in theory, in practice Charles was placed in a position to follow Carloman's policy in Italy rather than to initiate his own. The theory of equal interests was maintained when Sergius arrived in Francia in 769 to deliver the news of the election of Pope Stephen III. He invited both kings to send bishops to a council in Rome to investigate the transgressions of the former pope,

²⁷Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 41, fn. 1.

²⁸Codex Carolinus, ep. #11, p. 506.

Constantine II.²⁹ Bishops from both parts of the kingdom did participate in the council, perhaps thereby reinforcing the idea that Charles as well as Carloman was expected to take part in Roman affairs, even though the council itself was a peripheral matter with respect to the larger problem of maintaining the Papal-Lombard equilibrium in Italy.

Aquitaine rather than Italy provided the spark that ignited the quarrel between Charles and Carloman. In 769 a rebellion broke out, and Charles called upon his brother to assist in putting it down. The two met at Duasdivas, where Carloman apparently rejected Charles's request for aid. The tension produced by this incident brought the Franks to the verge of civil war.³⁰ Not until May of 770 when the dowager queen, Bertrada, managed to secure a reconciliation between

²⁹Vita Stephanus III, p. 473: "Itaque in exodio ordonationis suae quo hisdem sanctissimus presul pontificatus apicem adsumpsit, direxit Franciae partes ad . . . viros Pippinum, Carulum, et Carulomannum reges Francorum et Patricios Romanorum, Sergium antedictum, secundarium et nomenclatorem illo in tempore existentem, deprecans atque adhortans eorum . . . per suas apostolicas litteras et aliquantaos episcopos gnaros et in omnibus divinis Scripturis atque sanctorum canonum institutionibus eruditos ac peritissimos dirigerent ad faciendum in hand Romanam urbem concilium pro eadem impia novi erroris ac temeritatis presumptione quam antefatus Constantinis apostoloeae sedis pervasor ausus est perpetrare."

³⁰Annales Regni Francorum, a. 769, pp. 28, 30. Annales Einhardi, a. 769, pp. 29, 30. Vita Karoli Magnus, p. 445: "Mansitque ista, quamvis cum summa difficultate, concordia, multis ex parte Karlomanni societatem separare molientibus adeo ut quidam eos etiam bello committere sint meditati." Abel, Jahrbücher, pp. 77-78.

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her sons during a meeting at Selz, did the threat of war subside.³¹

While the situation in Francia deteriorated in 769, Desiderius **made** further efforts to improve his position in Italy. It will be recalled **from** Chapter II that the Lombard nobility was divided in its attitude **toward** relations with Rome. Liutprand and his successor Ratchis had **favored** a policy of accommodation with Rome. But Aistulf on the **other** hand, had apparently reflected the attitude of Lombards who **favored** the domination of Rome rather than co-operative coexistence. Desiderius had come to power with the support of the papacy, as we **have** seen, because of the expectation by Pope Stephen II of a generous **land** settlement. In addition, however, we should note the possibility **that** the Romans also desired to aid Desiderius because he showed **promise** of being more tractable, in the spirit of Liutprand. Desiderius, however, was probably aware of the fact that his position **would** depend upon winning Lombard nobles of both points of view.

³¹Annales Regni Francorum, a. 770, p. 30: "Tunc domnus Carolus rex habuit synodum in Warmatiam civitatem, et Carlo mannus et Berta regina iungentes se ad Salossa." Codex Carolinus, ep. #44, p. 559-560: "Itaque, . . . filii . . . nostri Romanorum patritii, coniugentes ad nos . . . vestri missi . . . detulerunt nobis honorabiles et nimis desiderabiles syllabas vestras, a Deo instituta regale potentia **directas**, per quas innotuistis: contentionis rixas ac litigia inter vos **versata** fuissent sed annuentae Domino nunc ad veram dilectionem et **unitatis** concordiam et fraternam amorem conversi extitisse videmini . . . Nam sic vero et in is ipsis vestris ferebatur apicibus: tota **vestra** virtutae vos decertaturos pro exigendis institiis protectoris **vestri** beati Petri . . . atque in ea promissione amoris (quam cum) **vestro** pio genitore, . . . domino Pippino, eidem principi apostolorum et eius vicariis polliciti estis, esse permansuros et plenarius institias **sanctae** Dei ecclesiae atque eius exatationem esse operaturos . . . Si quis autem vobis dixerit, quod institias beati Petri recepimus, vos ullo modo ei non credatis."

As one would expect, Desiderius's policy shows a certain inconsistency as a result of trying to please diverse groups within his following. In 769 Desiderius apparently gave his support to a more aggressive policy toward Rome, which must have run counter to his hope of expanding Lombard influence among potentially sympathetic Romans. In that year, Desiderius indirectly supported a Lombard effort to dislodge the papacy from Ravenna.³²

In an uncanonical election, a usurper named Michael became Archbishop of Ravenna. Backed by the military strength of the Duke of Rimini, a Lombard noble, Michael was able to seize control of this critical office.³³ Desiderius remained in the background. Even the account in the Liber Pontificalis could only charge him with supplying advice to the usurper and his allies.³⁴ In return Desiderius received an important share of church revenues which had been diverted from Rome. Whether or not this course of action was forced upon Desiderius by his more aggressive followers, the King of the Lombards revealed a disturbing desire to tinker with the equilibrium which Carloman was charged with preserving in Italy.

To what extent the Franks were aware of the Lombard thrust against Ravenna in 769 we are unable to say precisely. No direct mention

³²Vita Stephanus III, p. 477: ". . . et congregans hisdem . . . Mauricius exercitum una cum consilio Desiderii Langobardorum regis, properavit atque ingressus est Ravennam, et brachio forti elegit praedictum Michelium, et in episcopio Ravennatis ecclesia introduxit"

³³Ibid., "Et continuo surgens Michaelius scrinarius ipsius ecclesiae . . . profectus Arimino ad Mauricium ducem Ariminensem" See above, n. 32.

³⁴See above, fn. 32

of Ravenna was made immediately by Pope Stephen III. Nor did the pope speak of the matter in the letter to Charles and Carloman congratulating them on the reconciliation they had achieved at Selz, mentioned above.³⁵ However, Stephen did urge them to discount claims, presumably by Desiderius, that full justice had been done regarding the claims of St. Peter.³⁶ It thus is possible that Bertrada or Carloman had learned of the coup in Ravenna before May of 770 and the meeting at Selz, receiving the assurance that St. Peter's claims were met in full. We can assume that the Franks were concerned early in 770 about Desiderius's intentions regarding Ravenna. Here was certainly a potential cause of war since the Lombards had moved against the one city which Pepin had most clearly promised to protect for Pope Stephen II.

Thus, the meeting between Charles and Carloman arranged by Bert rada at Selz in 770 takes on a new significance if the Franks were aware that the Lombards had severely shaken the equilibrium in Italy by the move against Ravenna. The quarrel between Charles and Carloman over Aquitaine was suddenly of minor importance since it now appeared that the Franks might be drawn into another war in Italy. A reconciliation between the brothers was needed in order to provide the united front

³⁵See above, fn. 31.

³⁶Codex Carolinus, ep. #44, p. 560: "Et videte, . . . filii, quia obtestamur vos per tremendum diem iudicii etiam beatus Petrus per nos adhortatur atque obtestatur ut sub nimia velocitate ipsas iustitias eiusdem principis apostolorum exigere a Langobardis iubeatis, fortiter eos cum Dei virtute distringentes, ut sua propria isdem princeps apostolorum atque sancta Romana rei publice ecclesia recipiat . . . Si quis autem vobis direxit, quod iustitias beati Petri recepimus, vos ullo modo ei non creditas."

necessary to prevent the Lombards from further efforts to upset the balance in Italy. At least this is possibly the way Bertrada viewed the situation.

With the threat of civil war ended by the Selz meeting for the time being, Bertrada embarked upon a journey that took her to Bavaria, then to Pavia and from there to Rome. She went, according to our source, "in the cause of peace."³⁷ The "peace" that Bertrada had in mind, according to the standard interpretation, was a general European settlement rather than one focused particularly upon the situation in Italy.³⁸ It has been argued that her plan was set in motion in 769 by Charles when he dispatched the Abbot Sturm of Fulda to Tassilo of Bavaria.³⁹ Sturm managed to secure a lasting friendship between Charles and Tassilo, according to the source. Bertrada built upon this foundation in the late spring of 770 by going to Tassilo, possibly to guarantee his independence in return for his good offices in arranging

³⁷Annales Einhardi, a. 770, p. 31: "Bertrada vero, mater regum, cum Barlomanno iuniore filio apud Salusiam locuta pacis causa in Italiam proficiscitur. . . ."

³⁸Mohr, Studien, pp. 55-60. Abel, Jahrbücher, pp. 61-63. Martens, Die römische Frage, pp. 117-127.

³⁹Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 66. See Vita Sturmi, c. 23, MGH, Scriptores, II, p. 376: "Illis quoque temporibus, suscepta legatione inter Karolum regem Francorem et Thasilonem Noricae provinciae ducem, per plures annos inter ipsos amicitiam statuit." See ibid., p. 376, n. 1 where the dates 771, 773 or 774 are also suggested for Sturmi's mission, making Abel's assumption doubtful at best. Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 66, carefully noted that there was nothing to prove that Tassilo served as an intermediary for Bertrada as part of the peace negotiated by Sturm. Without this assumption the argument that Bertrada's search for peace entailed a comprehensive plan is seriously weakened.

a meeting with Desiderius.⁴⁰ Bertrada is credited, in this view, with **d**esiring to secure a marriage alliance between at least one of her sons **a**nd a daughter of Desiderius as a means of reviving the old friendship **b**etween the Lombards and the Franks that had existed under Charles **M**artel.⁴¹ Indirectly the alliance would also improve relations with **T**assilo, who was allied by marriage to a daughter of Desiderius. In **t**his way external peace in Europe would be assured.

The major problem with this interpretation of Bertrada's aims, **a**s **i**de from assuming that the Franks were prepared to allow Bavaria **t**o **s**lip permanently from their grasp, is that it ignores the problem of **t**he very real threat to peace raised by the Lombards in Ravenna. How **c**ould Bertrada have seriously entertained the idea of a marriage **a**lliance, given the ominous signs that the Lombards were preparing to **d**estroy Pepin's handiwork in Italy? Conflicting reports on the Italian **s**ituation from Rome and from Pavia, indicating the possibility of a new **s**truggle in Italy, probably were more directly responsible for Bertrada's **j**our**n**ey than her supposed desire to negotiate a sweeping European **p**ea**c**e. Bertrada's journey "in the cause of peace" is perhaps better seen as **a**n undertaking to discover Desiderius's real intentions in Italy and in **B**avaria at first hand. The idea of an alliance with the Lombards, **c**emented by marriage, probably grew out of her visits to Tassilo and **D**esiderius rather than from a preconceived, carefully defined plan of action.⁴²

⁴⁰Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 59.

⁴¹Mühlbacher, pp. 92-94.

⁴²So argues H. K. Mann, The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages (London, 1925), I, pt. II, 379-381, but he gives no clear indication why Bertrada was taken by the idea.

It is unlikely that Carloman would have given his support to his mother's peace journey had he known that she would arrange a marriage alliance with Desiderius. Carloman's allies in Rome, Christopher and Sergius, would probably have opposed it on the ground that the pro-Lombard faction would have gained an undue advantage in the struggle to dominate Pope Stephen's policies. As long as the Franks appeared to present a united front in Rome the pro-Lombard faction would have no lever to pry Stephen loose from the influence of Christopher and Sergius. Fulrad probably would have endorsed Carloman's position. The idea of a marriage alliance was foreign to the effort to preserve the status quo that had to now entailed keeping Desiderius at arm's length from Rome without threatening him at the same time.

Thus it seems more likely that the initiative for the marriage alliance came from Desiderius.⁴³ Seeking to restrain the Lombards from destroying the precarious balance created by Pepin's diplomacy, Bertrada might have accepted it as part of the price of peace in Italy. But Desiderius probably had to pay a high price for such a prize, quite possibly the restoration of Ravenna to papal control. Bertrada perhaps thereby hoped to avoid a situation that was very likely going to lead the Franks into another war on behalf of the papacy in Italy. Also the marriage alliance probably appeared very attractive if the pro-Lombard faction in Francia had gained new influence, as the standard view maintains.⁴⁴ In addition, perhaps Bertrada herself sympathized with this faction. In so doing she did not really depart from Pepin's position since

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 80.

he had not treated Desiderius as an enemy. Perhaps, then, Bertrada had confidence, however misplaced, in Desiderius's willingness to preserve the equilibrium in Italy. A marriage alliance would commit Desiderius to that policy, from Bertrada's point of view, by strengthening the tie of friendship implied in Pepin's longstanding policy of tolerating Lombard interests in Italy.

Desiderius's reasons for seeking the alliance are not entirely clear. However, he might have assumed that a marriage alliance would strengthen the pro-Lombard faction in Rome and Francia and allow him to assert himself more vigorously in Italy as a result. The pro-Lombard faction in Rome could also profit by the alliance since it would force a split in Frankish ranks in Rome. Later, Pope Stephen complained, perhaps while under the influence of Christopher and Sergius, that Lombard pressure had increased as a result of the marriage which suggests that this is what Desiderius had hoped to accomplish by the alliance in the first place.⁴⁵ Bertrada, it seems, had no inkling that Desiderius was negotiating in bad faith at the time of her journey to Pavia.

Bertrada probably viewed the marriage alliance as a way of guaranteeing the territorial settlement that was made with Desiderius. With this in mind perhaps she discussed the alliance, but not the marriage proposal, with Pope Stephen during her visit to Rome following her

⁴⁵Codex Carolinus, ep. 45, p. 563: ". . . eo quod, omnia quae vobis polliciti sunt transgredientes, nos cotidie adfligendo et obprimendo non cessant, etiam quia aliquid nobis reddere minimem sunt inclinati etiam et nostros invadere fines noscuntur. Et tantummodo per argumentum in praesentia de vestris missis simulant institios nobis faciendum; nam nihil ad effectum perduciter, et quicquam ab eis de nostris iustitiis nequaquam recipere valuimus."

meeting with Desiderius. From Pope Stephen's later letter it appears that he had no previous knowledge of the marriage alliance. Perhaps all that he learned from Bertrada on her visit was that the Lombards would return certain cities, Ravenna among them, and that they had agreed to keep the peace in Italy. Why she failed to discuss the marriage with the pope is a matter that cannot be determined; it appears that she avoided the issue, nevertheless.

Bertrada's solution to the problem of preserving the equilibrium in Italy was probably not received with enthusiasm by her sons upon her return to Francia, possibly sometime in late August, 770. Carloman, influenced by Fulrad, would have rejected the marriage alliance as a dangerous step opening the door upon deeper involvement in Italy as well as a threat to Frankish allies in Rome. Einhard only records that Charles married the Lombard princess, Desiderata, "to please his mother".⁴⁶ Very possibly Charles married her to prevent his mother's independent attempt to insure peace in Italy from ending in disaster. If Carloman had, in fact, refused to cooperate then Bertrada was in a difficult position since an offense to Desiderius might have precipitated the war she was trying to avoid. Presented with Bertrada's fait accompli, Charles had little choice but to marry Desiderata. Following Bertrada's reading of the situation, Charles could expect the marriage tie to lead to the restoration of Ravenna to Rome. Furthermore, as the son-in-law of Desiderius, Charles could hardly be denied an important place in Carloman's councils on Italian affairs.

⁴⁶Vita Karoli Magnus, c. 18, p. 453: "Mater quoque eius Berthrada in magno apud eum honore consenvit. Colebat enim eam cum summa reverentia, ita ut nulla umquam invicem sit exorta discordia, praeter in divortio filiae Desiderii regis, quam illa suadente acceperat."

That things did not go according to Bertrada's expectations is shown by a letter from Stephen, vehemently denouncing the idea of a marriage with the Lombards.⁴⁷ The marriage undermined the ideological foundation of the Papal-Frankish alliance. As we have seen in Chapter II, St. Peter had adopted the Franks, making them the brothers of the Romans, and thus spiritual equals in the eyes of St. Peter, in 754. The purpose of the adoption had been made clear at that time: the Franks were to protect St. Peter's relics from contamination by the Lombards.⁴⁸ Thereafter, Pope Paul had developed the theme that the Franks were a holy people, in the interests of strengthening the Papal-Frankish alliance. The idea that they were a holy people, corresponded with the Frankish view of themselves developed independently of the papacy.⁴⁹ That the Franks would now consider allying themselves by marriage with an inferior people was a great shock to Stephen, or at least to an element within the curia speaking through Stephen. The Lombards would now gain access to St. Peter on the same footing with the Franks and the Romans by Charles's unfortunate marriage.⁵⁰ Stephen could not accept this possibility, and he unleashed

⁴⁷Codex Carolinus, ep. #45, pp. 560-563.

⁴⁸See above, Ch. II, p. 51, fn. 59.

⁴⁹See above, Ch. I.

⁵⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #45, p. 561: "Non vobis convenit tale peragi nefas, qui legem Dei tenetis at alios, ne talia agant, corripitis: haec quippe paganae gentes faciunt; nam absit hoc a vobis, qui perfecte estis christiani et 'gens sancta atque regale estis sacerdotium.' Recordimini et considerate, quia oleo sancto uncti per manus vicarii beati Petri callesti benedictione estis sanctificati; et cavendum vobis est, ne tantis reatibus implicemini."

all the spiritual weapons at his command to undo the marriage.

To reinforce his religious objections, Stephen indicated that the Lombards transgressed all that which had been promised to Rome by the Franks.⁵¹ The Lombards did not cease their daily afflictions and oppressions of the Romans. Furthermore the Lombards not only were not inclined to return any lands to Rome, but they had even invaded Roman territory.⁵² At the same time, the Lombards sought to convince Frankish missi that justice was being done to St. Peter's claims.⁵³ Stephen sent a missus with this letter to relate in detail Lombard incursions in one area of Roman territory.⁵⁴ From this protest it should have been clear that Bertrada's policy had backfired. Instead of guaranteeing the equilibrium in Italy, the agreement with Desiderus was being used by the Lombards to give new life to their territorial aspirations in the Duchy of Rome.

Since Charles and not Carloman had married the Lombard princess, Charles was most threatened by the papal letter denouncing the marriage. Stephen had called upon St. Peter himself to intervene, a gesture that must have caused Charles considerable uneasiness. Carloman could continue to rely upon Christopher and Sergius and their party in the curia for support. If one assumes, as we must, that

⁵¹See above, fn. 45.

⁵²See above, fn. 45.

⁵³Codex Carolinus, ep. #45, p. 563: "Et tantummodo per argumentum in praesentia de vestris missus simulant iustitias nobis faciendum; nam nihil ad effectum perducitur et quicquam ab eis de nostris iustitias nequaquam recipere valuimus."

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 563.

religious concerns were fused with political questions, then Stephen's protest must be credited with shaping Charles's policy in 770. From this point of view, the Lombard marriage alliance had already become a burden to Charles in 770 because it had seriously endangered his tie with St. Peter.

However, it has been argued by Lintzel that the marriage alliance was primarily a device to isolate Carloman from all possible allies in preparation for Charles's attempt to gain control of both parts of Francia.⁵⁵ If this be accepted, then Charles should have allowed nothing to interfere with this coldly conceived plan. But instead of striving to maintain his link with Desiderius, Charles took action in August 770 that shook the newly established alliance. He intervened abruptly in Ravenna by dispatching a missus, Hucipert, to that city with a warning to the people.⁵⁶ Encouraged by this sign of Frankish support, the people of Ravenna rose in rebellion and drove Archbishop Michael, the unconsecrated usurper, out.⁵⁷ A canonical election was quickly held in which archdeacon Leo was elected archbishop.⁵⁸ Stephen speedily consecrated

⁵⁵Karl der Gross und Karlmann", HZ, CXL (1929), 1-22, esp. p. 10.

⁵⁶Vita Stephanus III, pp. 477: "Sed dum nullo modo firmissimam mentis constantiam ipsius . . . pontificis flectere potuerunt nequissimi . . . Michellii, tunc dum missis . . . Caruli regis Francorum et patricii Romanorum praesentaliter adessent, dirigens hisdem . . . praesul sous missos denuo tam praeduto Francorum missos quamque omnes Ravinianos ammonedo, statim insurrexerunt super ipsum Michelium et eum cum obprobrio de ipso episcopo proiecierunt, quem ninctum hie Roman dirigentes, elegerunt sepefatum Leonum . . . Qui ad hanc apostolicam sedem properans cum sacerdotibus et clero ipsius Ravenntis . . . in archiepiscopatus honorem ab eodem . . . Stephano papa ordinatus consecratusque est."

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

Leo, and Desiderius was left to ponder the implications of these events for the Lombard role in Italy.⁵⁹

Lintzel's interpretation of Charles and Bertrada's policy, resting upon the assumption that they were locked in a coldly considered struggle for power with Carloman, collapses in the light of Charles's behavior regarding Ravenna.⁶⁰ Charles's action in Ravenna was taken to show Pope Stephen that the marriage to the Lombard princess did not mean that Charles had befriended the Lombards at the expense of Rome, as Stephen's letter of protest implied. Lintzel's explanation for Charles's policy is that Charles did not recognize the relationship between the Franco-Lombard alliance and the overthrow of the usurper, Michael.⁶¹ But this seems a peculiar lapse in one who had presumably coolly plotted the alliance in order to destroy Carloman. Surely, Charles could not have failed to see that his action in Ravenna might have ended the alliance so necessary to overthrow Carloman. We must conclude that there was some other basis for the creation of the alliance with the Lombards and Charles's subsequent behavior in Italy than the motives of Realpolitik.

As was said, the marriage alliance grew out of Bertrada's peace mission and was proposed by Desiderius as the price of peace, possibly with the promise that Ravenna would be returned to Rome. The aim of Bertrada did not appear to have been the destruction of Carloman but to guarantee, by different means, the equilibrium which Pepin had committed

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰See above, fn. 55, pp. 1-10.

⁶¹HZ, CXL (1929), pp. 11-12.

the Franks to preserve in Italy. If Carloman and Charles drifted apart over the marriage alliance, then perhaps it was because Carloman resented Bertrada's meddling in an area for which he saw himself, not Charles, responsible. Charles, on the other hand, appears to have accepted his Lombard bride without enthusiasm in order to avert a political disaster in 770. When Pope Stephen then raised serious objections, Charles was forced to take immediate steps to prove his good intentions toward St. Peter. This was done by effecting a dramatic change in the situation in Ravenna. Perhaps his actions were also prompted by the discovery that Desiderius had not kept a promise to Bertrada to somehow resolve the problem, among others, of Ravenna.

Forced by the circumstances surrounding his marriage to Desiderata, which produced from the papacy a threat of eternal damnation, Charles's role in the Papal-Lombard dispute went far beyond that which Pepin and Carloman perhaps had planned for him. The possible loss of papal support for his royal power was too grave a danger to allow Charles to stand idly by and to ignore Italy. Perhaps the first seed of distrust of the Lombards had been sown in late 770. The Lombard king had negotiated a peace in Italy with Bertrada while supporting efforts to upset the equilibrium created there by Pepin.

However, Charles's successful effort to restore papal authority in Ravenna probably persuaded him that Desiderius, though untrustworthy, could be intimidated by the threat of Frankish power as of old. But the protection of his tie with St. Peter, making necessary an independent intervention in Italy, contributed to the deterioration of relations with Carloman. Carloman either became envious of or alarmed by Charles's success in achieving at a stroke what Carloman's plodding diplomacy had failed to

secure for Rome. Thus, by the end of 770 the brothers had drifted apart not because Charles deliberately attacked his power but because in protecting Charles's own position he had weakened Carloman's hold on the reins of Frankish policy concerning Papal-Lombard relations. Perhaps news of the new tension between them reached Desiderius which might account for his bold move against the papacy during Lent, 771.

The news that Desiderius was coming to Rome prompted some of the Romans to prepare new defenses for the city.⁶² Ostensibly, Desiderius intended to make his visit a pilgrimage to holy places in Rome, but the fact that he brought an army with him had apparently raised reasonable doubts about his real intentions.⁶³ But Pope Stephen, in defiance of Christopher, apparently did not immediately regard the Lombard King as a menace to Rome. While the defenses were maintained by one group, Stephen apparently slipped outside the city and discussed the problem of territorial claims with Desiderius, who was by now apparently

⁶²Vita Stephanus III, p. 478: "Unde nimia furoris indignatione contra praenominatos Christophorum et Sergium exardescens ipse Desiderius, nitebatur eos extinguere ac delere. Pro quo suo maligno ingenio simulavit se quasi orationis causa ad beatum Petrum hic Roma properaturum, ut eos capere potuisset, dirigens clam munera Paulo cubiculario cognomento Afiarta et aliis eius impiis sequacibus, suadens eis ut in apostolicam indignationem eos deberent inducere; eique hisdem Paulus consentiens de eorum perditione absconse decertabat. Dumque hoc agnovissent praenominati Christophorus et Sergius, et eundem protervum Desiderium regem Romam properaturum agnovissent, ilico aggregantes populi . . . viriliter cum eadem populi congregatione eundem Desiderio regi paraverunt se resistendum Qui etiam portas huius Romanae urbis claudientes, alias ex eis fabricaverunt; et ita armati omnes existebant ad defensionem propriae civitatis."

⁶³Ibid.

encamped in and around St. Peter's.⁶⁴ Later, after being accosted by Christopher, Sergius, and Carloman's missus, Dodo, Pope Stephen swore that he would not negotiate a secret agreement with Desiderius.⁶⁵ However, the next day, Stephen did manage to meet privately with the king. Desiderius apparently promised by a solemn vow taken in front of St. Peter's tomb, to restore the lands in dispute with Rome.⁶⁶ Desiderius and his pro-Lombard allies were now able to turn their full attention upon their opponents, Christopher and Sergius. According to Stephen's account, they fell victim to an unruly mob.⁶⁷

In Abel's interpretation, the Franks were unprepared for Stephen's effort to act independently by coming to terms with the Lombards.⁶⁸ Stephen's decision to seek a new policy that entailed coming to terms with Desiderius was also bound up with his decision to become pope in his own right and to throw off the burdensome pressure of Christopher and Sergius. This, more than a lingering annoyance at Charles for marrying

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 478-479: "Et dum haec agerentur, subito coniunxit ad beatum Petrum antedictus Desiderius rex cum suo Langobardorum exercitu. Et continuo direxit suos missos praefato pontifici, deprecans ut ac eum egredi deberet; quod et factum est.

⁶⁵We follow Hodgkin's reconstruction of events in Italy and her Invaders, VII, pp. 321-323.

⁶⁶Hodgkin, VII, p. 322. Vita Hadrianus, p. 487: "'Sed quomodo possum credere eidem regi vestro, in eo quod subtilis mihi sanctae recordationis praedesessor meus domnus Stephanus papa de fraudulenta eius fide referuit, inquiens quod omnia illi mentitus fuisset que ei in corpus beati Perti iureiurando promisit pro iustitiis sanctae Dei ecclesiae faciendis'"

⁶⁷See Vita Stephanus III, pp. 479-480 and Vita Hadrianus pp. 486-487, and Codex Carolinus, ep. #48, pp. 566-567 for conflicting accounts of the persons responsible for the maltreatment of Christopher and Sergius.

⁶⁸Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 89.

without his advice, perhaps inspired his policy during Lent of 771.⁶⁹ In order to free himself of his two advisers, Stephen shifted his allegiance away from Carloman to Charles, from whom he could expect the same protection for Rome.⁷⁰ Since Charles had already proved that he could hold Desiderius in check, the pope probably saw little to fear in attempting to negotiate with the Lombard King.

However, the risks involved in Stephen's quest for independence from his two curial watchdogs were considerable. The Lombard faction would surely try to capitalize upon the situation and fill the vacuum left by the absence of Christopher and Sergius. With this objective in mind, the leader of the pro-Lombard group in the curia, Paulus Afiarta, appears to have encouraged Stephen to seek an accord with Desiderius. Wisely or not, Stephen took the opportunity to align himself more clearly with Desiderius and Charles. In the bargain he expected to gain and keep his independence, to preserve the all-important tie with the Franks, and to win new territorial concessions from the Lombards. However, the murders of Christopher and Sergius were more than Stephen had bargained for. Had they been left alive, Carloman would not have had as clear a pretext for intervention in Rome and could have been forced to accept the new arrangement.

In a letter to Charles, Stephen attempted to reassure the Frankish King by presenting an account of events in Rome that drove home the idea

⁶⁹Ibid. Rather than stress Stephen's remaining irritation at Charles for acting without consulting him, it seems more useful to emphasize Stephen's part in these events as an attempt to secure his independence from not only Christopher and Sergius but the Lombard faction as well.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 88, 92.

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of papal independence from the manipulations of one of Carloman's missi, Dodo.⁷¹ Desiderius had played a key role in protecting the pope from the threats of Christopher, Sergius and Dodo, whom the pope accused of trying to murder him.⁷² Apparently then the situation had gotten out of hand, considering the fate of Christopher and Sergius, but Pope Stephen disclaimed any responsibility for this piece of mob violence.⁷³

While the abuse of Christopher and Sergius by the mob was regrettable, Stephen had accomplished much, as he implied in this letter to

⁷¹Codex Carolinus, ep. #48, pp. 566-567. Louis Halphen, "La papauté et le complot Lombard de 771," Revue Historique, CLXXXII (1938), 238-244. The author's suggestion that Desiderius forced the pope to write the letter raises the question of why the king would have bothered to go to such lengths since the missi who brought the letter were Charles's. They would have exposed the whole plot. Yet, as Lintzel noted, Charles's missi apparently made no effort to intervene in the events in Rome. The situation was perhaps not as clear to Charles as some have assumed.

⁷²Codex Carolinus, ep. #48, p. 567: "Et credite nobis, . . . filia atque . . . fili, nisi Dei protectio atque beati Petri aposoli et auxilium excellentissimi filii nostri, Desiderii regis, adesset, iam tam nos quamque noster clerus et universi fideles sanctae Dei ecclesiae et nostri in mortis decideremus periculum. Ecce quantas iniquitas et diabolicas immissiones his seminavit atque operatus est praedictus Dodo, ut, qui deliverat in servitio beati Petri et nostri fideliter permanere, ispe contrario animae nostrae insidiabatur, non agens iuxta id, quod a suo rege illi praeceptum est; in servitio beati Petri et nostra oboedientia fideliter essepermansurum. Et arte credimus quod dum tanta eius iniquitas ad aures filii nostri Carlomanni, regis pervenerit, nullo modo ei placebit in eo quod tantem deminorationem atque destructionem . . . is Dodo cum praelatis suis nefandissimis sequaeibus cupiebat deducere . . .

⁷³Ibid, p. 567.

Charles. Desiderius had apparently agreed to another territorial settlement.⁷⁴ This time his oath was given directly to St. Peter in a ceremony before the saint's tomb.⁷⁵ Such a vow should have been far more binding than any made to a mere mortal like Bertrada, if such an oath had ever been given. While there were some people in the curia who considered the Lombards unfit to take a vow in such a holy place, judging by the previous letter denouncing the marriage, Pope Stephen had not come to this conclusion. He seemed confident that Desiderius had been won over to a reasonable position on the land question, and the pope assured Charles that the Frankish missi, who were delivering the letter, would confirm the truth of the papal account.⁷⁶ Perhaps Charles's missi were impressed, by Desiderius's vow, that he was serious in his resolve to come to terms with Stephen, and they thus conveyed the opinion that the pope could now steer his own course in Rome.

If we assume that Charles was prepared to accept, for the time being, Stephen's explanation of events and to interpret his letter as an indication that the pope was independent of Lombard control, then we can explain why Charles did not intervene in Rome. Perhaps it was Bertrada who advised this cautious policy of watchful waiting to test Desiderius's willingness to observe the terms of the peace he had negotiated with the

⁷⁴Ibid.: "Agnoscat autem Deo amabilis religiositatis vestra atque . . . tua, eo quod in nomina bona voluntate nos convenit cum praelato excellentissimo et a Deo servato filio nostro, Desiderio rege, et omnes iustitias beati Petri ab eo plenius et in integro suscepimus. Tamen et per vestros missos de hoc plenissime eritis satisfactum."

⁷⁵See above, fn. 66.

⁷⁶Codex Carolinus, ep. #48, p. 567: "Tamen et per vestros missos de hoc plenissime eritis satisfactum."

pope. Her strongest argument for the course of action, again, was the fact that Charles had recently forced Desiderius to fulfill the terms of the agreement reached at the time the marriage alliance was negotiated in 770.

Carloman, meanwhile, prepared a force to go to Rome and avenge the deaths of Christopher and Sergius.⁷⁷ But his invasion never occurred. Instead, the sources vaguely report that the quarrel between the brothers was reopened.⁷⁸ While no certain explanation is possible, it can be argued that the source of their quarrel was Charles's determination to give Stephen and Desiderius a chance to prove the merits of their respective cases. An independent pope, allied with the Franks and at peace with the Lombards, had been the objective of Pepin's policy. Charles had changed the methods by which that goal was to be reached. Pepin, as we have seen, imposed terms on the papacy and the Lombards, stifling further discussion despite the obvious discontent of Rome. Carloman had apparently also continued to ignore papal dissatisfaction with the terms set by the Franks.

Almost by accident, Charles had adopted different means to quiet papal discontent. Stephen had taken the initiative at this point and had really forced those new methods upon the Frankish king. Charles was content to see if they would work, but Carloman could not rest so easily since he stood to lose most by the new arrangement. Charles was forcing Carloman to accept a secondary role in Italian affairs by his decision to support Stephen's efforts to free himself from the control of Christopher

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸See above fn.

and Sergius. Pepin's choice of a successor to conduct his Italian policy was thereby endangered although the policy itself had not been deliberately abandoned.

Their disagreement seemed to emerge from circumstances rather than from a conscious effort on Charles's part to undermine his brother, although Carloman could easily have chosen to see it as a deliberate attempt to weaken his position. What he probably objected to most was the necessity to transfer the real initiative in Italian policy to Charles imposed upon him by Charles's inaction in 771. Could this not have inspired the jealousy in Carloman which Einhard noted, and have served as the main cause of their renewed quarrel in 771?⁷⁹

Einhard's account provides other difficulties for the historian regarding the events of 771. The repudiation of Desiderata by Charles came at the end of a year of marriage, according to Einhard, which would place the break with the Lombards in the early fall of 771.⁸⁰ Historians have argued with this chronology on the ground that Einhard knew little of dates concerning the early years of Charles's career. Most authors have

⁷⁹Vita Karoli M., c. 18, p. 452: "Post mortem patris cum fratre regnum partitus, tanta patientia simultantes et invidiam eius tulit, ut omnibus mirum videretur, quod ne ad iracundiam quidem ab eo provocari potuisset." Such a mild response could easily have been the product of Charles's recognition of his weakness compared to the resources of Carloman.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 453: "Deinde cum matris hortatu filiam Desiderii, regis Langobardorum, duxisset uxorem, incertum qua de causa, post annum eam repudiavit et Hildegardem de gente Suavorum . . . in matrimonium accepit. . . ." Perhaps Einhard's lapse of memory derives from his unwillingness to suggest that Charles was trying to make peace with Carloman. If he had repudiated her because of the threat to Rome, Einhard would not have had any sound reason for avoiding this explanation.

assumed that the break came shortly after Charles learned of the Lombard coup in Stephen's letter of explanation discussed above.⁸¹ Lintzel has suggested that, for reasons of state, Charles could not have repudiated her then, and chose to wait for a more opportune moment.⁸² The death of Carloman gave him that chance, since it removed the internal crisis that had stayed his hand in the first place.

But if Charles was not playing a clear game of Realpolitik, as we have suggested above, and if he nevertheless hesitated to move against Desiderius, believing that Stephen could maintain his independence and secure peace in Italy, then it is possible that Einhard's chronology is not too far off the track. According to the information given in the Vita Hadriani, Stephen spent an undetermined time pursuing further negotiations with Desiderius with the object of carrying out the terms of the agreement made at St. Peter's tomb.⁸³ Missi were sent to Pavia and they returned with Desiderius's blunt refusal to restore the territories he had promised to Stephen.⁸⁴ The Lombard king observed that he had done enough to aid Stephen by freeing him from the domination of Christopher and Sergius and by preventing Carloman from launching his proposed invasion to avenge

⁸¹See Lintzel, HZ, CXL (1929), 19-20.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Vita Hadriani, I, 487. Hadrian said of his predecessor that ". . . ad eum postmodum suos missos direxisset . . . adhortans eum ut ea quae praesentaliter beati Petri pollicitus est adimpleret"

⁸⁴Ibid.: ". . . taliter ei per eosdem missos direxit in responsis: sufficit apostolico Stephano quia tuli Christophorum et Sergium de medio, qui illi dominabantur, et non illi sit necesse iustitias requirendum"

their deaths.⁸⁵ Nothing more was necessary. Desiderius's claim indicates that these negotiations were reopened after Carloman had disbanded his army probably in the early summer of 771.

If Charles and Carloman had been acting in concert at the time of Stephen's letter of explanation, as Abel among others assumed, then Desiderius would have been unable to have resisted them.⁸⁶ But it seems that they were not united concerning the proper course in Italy; Charles had been neutralized. Under these circumstances Carloman could not act. This situation was intolerable to him and led him into open conflict with his brother.

Meanwhile, since Charles divorced Desiderata, according to Einhard, after a year, or as we have suggested, in August 771, the king must have learned that Stephen and Desiderius were now divided over the land dispute again. Charles now acted, both to clarify his position in Rome, which had apparently confused Pope Stephen, and to restore good relations with his brother in order to forestall a war which Charles was ill-equipped to fight. The divorce of Desiderata should have accomplished both.

The campaigning season was almost over - too late at least to negotiate a peace with Carloman and march on Rome. Charles could expect no help from Desiderius who preferred to see the brothers quarrel

⁸⁵Ibid: Nam certe si ego ipsum apostolicum non adiuvavero. magna perditio super eum eveniet, Quoniam Carulomannus, rex Francorum, amicus existens praedictorem christophori et Sergii, paratus est cum suis exercitibus, ad vindicandum eorum mortem, Roma properandum opusque capiendum pontificem. "

⁸⁶Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 96.

and exhaust their energy in a civil war. Peace with Carloman was probably a more attractive option than a disastrous civil war from which Desiderius stood to gain most. Under these conditions it was better to risk the wrath of the pro-Lombard faction, and come to terms with Carloman. By repudiating his Lombard bride Charles clearly shifted sides to Carloman's position. Perhaps with a period in which to negotiate Charles hoped to reassure his brother and combine forces to protect the papacy, the one focus of interest they shared. The realization on Charles's part that the Lombards had deceived both himself and Pope Stephen forced him to consider these alternatives.

Bertrada, Einhard said, opposed Charles's decision to repudiate his wife.⁸⁷ But now she was overruled. Perhaps she saw that the tension between the brothers could not be negotiated away and that Carloman might seek an alliance against Charles with Desiderius. In any case, from her point of view, in August, 771, Charles's repudiation of Desiderata came at a most inopportune moment since the papacy was threatened and Carloman threatened Charles. Had the kingdom been reunited before the repudiation, as Lintzel asserted, it seems unlikely that she would have protested so greatly since she surely saw the perfidy of Desiderius in Rome as clearly as Charles; and, equally, she could have seen in December, but not in August, that the Lombard alliance was no longer an asset to Charles as the ruler of a reunited kingdom. Since Charles could not have foreseen the death of Carloman in December, he made his decisions in terms of a policy of cooperation between them to protect their interests in Rome. The war party in Carloman's portion of

⁸⁷See above, fn. 46.

the kingdom perhaps had the upper hand at this time, but Charles could reasonably assume that his severance of the tie with the Lombards would restore him to Carloman's favor.

Before any settlement with Carloman had been reached, Carloman died, allowing Charles with practically no resistance to unite the kingdom. Although there were practical conditions that influenced the smoothness of reunification, such as the maturity of Charles and the youth of Carloman's heirs, one factor that might have contributed to the ease by which this was accomplished was that the Lombard alliance had ended and that Charles was prepared to take up Carloman's policy of intervention in Rome. However, before he could demonstrate his determination to restore the papacy to Frankish control, Pope Stephen died and Pope Hadrian succeeded him. Stability appeared to have returned to Rome, removing for the moment any need to use force against the Lombards. Charles could safely turn his attention to other concerns. But he came to his position as sole ruler of the Franks with a deep distrust of the Lombard fortified by bitter experience. The foundation for Desiderius's overthrow had been laid. All that was needed was a set of circumstances to provide Charles an opportunity to deal with him. Desiderius did not disappoint him, for he soon returned to the offensive against Pope Hadrian.

CHAPTER V

THE EXPANSION OF THE PAPAL-FRANKISH ALLIANCE

772-774

By 772 the stage had been set for a vigorous Frankish response to further Lombard pressures upon Rome. The old confidence that the Lombards could be trusted to keep the peace had been shaken to pieces by Desiderius's clumsy attempts to dominate the papacy. Between 772 and 774 Charles was drawn deeper into Italian affairs. The failure of Pope Hadrian to secure an independent position for the papacy in Italy was partly responsible. But perhaps more important was Charles's readiness to expand the scope of the Papal-Frankish alliance to meet a new need which had emerged. In April, 774, perhaps at the initiative of Hadrian, the spiritual resources of the papacy were turned to the new task of supporting Frankish arms against the Saxons in a war of conquest and conversion that had begun in 772. Though the exact terms of the agreement reached during Easter, 774, cannot be precisely determined, this discussion will attempt to show that Charles had formed a spiritual alliance which would remain at the center of his later efforts to develop a consistent Italian policy.

Stephen III's successor, Pope Hadrian I, brought new strength to his difficult task by combining the resources of the lay aristocracy with

those of the pro-Frankish curial party.¹ In 772 Hadrian asked no help from Charles and immediately set about undermining the position of the Lombard sympathizer, Paulus Afiarta.² Hadrian's determined leadership perhaps had encouraged Charles's hope to restore the balance in Italy, but the king also knew that Desiderius held the key to peace, a fact which should have inspired pessimism. With the papacy in competent hands once again, Charles turned his attention upon Saxony where, in 772, after holding a synod at Worms, he opened a campaign that ended with the destruction of the Saxon's most important religious center, the Irminsul.³

Although some historians have interpreted Charles's behavior at this time as evidence of his lack of interest in Italian problems,⁴ his policy in 772 reflects more the pressures of the immediate situation than a sign of his disinterest in the threats posed by Desiderius. Through bitter experiences since 770 Charles had learned to identify Desiderius as the primary cause of unrest in Italy. As we saw in Chapter IV, the

¹Vita Hadriani, p. 486: "Vir valde praeclarus et nobilissimi generis prosapia ortus atque potentissimus romanis parentibus editus, elegans et nimis decorabilis persona" Also, Ibid. p. 514, fn. 1; Jan T. Hallenbeck, "The Election of Pope Hadrian I", Church History, XXXVII (1968), 261-270.

²Vita Hadriani, pp. 487-491; Hallenbeck, Church History, XXXVII (1968), 263.

³Annales Einhardi, a. 772, pp. 33, 34: "Rex vero Karlus congregato apud Wormaciam generali conventu Saxoniam bello adgredi statuit eamque sine mora nigressus ferro et igni cuncta depopulatus Eresburgum castrum cepit, idolum, quod Irminsul a Saxonibus vocabatur, evertit."

⁴Thomas Hodgkin, Charles the Great (London, 1921), pp. 79, 93. P. Villari, The Barbarian Invasions of Italy trans. L. Villari (London 1902), p. 435. Mohr, Die Karolingische Reichsidee, p. 36.

Lombard king had made it clear by his support of the effort to detach Ravenna from Rome and especially by his treacherous double dealing later, in 771, with Stephen III that he had no intention of preserving the precarious balance favored by Pepin after 756. Furthermore, Charles knew that the repudiation of his Lombard wife was a grave offense to Desiderius, who would not accept it quietly. And, Carloman's widow, Gerberga, and her sons were potential weapons to be used against the newly unified kingdom.⁵ Charles's ties with Rome were seriously threatened by the mere presence of the Lombard king now that he had revealed his true colors.

Despite all the evidence that the situation in Italy was an explosive one, Charles turned away toward Saxony. For the time being he intended to continue his father's policy. Two elements in the situation of 772 combined to force this course of action upon Charles, whatever his private opinion about the need for action against Desiderius might have been.

Immense practical difficulties opposed a policy of immediate war in Italy. At a time when actions as well as words were necessary to complete the reunification of the kingdom, war with Desiderius would have seriously split the nobility. Fighting an unpopular war, especially if Charles encountered vigorous Lombard opposition, would have undermined

⁵Vita Hadriani, p. 488: "In ipsus vero diebus contigit uxorem et filios quondam Carulomanni regis Francorum ad eundem regem Langobardorum fugam arripuisse cum Autcario; et nitebatur ipse Desiderius atque incanter decertabat quatenus ipsi filii eiusdem Carulomanni regnum Francorum adsumpsissent; et ob hoc ipsum sanctissimum praesulam ad se properandum seducere covabatur ut ipsos antefati quondam Carlomanni filios reges ungeret cupiens divisionem in regno Francorum inmittere ipsumque . . . pontificem a caritate . . . Caruli . . . separe, et Romanam urbem . . . sub sui regni Langobardorum potestate subjugare."

his claim to rule. Charles needed success in battle to persuade those who were not moved by his religious claims to power.

In the past it had taken the full spiritual authority of the pope to stir the Franks to intervene against a clear Lombard threat to Rome. In 772, there was no clear military threat to accompany the internal pressures generated by the Lombard faction in Rome. As long as Desiderius remained in Pavia, Charles had a weak case for intervention in a situation, perhaps seen by many to be remote from Francia's immediate interests.

Finally, and most importantly, there had been no appeal from Rome for aid. There is no evidence to indicate that Hadrian did anything more than to announce his election to the Franks.⁶ Without a request for help Charles had no hope of taking action against Desiderius. In the view of Rome provided by Hadrian's biographer, it appeared that the pope had determined to free the papacy from the Lombards and, if possible, to reduce Frankish participation in papal affairs to the narrowest possible military basis.⁷ It was not a lack of interest but a lack of alternatives that prompted Charles to maintain Pepin's policy for Italy in 772.

The need to consolidate his hold over the kingdom combined with Charles's religious objectives to focus Frankish attention upon the Saxons. After holding a synod at Worms, Charles led his army to the Irminsul. In this first real test of his leadership, Charles passed with flying colors. To the Frankish bishops the king revealed through this campaign his determination to press the missionary effort. At the same

⁶Hallenbeck, *Church History*, XXXVII (1968), 261-264. *Annales Einhardi*, a. 772, p. 33: "Romae Stephano papa defuncto Adrianus in Pontificatus successit."

⁷See below, pp. 121-127.

time, Charles exercised his authority over men who might otherwise have opposed him if he had chosen to fight Desiderius in 772. But for these men Saxony was neutral ground; neither religious, family nor sentimental ties bound them to the Saxons as they might have to the Lombards. On the contrary, as Einhard noted, the ill-defined border between Saxon and Frankish lands led to constant border raids by both sides.⁸ Charles took up the cause of the nobility in Carloman's half of the kingdom. Here was a war that promised to be popular with his followers. The gold and silver of the Irminsul provided still another graphic incentive for them to serve Charles.⁹ The prestige of the new king gained ground by virtue of the success of his raids in Saxony. When the situation in Italy reached crisis proportions in 773, Charles was better prepared to face down his pro-Lombard opponents whose ranks had probably been thinned out by Charles's impressive display of leadership ability.

⁸Vita Karoli Magni, c. 7, p. 446: "Suberant et causae quae cotidie pacem conturbare poterant, termini videlicet nostri et illorum paene ubique in plano contigui, praeter paucaloca, in quibus vel silvae maiores, vel montium iuga interiecta utroumque agros certo limite disterminant in quibus caedes et rapinae vel incendia vicissim fieri non cessabant, quibus adeo Franci sunt irritati, ut non iam vicissitudinem reddere, sed apertum contra eos bellum suscipere dignum iudicarent."

⁹Annales Regni Francorum a. 772, p. 34: ". . . ad Ermensul usque pervenit et ipsam fanum destruxit et aurum vel argentum, quod ibi repperit, abstulit." H. Fichtenau, The Carolingian Empire, tr. Peter Munz (Harper Torchbooks) New York, 1964, p. 71, argues strongly for booty as the mainspring of Frankish expansion, but he still must agree (p. 71) that religious and political concerns were of crucial importance, especially in Charles's relationship with the papacy.

Meanwhile in Italy, Hadrian's ability to oppose the designs of Desiderius waned under renewed military pressure from Pavia.¹⁰ Reluctantly, "compelled by necessity" in the biographer's opinion, Hadrian sent an appeal to Charles for help in recovering cities recently siezed by Desiderius.¹¹ As in the past, papal charges were answered by Lombard claims that justice had been done concerning St. Peter's possessions.¹² In response Charles sent his own missi, Bishop Georgius, Abbot Gulfardus, and Consilarius Albuinus to investigate the situation.¹³ They returned to Francia to support Hadrian's claims against Desiderius. In the interim Desiderius had been deterred from attacking Rome by the papal threat of anathema delivered to him by three of Hadrian's bishops.¹⁴ Charles's missi then returned to Italy but they were unable to

¹⁰Vita Hadriani, p. 493: "Sed nihil aput eum impetrare valuerunt; potius permanens in sua iniquitate, multa civitatibus ac finibus Romanorum inferre faciebat exomnis parte mala, magnas conminationes dirigens eidem praecipuo pontifici se cum universis Langobardorum exercitibus properaturum, Romanam civitatem constringendum."

¹¹Ibid. "Etdum in magna angustia ac tribulatione consisteret, necessitate compulsus, direxit suos missos marino itinere cum apostolicio litteris ad . . . Carolum . . . deprecans eius excellentiam ut sicut suos pater . . . Pippinus, et ipse succurreret atque subveniret sanctae Dei Ecclesiae et adflictae Romanorum seu exarchatus Ravennantium provinciae, atque plenarias beati Petri iustitias et abstultas civitates ab eodem Desiderio rege exigeret."

¹²See below, fn. 14.

¹³Vita Hadriani, p. 494.

¹⁴Ibid. "Dunque haec omnia disposiusset, ex templo, facto in scriptis anathematis verbo, direxit eidem Desiderio regi tres episiopos . . . pretextans eum in eadem obligationis exhortationisque verbo et adiurans per omnia divina misteria ut nullo modo finibus Romanorum sine eius absolutione ingredi aut conculcari praesumpsisset . . . Susceptoque eodem obligationis verbo per antefatos episcopos, ipse Langobardorum rex ilico cum magna reverentia a civitate Vitervense confusus ad propria reversus est . . . Post haec coniunxerunt ad sedem apostolicam missi . . . Caroli . . . inquirentes si praefatus Langobardorum rex abstultas civitates et omnes iustitias beati Petri reddidisset sicut false Franciam dirigebat, adserens se omnia reddidisse; et satisfacti sunt presentabiter nihil ab eo redditum fuisse."

persuade Desiderius to return papal lands.¹⁵ Desiderius's intransigence at this point foreshadowed his responses later to overtures from Charles for a negotiated peace.¹⁶

According to Einhard, Charles "had similar, or rather just the same grounds for declaring war that his father had"¹⁷ One possible difference that Einhard failed to mention suggests itself. Obscured by the immediate problem of Desiderius was the potential danger to Charles's tie with Rome posed by the ambitious Duke of Bavaria, Tassilo. In 755 he had aided Pepin in his war with Aistulf, but by 773 Tassilo was following an independent course aimed ultimately toward turning a duchy into a kingdom. Tassilo's aspirations in this direction were made clear in one of his official documents of 769 in which he styled himself a king. Other signs appeared after 769 to indicate that Tassilo desired to strengthen his position.

During Hadrian's clash with Desiderius in 772 news reached Rome of Tassilo's efforts on behalf of the missionary movement in Cilicia.¹⁸ Then, in the same year, Tassilo boldly ignored his father-in-law's dispute with Hadrian and sent his son to Rome to be baptized by the pope.¹⁹ The

¹⁵Ibid. "Ipsi itaque Francorum missi properantes cum apostolicae sedis missis declinaverunt ad . . . Desiderium; qui et constanter eum deprecantes adhortati sunt, sicut illis a suo rege praeceptum extitit, ut antefatas quas abstuberat civitates pacifice beato Petro redderet, et iustitias parti Romanorum fecisset."

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 494-495.

¹⁷Vita Karoli Magni, c. 6, p. 446: "Sed licet sibi et patri belli suscipiendi similis ac potius eadem causa subesse videretur; haud similis tamen et labore certatum, et fine constat esse completum."

¹⁸Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 132.

¹⁹Ibid.

Bavarian duke was apparently courting favor with Hadrian, perhaps with the hope that Hadrian would supply the same religious sanction to Tassilo's quest for royal power that Zacharias and Stephen II had given to Pepin.

To what extent this policy was known to Charles it is not possible to say. But his missi could have learned of Tassilo's attempts to build closer ties with Rome when they investigated the conflicting claims of the pope and the Lombards in 773. Charles needed to act far more urgently in 773 than he had early in 772 in the light of Tassilo's ambitious policy. The Franco-Lombard war of 773-774 was possibly as much a struggle between Charles and Tassilo for the spiritual allegiance of Rome as it was between Charles and Desiderius. Tassilo was more of a menace because his methods relied less upon internal subversion of the curia or brute force and more upon gearing his political policies to meet the religious objectives of the Roman missionary church founded in Bavaria by Boniface.

In the light of the Bavarian problem, Charles probably did not want Desiderius to accept peace terms. The time had come to remove the Lombard threat and to separate Bavaria and Rome physically, and if possible, spiritually. The offer of peace terms to Desiderius placated pro-Lombard sentiment among the Franks; and, when the desperate Lombard king turned them down, Charles invaded Italy.²⁰ Desiderius,

²⁰Vita Hadrianus, p. 494: ". . . Carolus Francorum rex direxit eidem Desiderio suos missos . . . deprecans ut easdem quas abstulerat pacifice redderet civitates et plenarias parti Romanorum faceret institias, promittens insuper ei tribui XIII milia auri solidorum quantitatem in auro et argento. Sed neque deprecationibus, neque muneribus eius ferocissimum cor flectere valuit. Nihil enim optinentes ipsi missi Francorum ad praefatum suum christianissimum regressi sunt regem.

like Aistulf, offered brief resistance and then retreated behind the walls of Pavia. Unlike Aistulf, however, Desiderius was in no hurry to come to terms with Charles. Either he feared that Charles would depose him or that the Lombard nobility would desert him or possibly both.²¹

Although Desiderius apparently expected the worst from Charles, the Frankish king failed to give any clear indications of his intentions during the siege of Pavia.²² When Spoleto sought the protection of Rome very early in the war, judging from the papal biographer's references,²³ Charles gave no sign that he was disturbed by Hadrian's effort to capitalize upon Desiderius's weakness. If Charles had planned by that early time to take Lombardy he did not seem prepared to rule all that Desiderius had claimed to govern. On this matter, Charles reflected his father's lack of concern for any area of Italy not immediately related to the Lombard threat.²⁴ From yet another point of view, however, Charles seemed interested in Lombardy, beyond restraining the menace to Rome, only insofar as Lombardy harbored potential rivals to his

²¹Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 144.

²²Ibid., p. 150. Abel regards the period of the siege of Pavia before Easter 774 as the time when Charles decided to depose Desiderius. We are tempted to agree although the position is conjectural. See Duchesne, Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes, p. 103 for the view that the decision to depose Desiderius followed Easter 774 and was Charles's independent decision which invalidated the so-called Donation of Charles that had intended the suppression of the Lombard Kingdom.

²³Vita Hadrianus, pp. 495: "Nam Spolitini et Reatini, ab quanti eorum utiles personae, antequam Desiderius seu Langobardorum eius exercitus ad clusas pergerent, illi ad beatum Petrum confugium facientes praedicto sanctissimo Adriano papae se tradiderunt et in fide ipsius principis apostolorum atque praedicti . . . pontificis iurantes, more Romanorum tonsorati sunt."

²⁴See above, Ch. II.

position in Francia. Observers of Charles's actions, governed by experience with the Franks in the past and by assumptions about the role of the papacy in Italy, were able to draw their own conclusions.

Unfortunately, the biographer of Pope Hadrian is the only writer to leave a record of his impressions of Charles's role in Italy down to June, 774.²⁵ As was suggested above, the biographer couched his account of events from 772 until August, 773, in terms of the general theme of Hadrian's singlehanded struggle for papal independence. Although the central issue in that period was the Lombard threat, the biographer also attempted to indicate his idea of the limited role which he expected the Franks to play in Roman affairs.

Frankish interests were protected, as the biographer carefully recorded, in the discussion of Desiderius's attempts to force Hadrian to anoint the sons of Carloman.²⁶ However, though the Franks had an interest in seeing to it that the murderers of their allies, Christopher and Sergius, received punishment, Hadrian carefully avoided any moves that would have expanded Frankish influence over these proceedings. Hadrian appealed not to Charles but to the Eastern Emperor for a place of exile for the murderers even though the pope perhaps risked renewed imperial attempts to assert greater authority over Rome.²⁷

²⁵Abel, Jahrbücher, pp. 161-162 and Duchesne, L. P., p. ccxxxiv.

²⁶See above, fn. 5.

²⁷Vita Hadriani, p. 490: ". . . atque deprecans eorum imperialem clementiam ut pro emendatione tanti reatus ipsum Paulum suscipi et in ipsis Graciae partibus in exilio mancipatum retineri praecepissent."

In the biographer's record we find none of the profound ideological themes exalting the Franks that had especially characterized some of Pope Paul's letters to Pepin.²⁸ The Papal-Frankish alliance was preserved, but apparently only on a strictly military basis. The papacy was left free to carry out Roman political objectives in central Italy, or so the biographer apparently assumed. This assumption appears to have been conditioned by the idea that Charles had no greater role to play than that of military defender of the Romans.²⁹

Thus, we find in the full account of the submission of Spoleto and other areas to Rome not the slightest sign that Charles had protested vigorously enough to dampen the biographer's enthusiasm.³⁰ Charles's inaction gave license to the biographer to incorporate into his account of events the impression that Charles endorsed papal independence in Italy. Charles's greatest interest, in the biographer's estimation, was to eliminate the rivals which Desiderius had tried to create. Thus, we read that Charles detached a portion of his army to attack Verona where Gerberga and her sons had sought refuge.³¹ Their capture was speedily

²⁸See Miller, pp. 125-128.

²⁹*Vita Hadriani*, p. 493: ". . . direxit suos missos marino itinere cum apostolicas litteras ad excellentissimum Carolum, a Deo protectum regem Francorum et patricium Romanorum, deprecans . . . ut sicut suus pater . . . Pippinus, et ipse succerreret atque subveniret sanctae Dei Ecclesiae ad adflicte Romanorum seu exarchatus Ravennan-tium provinciae atque plenarias beati Petri iustitias et abstullas civitates ab eodem Desiderio rege exigeret."

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 495-496.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 496: "Et dum agnovisset fugam arripuisse in Veronam praenominatum Adelgis, relinquens plurimam partem ex suis exercitibus Papiam, ipse quoque cum abquantis fortissimis Francis in eadem Veronam properavit civitatem. Et dum illuc coniunxisset, protinus Autcarius et uxor adque filii saepius nominate Carolmanni propria voluntate eidem benignissimo Carulo regi se tradiderunt."

accomplished. Nothing further of the Frankish king's activities is reported until we hear that he undertook an unannounced visit to Rome.³²

It is only logical that the biographer chose to avoid language that exalted the role of Charles. The biographer apparently was trying to convince his audience that Hadrian's change of policy was necessary. Aside, of course, from the pro-Lombards, the one group probably least anxious to call upon the Franks for aid was the lay aristocracy who had provided Hadrian with an important source of strength to resist Paulus Afiarta. Hadrian had been "compelled by necessity" to call upon Charles, and once committed the pope did not try to retreat because he knew that Rome could not resist the full weight of Lombard arms.

The Frankish intervention, from the biographer's point of view, did not mean the end of the Roman nobility's aspirations in Italy, contrary perhaps to the idea of those among the nobility who had watched their desire for a role in papal affairs thwarted by Pepin in 757 and again by Charles and Carloman in 769.³³ As if to demonstrate that the Romans need not fear the Franks, the biographer lingered over the papal acquisition of Spoleto. Charles perhaps appeared too absorbed with his own concerns about potential rivals, in the estimation of the biographer, to give much attention to papal activities in an area outside the traditional

³²Ibid., "Et dum per sex mensum spatium ipse Francorum rex Papiam demoraretur in obsessione ipsius civitatis magnum desiderium habens ad limina apostolorum properandum, considerans quod et sacratissima paschalis festinitas adpropinquasset . . . hic Roman per Tusciae partes properavit . . . Cuius adventum audiens antedictus beatissimus Adrianus papa quod sic repente ipsi Francorum advenisset rex, in magno stupore et extasi deductus"

³³See above, pp. 79-80, 86-87.

range of Frankish interests in Italy. The biographer's purpose, if he wrote for a special audience, or only as a member of the group concerned with the future of the Roman nobility, was to convince others, or possibly only himself, that Hadrian's change of policy in 773 was necessary and full of promise for the future of Rome in Italy.

Although he emphasized the point that Charles came to Rome in 774 as a pilgrim for the occasion of Easter,³⁴ the biographer continued to stress the theme of papal independence, a view most likely to appeal to a Roman audience. Hadrian was portrayed on two occasions as the temporal ruler of Rome, a position that Charles seemed to accept willingly enough since the pope's power over Rome was closely associated with his spiritual position.

As if to underline Hadrian's official capacity at this time, the biographer chose to compare Charles's reception to that given the Exarch of Ravenna.³⁵ This was done not so much to identify Charles's role but to establish Hadrian's position with respect to the Frankish king. At least, it seems logical to assume this to be the case since the biographer, as a Roman, would naturally be more concerned to establish the point of Hadrian's temporal position.

³⁴See above, fn. 32.

³⁵*Vita Hadriani*, p. 497: "Et dum adpropinquasset fere unius miliario a Romana urbe, direxit universas scholas militiae una cum patronis simulque et pueris qui ad didicendas litteras pergebant, deportantes omnes ramos palmarum adque olivarum, laudesque illa omnes canentes, cum adclamationum earundem laudium vocibus ipsum Francorum susceperunt regem; obviam illi eius sanctitas dirigens venerandas cruces, id est signa, sicut mos est exarchum aut patricium suscipiendum, eum cum ingenti honore suscipi fecit.

The scene depicting Charles's approach to the Church of St. Peter where Hadrian waited on the porch to greet him also illustrates the biographer's tendency to focus upon Hadrian's temporal power. Having made his way on foot through the assembled ranks of Romans, Charles ascended the steps of St. Peter on his knees in the manner of a pilgrim, and at the top, Charles rose and clasped Hadrian's hand.³⁶ One recent historian has suggested that this incident reflected Charles's determination to show obeisance only to St. Peter and not to his Vicar.³⁷ While that seems a reasonable interpretation of Charles's behavior, it is possible that, from the biographer's point of view, Charles recognized Hadrian as a temporal equal. Again, the biographer, as a Roman, could logically be expected to be more concerned about the significance of Charles's acts from the Roman, not the Frankish, point of view. His support of the drive for papal independence probably led him to interpret Charles's behavior in a light favorable to his central theme. Thus, the point was not that Charles made a distinction between the roles of St. Peter and Hadrian, but that he treated Hadrian as a temporal ruler on a

³⁶Ibid.: "Ipse . . . carolus magnus Francorum rex et patricius Romanorum . . . descendens de eo quo sedebat equo, ita cum suis indicibus ad beatum Petrum sedestris properare studuit. Quod quidem antedectus almificus pontifex diluculo surgens in eodem sabbato sancto cum iniverso clero et populom Romano ad beatum Petrum properavit ad suscipiendum eundem Francorum regem, et in gradibus ipsius apostolicae aula eum suo clero prestolavit. Coniungente vero eodem . . . Carulo rege, omnes grados singillatim euisdem . . . Petri ecclesiae deosculatus est . . . Eoque suscepto, mutuo se amplectantes, tenuit isdem . . . Carolus rex dextram manum antedicti pontificis et ita in eandem venerandam aulam Petri principis apostolorum ingressi sunt."

³⁷A. Kleinclausz, Charlemagne (Paris, 1934), p. 119.

par sufficiently equal to Charles for the neutral greeting of a handshake.

Once inside the Church, after an impressive greeting by the assembled clergy, Hadrian and Charles moved to the confession of St. Peter where both knelt and prayed for a Frankish victory over Desiderius.³⁸ Then the biographer added that Charles humbly requested permission to enter Rome.³⁹

Having satisfied himself that Charles willingly acknowledged Hadrian's temporal power in Rome, the biographer passed briefly over Charles's participation in Easter observances, and related the account of the historic meeting of 6 April 774 before the tomb of St. Peter. According to his version of the meeting, possibly acquired from one of the milites in Hadrian's entourage,⁴⁰ Charles, in the presence of his advisors, responded to Hadrian's entreaties by reviewing the so-called Donation of Pepin and agreeing "of his own free will" to renew

³⁸*Vita Hadriani*, p. 497: ". . . laudem Deo et eius excellentiae decantantes universus clerus et cuncti religiosi Dei famuli, extensa voca adclamantes: 'Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini' et cetera. Sicque cum eodem pontifici ipse Francorum rex simulque et omnes episcopi, abbates et vidicis et universi Franci qui cum eo advenerant, ad confessionem beati Petri adpropinquantes seseque provi ibidem prosternentes, Deo nostro omnipotenti interventionum suffragia eiusdem principis apostolorum concedere iussit victoriam."

³⁹*Ibid.*: "Expletz vero eadem oratione, obnixe deprecatus est isdem Francorum rex antedictum almificum pontificem illi licentiam tribui Romam ingrediendi sua orationem vota per deversas Dei ecclesias persolvenda."

⁴⁰*Ibid.* p. 498: "agressus praenominatus pontifex cum suis iudicibus tam cleri quamque militiae"

it.⁴¹ The extent of that grant was then set forth by describing a line across northern Italy that signified the transfer of almost three-fourths of Italy to Rome.⁴² Charles swore a mighty oath to fulfill his promise and copies of the agreement were drawn up and distributed.⁴³

Needless to say, the accuracy of the biographer's account of the meeting has been debated by many historians. Interpretations have ranged from those who accept the account as an accurate, contemporary record to those who charge the biographer with an outright forgery.

⁴¹Ibid.: " . . . pariterque cum eodem rege se loquendum coniungens, Constantes eum deprecatus est atque ammonuit et paterno affectu adhortare studuit ut promissionem illam, quam eius . . . genitor Pippinus quondam rex et ipse . . . Carolus cum suo germano Carlomanno atque omnibus iudicibus Francorum fecerant beato Petri et eius vicario . . . dommo Stephano iuniori papae, quando Franciam perrexit, pro concedendis diuersis civitatibus ad territoriis istius Italiae provinciae et contradendis beato Petro eisque omnibus vicariis in perpetuum possidendis, adimpleret in omnibus . . . Et propria voluntate bono ac libenti animo, aliam donationis promissionem ad instar anterioris ipse . . . Carolus Francorum rex adscribi iussit"

⁴²Ibid.: " . . . a Lunis cum insula Corsica, deinde in Suriano, deinde in monte Bardone, id est in Verceto, deinde in Parma, deinde in Regio; et exinde in Mantua atque Monte Silicis, simulque et universum exarchatum Ravennantium, sicut antiquitus erat, atque provincias Venetiarum et Istria; neconon et cunctum ducatum Spolitinum seu Beneventanum."

⁴³Ibid.: "Factaque eadem donatione et propria sua manu eam ipse . . . Francorum rex eam conroborans, universas episcopos, abbates, duces, etiam et grafiones in ea adscribi fecit; quam prives super altare beati Petri et postmodum intus in sancta eius confessione poventes, tam ipse Francorum rex quamque eius indices, beato Petro et eius vicario . . . Adriano . . . sub terribile sacramento sese omnia conservaturos qui in eadem donatione continentus promittentes traderunt." Ibid.: "Apparem vero ipsius donationis eundem Etherium adscribi faciens ipse . . . Francorum rex intus super corpus beati Petri, subtus evangelia quae ibidem osculantur pro firmissima cautela et aeterna nominis sui ac regni Francorum memoria propriis suis manibus posuit."

Duchesne, for example, accepted the whole record and tried to explain Charles's later change of heart upon the basis of changed political realities which Hadrian eventually accepted.⁴⁴ The fall of the Lombard Kingdom and the assumption of the Lombard crown by Charles negated the papal concern for its security upon which it had advanced its claim to so vast an area, according to Duchesne.⁴⁵ Hadrian's trouble later with Ravenna convinced him of the need to moderate papal aspirations to rule in Italy.⁴⁶ By 781, he had abandoned his claims and had released Charles from his promise of 774.⁴⁷

Another explanation advances the thesis that what Charles really promised was to return papal patrimonial lands within the areas cited by the biographer. Among the adherents to this view of the promise of 6 April one finds Abel and Lindner.⁴⁸ But, as Hodgkin has noted, although this is a convincing explanation of Charles's intentions, there is simply nothing in the biographer's account to suggest that this was Charles's aim.⁴⁹

Other historians, unable to accept the idea that Charles willingly gave away most of Italy to Rome, have built interpretations of this document on the argument that references to territories were interpolations inserted in the text to clarify a much vaguer statement actually made in

⁴⁴Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes, pp. 104-106 and L. P., p. cccxxxvi.

⁴⁵L. P., p. cccxxxvi.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Abel, FDG, I (1860), 459, 471-472. Theodor Lindner, Die sogenannten Schenkungen Pippins, Karls des Grossen und Ottos I an die Ppste (Stuttgart, 1896), as summarized in Hodgkin, VII, 390-391.

⁴⁹Hodgkin, VII, 391, 392.

774 regarding Charles's obligations to Rome. In developing his thesis that Papal-Frankish alliance had never been a clearly defined legal arrangement, Wilhelm Martens asserted that a disgruntled cleric in 781 took the opportunity to register his dismay at the meagre territorial gains which had followed the defeat of the Lombards.⁵⁰ To keep alive hope that some future Frankish king would be more generous, in order to remove from Charles the stigma of being an oathbreaker, the additional territories were tacked on to the sketchy account of the 774 meeting then at hand. In this way, according to Martens, an ill-defined oral agreement became a written document of a formal agreement.

More recently, a French historian, E. Griffé, following a course marked out by Soltet, adapted the interpolation thesis to his own idea of the events of 6 April 774.⁵¹ Unlike Duchesne, Griffé insisted that papal claims to lands in Italy between 774 and 781 were very moderate.⁵² Hadrian stubbornly persevered in good relations with Charles, even though the pope did not like it when Spoleto slipped from Roman control.⁵³ Charles's "deception" in the matter of Spoleto prompted the Frankish king to make other offerings to Rome in 781.⁵⁴ The effect, according to Griffé, was to raise Roman aspirations to recover territories long ago

⁵⁰Martens, Die römische Frage, pp. 159-161. Hodgkin, VII, 393-394.

⁵¹E. Griffé, "Aux origines de l'Etat pontifical: Charlemagne et Hadrian Ier (772-795)" BLE, (1954), 65-89.

⁵²Ibid., p. 70.

⁵³Ibid., p. 80.

⁵⁴Ibid.

lost to the Lombards.⁵⁵ It was in 781 that the interpolations were added to the biographer's account which had until then only recorded Charles's renewal of his father's promise concerning Ravenna.⁵⁶

Undoubtedly the issue can never be resolved in favor of any argument unless new evidence can be found to corroborate or deny the biographer's account. About all that historians can agree upon in this debate is that Charles did make some promise to Hadrian on 6 April 774. The king probably confirmed in some general way Hadrian's claim to the Exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis based upon Pepin's promise regarding these areas. But even this assumption can be challenged.⁵⁷ In addition, Charles probably restored the cities taken during the recent crisis by Desiderius.⁵⁸ And, if we can trust Hadrian's claim in a later letter to Charles, the king also recognized the papal fait accompli of rule over Spoleto, by offering it as a religious gift.⁵⁹

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 82.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 82.

⁵⁷Hodgkin, VII, 391. Griffé, BLE, (1954), 74. Abel, FDG, I, (1860), 461. See below, Chap. VI.

⁵⁸Vita Karoli M., c. 6, p. 446: "Karolus post inchoatum a se bellum non prius destitit quam . . . omnes Romanis erepta restitueret et res a Longobardorum regibus ereptae Adriano Romanae ecclesiae rectori restituae." Annales Petaviani, a. 774 MGH, Scriptores, I, p. 16: "Et domnus rex Karolus, missis comitibus per omnem Italiam laetus sancto Petro reddidit civitates quas debuit."

⁵⁹Codex Carolinus, ep. #56, p. 581: ". . . quia et ipsum Spoletinum ducatum vos praesentiliter offeruistis protectori vestro beato Petro principi apostolorum per nostram mediocritatem pro animae vestrae mercede." See below, Chap. VI.

The size of Charles's donation to Rome is not the only factor that casts doubt upon the truth of the biographer's report, if he intended it to be an accurate record of Charles's promise and not, as we think, simply a statement of Roman hopes for the future. The method of making the donation was clearly a radical departure from practices established since 756. The whole thrust of Frankish involvement in the territorial question in Italy had been toward cautious investigation of conflicting claims, not spontaneous acquiescence in papal demands.⁶⁰ Pepin perhaps had made that mistake before his anointment in 754, but subsequent land disputes had seen Frankish missi dispatched to inquire into the merits of the various claims.

After Pepin's death the Franks continued to exercise a caution that reflected their due regard for the complexity of the land question in Italy where, for centuries, possession of some areas of central Italy had shifted back and forth many times. Although Charles intervened vigorously in Ravenna in 770, as we have seen,⁶¹ he imitated Pepin and sent missi to investigate Pope Stephen III's claims in Spoleto.⁶² Though the issue was decided in the pope's favor, the point remains that Charles, like his father, understood the need for careful investigation before attempting to settle territorial disputes. In addition, it should be noted that Charles's action in Ravenna in 770 suggests that there was no doubt in Frankish circles regarding papal jurisdiction in the area. Spoleto and Benevento, however, were areas with which the Franks had had little

⁶⁰Miller, pp. 97, 99-100.

⁶¹See above, Chap. IV, p. 98.

⁶²Codex Carolinus, ep. #47, p. 565.

significant contact before 770 since Pepin had deliberately chosen to exclude them from his narrow range of interests in Italy.

If Charles had not carefully investigated territorial disputes in Italy the result no doubt would have been that his court would have been clogged with plaintiffs from the lands in question, bearing evidence of their claims. This perhaps had happened to Pepin in 755,⁶³ and Frankish policy since then had in part been directed toward avoiding a recurrence of this situation.

There is little to support the thesis that Charles was "dazzled" by his visit to Rome into departing from this cautious procedure and giving up so much of Italy.⁶⁴ The one thing most likely to have turned Charles's head was his reception upon arriving at Rome, and yet here Charles managed to preserve a sense of dignity and proportion that allowed him to perform his pilgrim's duties and still retain a sensible attitude toward Hadrian. With several days to reflect upon his surroundings, it seems more likely that, whatever the initial emotional response Charles might have had, in the presence of hard-headed advisers like Itherius,⁶⁵ the king probably approached his meeting on 6 April with a clear head. If so, he knew the problems of settling land claims that would come if he arbitrarily conceded the area in question to Rome. But those territorial limits, being either the biographer's idea of the meaning

⁶³See above, Chap. III , p. 60.

⁶⁴Kleinclausz, Charlemagne, p. 119.

⁶⁵Hodgkin, VII, 392-393, notes that efforts to blame Itherius somehow for deceiving Charles "are mere baseless conjecture."

of Charles's promise or the work of an interpolator, probably never entered the discussion in such specific terms.⁶⁶

The clearest evidence of the biographer's distortion of the events of 6 April lies in the fact that nowhere in his account did he trouble to mention that Hadrian made a very important promise to Charles. That promise, very clearly repeated in Hadrian's letters to the king, to be examined below in Chapter VI, required the pope to give to Charles the full spiritual resources of the papacy. No others were to receive the same kind of aid because no one else would ever be able to share with Charles his role as protector of the Church.⁶⁷ After God only Charles defended Rome, as Hadrian took care to stress perhaps at a time when the Romans were most anxious for him to retreat from his agreement with the king.⁶⁸

In order to gain a clearer picture of the nature of the alliance of 774, from the Frankish point of view, we must turn to the letters of Hadrian to Charles and to Charles's letter to Hadrian's successor,

⁶⁶Griffé, BLE, (1954), 74, stresses how little prepared Charles was to undertake detailed negotiations at Easter, 774. See below, Chap. VI.

⁶⁷Codex Carolinus, ep. #54, p. 577: "Nos quidem, veritate testante, coram Deo dicimus puriter et fideliter in vestro permenantes amore, iuxta quod inter nos praesentaliter in aulo apostolica confirmatum est, ea, quae ad nos perveniunt, de presenti cum magna cautela vobis stedemus denuntianda, quia post Deum et beatum Petrum alihi nostra spes et fiducia non est nisi in vestra a Deo protecta excellentia."

⁶⁸Ibid.: "Etenim innotescimus . . . christianitati vestrae, eo quod, quando a vestra regalia vestiga reversus est Leo antefatus archiepiocopus, in magnam superbiam ac tyrannicam elationem pervenit" We can assume that Leo's behavior raised criticism about the alliance with Charles which Hadrian (above fn. 67) continued to cling to.

Pope Leo III.⁶⁹ As was noted above, it was a mutual agreement between Hadrian and Charles, not merely one in which Charles responded of his own free will to Hadrian's plea for the renewal of Pepin's promise.⁷⁰ In failing to emphasize, or even to mention, the pope's promise to Charles, the papal biographer indicated his central concern, and that of the lay aristocracy, without attempting to reflect Charles's attitude toward the alliance.

In 795 Charles made his feelings on the subject clear to Hadrian's successor. In that often-quoted letter, Charles pointed out that it was the pope's duty to pray for the success of Frankish arms against the enemies of the Church while Charles himself fought the Church's battles.⁷¹

⁶⁹Especially, Codex Carolinus, ep. #62, pp. 589-590.

⁷⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #51, p. 571: "Alisit namque a nobis, carissime et nimis nobis dulcissimi fili, ut ea, quae inter nos mutuo coram sacratissimi corpus fautoris tui, beati apostolorum principis Petri, confirmavimus atque stabilivimus, per quovis modum iritum facere adtemptemus, quoniam et nos satisfacti sumus, qui et vos in nostra caritate firmiter esse permansuros." Ibid., ep. #52, p. 574: ". . . eo quod nimis desiderabiles sumus . . . vestrum conspicere vultum; quoniam- satisfaciat te veritas . . . - in eadem sponsione, quam invicem ante sacram evisdem Dei apostoli confessionem adnexi sumus, firmi atque incommutabiles diebus vitae nostrae cum universo nostro populo permanere satagimus. . . ."; Ibid. ep. #56, p. 581: ". . . quia - Deo teste dicimus - visi vestram cupimus exultationem et laetitiam, dum annuente Deo magna inter nos atque insolubilis caritatis concordia corroborata est, permanentis in his, quae mutuo inter nos asserentes confirmavimus."

⁷¹Epistolae Carolinae, ep #10, Monumenta Carolina, IV, ed. Philippus Jaffe, Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum (Berolini, 1867), pp. 354-357: "Vestrum est, sanctissime pater: elevatis ad Deum cum Moyse manibus nostram adjuvare militiam; quatenus, vobis intercedentibus, Deo ductore et datore populus christianus super inimicos sui sancti nominis ubique semper habeat victoriam"

From Charles's point of view the alliance of 774 was neither a legal contract nor a political settlement. It was above all a spiritual alliance formed in order to establish a formal religious ceremony in which the pope called down upon Charles the grace of God so that the king would be "everywhere followed by the apostolic benediction."⁷² This desire was the fundamental source of the differences between Charles's Italian policy and that of Pepin. The danger was that Charles's conception of Papal-Frankish relations would smother the feeble Roman Republic, as we shall see below in Chapter VI. It is not entirely clear from this letter that Charles implied a necessarily subordinate role for the pope in the West.⁷³ If the pope took a back seat in determining the direction of Frankish policy, he nevertheless held a crucial spiritual position, for upon his attention to the duty of calling upon St. Peter depended the success of Charles's efforts.⁷⁴ In this sense they were serving as equals, though in different functions, in order to advance the cause of St. Peter and the Church.

Beginning immediately after Charles left Rome in 774, Hadrian initiated the practice of marshalling the spiritual power of St. Peter, by

⁷²Ibid., p. 355: "Sed magnum divina nobis praevidebat gratis solatium, dum vos, vir venerande, in Locum illius subrogavit; ut esset, qui cotidie apud beatum Petrum . . . pro totius ecclesiae stabilitate atque pro salute nea neorumque fidelium immo et prototius prosperitate regni nobis a Deo intercederet et paterna pietate nos in filium sibi adoptaret dilectionis."

⁷³Winston, Charlemagne: from the Hammer to the Cross (New York, 1954), pp. 84-85, implies such a position in his view that Charles "was beginning [in 774] to see the papacy as the spiritual arm of the Frankish state."

⁷⁴Heinrich Fichtenau, The Carolingian Empire: The Age of Charlemagne, trans. Peter Munz (Harper Torchbooks, Harper & Row, New York, 1964), p. 61.

daily assembling the Roman clergy and the Roman people, to participate in special services either to call upon St. Peter for aid or to return thanks to him for his assistance.⁷⁵ At first these services were held to reinforce Charles in his struggle with Desiderius, but they were soon directed toward aiding the king in his war of conquest and conversion in Saxony.⁷⁶

This support was not merely a formality that Charles chose to observe. He was constantly concerned to know that Hadrian was faithful in the performance of his spiritual duties, as an undated letter written probably sometime in the period from 774 to 781 by Hadrian indicates.⁷⁷ Hadrian's response it should be stressed, was a reply to a letter from Charles;⁷⁸ it was not simply a piece of papal rhetoric unsolicited by the king.

⁷⁵Codex Carolinus, ep. #50, p. 570: ". . . ab illo die, quo ab hac Romana urbe in illis partibus profecti estis, cotidiae momentaneis etiam atque sedulis horis omnes nostri sacerdotes seu etiam religiosi Dei Famuli, monachi, per universa nostra monasteria simulque et reliquus populus tam per titulos quam per diaconos trecentos 'krieleyson' extensis vocibus pro vobis Deo nostro adclamandum non cessant flexisque genibus eundem . . . dominum Deum nostrum exorantes, ut et veniam dilectorem vobis et maximam prosperitatis laetitiam etiam et copiosas victorias vobis multipliciter e caelo concedat."

⁷⁶Ibid., ep. #53, p. 575: "Plenissimae enim satisfactus est . . . regum, qualis fortissimus ac validus ipse ianitor regni caelorum beatus Petri tuae extitit excellentiae adiutor, et quomodo eius sacris interventionibus omnipotens dominus Deus noster victoriam tibi tribuit regnumque Langobardorum tuae tradere vixit potestatis dicioni; et in antea magnum halicto fiduciam, quia, eius suffragis circumvallatus, tuis regalibus vestigiis caeteras barbaras nationes omnipotens Dominus substernet."

⁷⁷Ibid., ep. #62, pp. 589-590.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 589: ". . . benignissimae fili, honorabiles suscepimus syllabas"

Very possibly Charles had written to inform Hadrian of an impending campaign and sought assurances that St. Peter would be with the Franks. In reply, Hadrian said that Charles could certainly count on St. Peter's support. "Day and night without ceasing," according to the pope, he and his clergy and all Christians prayed humbly in the Confession of St. Peter for a Frankish victory, since a victory would bring the barbarous nations under Charles's rule, thereby exalting him and the Church as well.⁷⁹ Apparently Hadrian expected Saxon resistance to crumble before Charles, just as the Lombards had done. When that was accomplished, the pope then seemed to imply that Charles could be trusted to keep his promise to St. Peter, whom he had loved since his earliest childhood.⁸⁰ In closing, the pope expressed confidence that no evil men, meaning perhaps Archbishop Leo of Ravenna, would be able to separate Charles from the love he bore for St. Peter.⁸¹ Meanwhile, the pope assured Charles that everything was being done on his behalf in Rome to insure success.

From this letter, and from others to be examined in another place,

⁷⁹Ibid.: "Nos quidem die noctuque numquam desistimus, cum sacerdotes cunctoque christiano populo in confessione beati Petri . . . subpliciter exorare . . . victorem te super omnes barbaras nationes faciat, quatenus omnes sub tuo brachio umiliati vestigia pedum tuorum prorsus osculentur et ecclesia Dei (tua) a Deo instituta regali potentia nimirum exaltetur."

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 590: "Numquam enim credimus, quod semel pollicitus es super venerabile corpus beati Petri . . . quaelibet falsa potestas seu principatus poterit tuam firmissimam excellentiam segregare a caritate et amore, quam a cunabulis tuis beato Petro . . . habuisti . . ."

⁸¹See above, fn. 79-80.

one can detect the essentially spiritual quality of the alliance between Charles and Hadrian. We may presume that in the above letter Hadrian was repeating the terms of the alliance as Charles wanted to hear them, thus stressing the spiritual side of their agreement, just as Charles stressed this aspect of the agreement in his letter to Pope Leo.⁸² The pope did not fail to mention Charles's promise to Rome. However, we note the lack of an appeal for immediate action which suggests that Hadrian linked the exaltation of the Church to Charles's final victory over the "barbarians". The timetable probably changed as pressures on Hadrian in Rome increased or decreased.⁸³

To those historians determined to analyze Papal-Frankish relations within a strictly political or legal framework the significance of Hadrian's promise to Charles at this meeting has seemed slight. Caspar, for example, in his analysis of the role played by Rome in Frankish policy, asserted that Hadrian played only a peripheral part in the problems of Saxony and Bavaria.⁸⁴ To support this contention Caspar ignored the spiritual significance of the agreement of 774 and its

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Codex Carolinus, ep. #50, p. 570: "Et certe crede nobis, magne . . . rex . . . et maximam habeto fiduciam, quia, dum tu fideli studio in amore ipsius principis apostolorum secundam tuam promissionem permanseris et cuncta eidem Dei apostolo adimplere studueris, et salus tibi et immensa victoria ab omnipotenti Deo tribuetur indesinenter." Here victories apparently will follow from Charles's efforts to complete his promise rather than the other way around. Ibid., ep. #53, p. 575: "Sed . . . deprecor et obnixae peto . . . ut velociter ea, quae beato Petro pro magna animae tuae mercede . . . per tuam donationem offerenda spopondisti, adimplere iubeas"

⁸⁴Das Papsttum unter fränkischer Herrschaft, pp. 72-74.

implications to concentrate upon the point that Hadrian's letters revealed only a few instances in which the Pope concerned himself directly with Charles's difficulties in those areas.⁸⁵

In his analysis Caspar made reference only to a few, isolated signs of direct papal involvement in Frankish political concerns. A letter of 785, reflecting Charles's belief that the Saxon war at last had ended, indicated that the pope honored Charles's request for a period of special thanksgiving throughout his lands.⁸⁶ On another occasion, Hadrian replied to Charles's request for advice concerning measures to take against Saxons who lapsed into their old pagan ways.⁸⁷ As we shall see, Caspar's legalistic interpretation does not take into account the possibility that the mainspring of Charles's Italian policy after 774 had been to create a situation in which the spiritual alliance could function unhindered.

In the case of Bavaria, Caspar argues again that Hadrian played only a minor role as an "aide" to Charles in the realization of his desire to unseat Tassilo.⁸⁸ Caspar cites the warning delivered to Tassilo in 781 by papal envoys that he should recall his oath of loyalty to Charles. In 787, the Pope again played the part of "aide" by warning Tassilo that Charles would be held blameless if war should occur between them.⁸⁹

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid.; Codex Carolinus, ep. #76, pp. 607-608.

⁸⁷Caspar, Das Papsttum unter fränkischer Herrschaft, p. 72.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 74.

⁸⁹Ibid.

Beyond these manifestations of papal participation in Frankish affairs, Caspar found no significant instances of papal involvement. Caspar, like Hadrian's biographer, attempted to confine papal-Frankish relations within a structure far too narrow to reveal the far-reaching implications of the basically spiritual alliance which Charles and the pope attempted to establish in 774.

One possible explanation for the biographer's failure to mention Hadrian's promise to Charles at the meeting is that he wrote as a member of an audience hostile to or at least suspicious of the Franks. For the time being the biographer had persuaded himself that Charles had come to Italy to remove the Lombard threat and to guarantee without any strings attached that Rome would direct her own destiny. Bitter experiences later, perhaps by as early as the end of 774, would challenge this optimistic view of the future. His evaluation of the alliance, unlike the one later expressed by Hadrian's critics,⁹⁰ was unduly optimistic perhaps because he had chosen to read Charles's actions in Italy and in Rome as indications of the king's acceptance of an independent role for Hadrian in Italy.⁹¹ When it became clear after the middle of 774 that Charles would not rush to support the territorial aspirations of the Roman nobility, the biographer ceased his record of Hadrian's political activities and began a dull catalog of church restorations. It is quite possible

⁹⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #49, p. 568: "Et ecce inproperatur nobis a plurimus nostris inimicis, exprobrantes nos et dicentes: 'Quid vobis profuit, quod Langobardorum gens est abolita et regno Francorum subiugata? Et ecce iam nihil de his, quae promissa sunt, adimpletum est; insuper et ea, quae antea beato Petro concessa sunt a sanctae recordationis domno Pippino rege, nunc ablata esse noscuntur'."

⁹¹See above, pp. 122-126.

that the biographer's task was taken over by another author at this point and that the original writer joined the ranks of Hadrian's critics who sought to turn the pope away from his agreement with Charles.

Pope Hadrian's own attitude toward the territorial expansion of the papacy is difficult to establish precisely. He, along with his critics, appeared to think, first, that Charles had guaranteed the lands originally promised by Pepin.⁹² In addition, Hadrian later argued, in response to Charles's efforts to avoid trouble with Spoleto, that the king had given up this territory to Rome as a religious offering, "for the good of his soul".⁹³ Finally, the Pope also seemed to expect still greater "fruits" to accrue to Rome as a result of the arrangement made in 774, but he did not press specific claims to an area representing three fourths of Italy.⁹⁴ Hadrian later seemed far more concerned to hang on to the areas Rome had already acquired with the addition perhaps of territories long

⁹²Codex Carolinus, ep. #49, p. 568: "Sed magis peto te coram Deo omnipotente, ut ita disponere iubeas eundemque archiepiscopum sub nostra potestate contradere digneris, ut a nobis cunctam exarchatum disponatur, sicut saepe fatus domnus Stephanus, . . . temporibus . . . genitoris vestri, domini Pippini, disponere visus est" The need for clarification at this time (late 774) suggests that the details of papal holdings in the Exarchate had not been discussed fully in April.

⁹³See above, p. 130, fn. 59.

⁹⁴Codex Carolinus, ep. #53, p. 575: ". . . immensas referuimus grates, impensius pro vestra prosperitate eius divinam clementiam exorantes, ut confirmet isdem dominus Deus noster hoc ipsud in vestro florifero pectore, quatenus velociorem atque copiosum fructum sancta spiritalis mater vestra, Romana ecclesia, capud omnium ecclesiarum Dei, de vestra consequatur promissione." Ibid. ep. #55, p. 579: "Unde et copiosam a vobis suscipi prestolamus fructum, ut, sicut caepisti, bonum apus perficias tuisque temporibus sancta Dei ecclesia multo amplius exaltata permaneat quatenus omnipotens Dominus, intercedente beato Petro . . . dignam vobis remunerationem tribuat"

in dispute with Desiderius rather than to press unrealistic claims upon Charles.

But the pope had to respond to those, perhaps like the biographer, who expected much in return for the spiritual support of Rome. Hadrian's pressure upon Charles was thus the product in part of the pope's own possibly more modest ambitions for papal expansion and in part of his reflection of the demands of one of his major sources of support, the Roman nobility.⁹⁵ Periodically, from 774 until 778 Hadrian was under great pressure from this quarter to end the alliance with Charles and to seek Roman fortunes elsewhere, possibly in closer ties with Tassilo of Bavaria.⁹⁶

While the biographer's record is an interesting reflector of the Roman nobility's hopes for the future, it tells us little about the Frankish attitude toward Rome or toward Italy in general.⁹⁷ Absorbed by his task of describing the papal struggle for an independent role in Italy and of enlisting Charles's support for that policy on paper, the biographer did not inquire very deeply into Charles's motives either for invading Italy or for visiting Rome.

⁹⁵Hallenbeck, Church History, XXXVII (1968), 264-265 denies that Hadrian was the leader of an aristocratic faction because his long church career had detached him from this background. However, the nobility possibly saw Hadrian as their natural spokesman and put pressure on him as one who at least understood their interests. Necessity makes strange bedfellows, and Hadrian and the Roman party might have sought support from the lay nobles in 772 against the Lombard party. See Ibid. p. 269 when the author accepts the above view.

⁹⁶Codex Carolinus, ep. #51, p. 571: ". . . neque nulla nos posse huius mundi transitorii ac labentibus opibus vel humani suasioni blandimentis ab amore et dilectione vestrae inclytae sublimitatis vel ab ea, quae vobis polliciti sumus"

⁹⁷See above, pp. 118-119.

Charles came to Italy, as was said, in his role of Patricius Romanorum, that is, as the military defender of the Romans, from the biographer's point of view. A further motive implied in the biographer's account, was supplied by Hadrian's defense of Charles's interests, an act that by implication provided for Charles's intervention as a reasonable quid pro quo for papal support.⁹⁸ While these factors were probably important to Charles's decision to go to war in Italy, they do not necessarily represent the only reasons for his intervention. As was suggested above (p. 86), Charles's desire to end the Lombard menace might also have been reinforced by a need to consider the potential danger of Tassilo's efforts to strengthen his ties with Rome. If the biographer knew of these efforts, he did not trouble to mention them. Finally, and most importantly, Charles grasped more fully than had Pepin, how important the papacy was as a source of spiritual justification for his expansionist aims, which themselves were mixed with religious motives.

The visit to Rome was not inspired by papal acquisition of Spoleto, as was indicated above (p. 91). Charles's near indifference to this action was in keeping with past Frankish policy of Pepin who deliberately ignored efforts by Paul I to entangle the Franks in a wider question than the Lombard threat to Rome. Those who have argued to the contrary have been hard pressed to provide evidence for their position in view of Hadrian's blunt assertion that Charles had promised Spoleto to Rome in 774.

⁹⁸See above, pp. 120-121.

Thus, it was not questions of territory that drew Charles to Rome in 774. In part he came as a pilgrim as some have argued. In addition, and more important, he probably came seeking the spiritual support of the papacy in the war against Desiderius and also against the Saxons which was reopened in 774 by a Saxon retaliatory raid on Frankish territory. By securing Lombardy and by receiving Hadrian's support, Charles could turn his attention back to the conquest and conversion of Saxony. Charles's religious zeal drove him not simply to serve St. Peter in the narrow role of defender of Rome but also to serve him by expanding the scope of Christianity in the West.

Ultimately, as Hadrian frequently expressed it, Charles looked forward to the day when, with the aid of St. Peter, all the "barbarous nations" were brought under Frankish rule. Perhaps Charles implied during his discussions with Hadrian that the Church would prosper in the process by reaping a harvest of new Christians, although we cannot tell this from the biographer's account, and Hadrian appeared to relate the prosperity of the Church to the return of unspecified lands in Italy belonging to St. Peter. However, even as he expressed his hopes for the Church in Italy, Hadrian made clear in his correspondence that he and his clergy were faithfully putting into effect the spiritual sanctions which had been promised to Charles in 774. From 774 until 781, and beyond, Charles focused his attention, as we shall see below, upon removing potential or real obstacles to the smooth functioning of the spiritual alliance which he had formed with the pope.

CHAPTER VI

THE EXPANSION OF THE FRANKISH POLITICAL HORIZON IN ITALY

774-780

The expansion of the spiritual role of the papacy in Frankish military affairs, marked by the new alliance of 774, was a fundamental step in broadening the Frankish political horizon to include all Italy. The motive of Charles's policy, as this discussion will try to show, was not power for its own sake in Italy as some historians have assumed.¹ The goal of Frankish Italian policy, though never fully achieved between 774 and 780, was to remove or reduce the political burdens of Hadrian so that the full spiritual resources of Rome could be joined to the Frankish missionary - military program in Germany.

The gulf between Frankish theory and the actual status of Papal-Frankish relations in Italy was wide and deep. Instead of creating the clear separation of political and religious functions in Papal-Frankish

¹The impetus to political action, in the Realpolitik analysis of Frankish policy, was Charles's decision to become King of the Lombards which, it is assumed, naturally led him to adopt the aims of his predecessors on the Lombard throne. Abel, Jahrbücher, pp. 189-190. Caspar, Das Papsttum unter fränkischer Herrschaft, p. 39. Duchesne, Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes, p. 103. Abel, FDG, I (1860), 476-477. Hodgkin, VIII, 23-24. Kleinclausz, Charlemagne, p. 26. Martens, Die römische Frage, pp. 142-145. Gregorovius, Rome in the Middle Ages, II, 366. Mohr, Die Karolingische Reichsidee, p. 37, is more cautious; he indicates that the conquest of Lombardy and the "renewal of friendship" with Rome are in some uncertain way interwoven.

relations, Charles's Italian policy left a broad grey area in which Hadrian managed to preserve Roman claims for a political role in Italy.² In practice, the situation in Italy was far too complex to permit a simple solution like the one proposed by Charles to Pope Leo III.³ Nevertheless, as we shall see below, Charles tried to find ways to reconcile his view of the spiritual role of Rome with the reality of Roman political interests in Italy.

Charles's efforts to create a stable political order in Italy generated new problems in the process of solving old ones. The dispute over Ravenna, to be examined below, is only one case in point. Another example is that of Spoleto. In the course of resolving the conflict between Hadrian and Duke Hildebrand, Charles's missi perhaps hit upon a political compromise that in effect laid the foundation for a new political problem later on.⁴ Although Charles probably attempted to set limits upon the extent of Frankish involvement in Italy, he found himself finally committed by 781 to an open-ended policy that led him eventually into contact not only with all Italy but with the Eastern Empire as well.

Charles's behavior immediately following the meeting with Hadrian on 6 April 774 is a puzzle that the available sources cannot

²See below, pp. 165-170.

³See above, Chap. V, p. 134, fn. 71.

⁴See below, pp. 165-170.

solve.⁵ The negotiations with Archbishop Leo of Ravenna and the subsequent deposition of Desiderius in June are two acts which contrast sharply with the events of 6 April. But, as we have argued above (Chap. V, p. 133) the biographer's account of the meeting between Charles and Hadrian was a gross distortion of that encounter. The author's motives, it was indicated, were not so much those of a deliberate forger as those of one who, perhaps on the basis of information acquired from one of the milites present at the meeting, pieced together an account that reflected the hopes for the future of the Roman nobility. Guided by the assumption that Charles favored Roman independence in Italy, the biographer projected an optimistic view of the future which he expected the alliance to create. Perhaps it was only to win support for the alliance that the biographer apparently was willing to lie shamelessly about the extent of the lands conveyed by what probably was a vaguely defined territorial agreement.⁶

From Charles's point of view, however, the promise made by Hadrian to support the Franks in papal prayers in a formal ceremony was probably uppermost in his mind. The major political obstacle to

⁵Vita Hadrianus, p. 499 makes no mention of a meeting with Leo. It must be inferred from Hadrian's report in Codex Carolinus, ep. #49, p. 568: "Et in sua (Leo) potestate diversas civitates Emiliae detinere videtur . . . asserens, quod a vestri excellentia ipse civitates una cum universo Pentapoli illi fuissent concessae" Agnelli qui et Andreas Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis ed. O. Holder - Egger, MGH, Scriptores rerum Langobardorum et Italicarum saeculi VI - IX (Hanover, 1878), p. 381 gives no clue.

⁶We cannot rule out the argument that the precise list of lands was added later on, but that does not change our view of the biographer as one who was preparing a blueprint for Roman action rather than faithfully recording the terms of a legal agreement.

the implementation of the expanded spiritual alliance, as it appeared in the late spring of 774, was still Desiderius. As for Archbishop Leo we can only guess that Charles was asked to confirm possessions which the archbishop had held before,⁷ not knowing that Leo would attempt to parley Charles's support into an attempt to drive Hadrian out of the whole Exarchate of Ravenna.

When Pavia fell in June, 774, Charles at last had to face the question of how to avoid future trouble with the Lombards. Many factors probably contributed to his decision to claim Desiderius's title. Apparently there was some support for such a drastic step among the Lombards themselves.⁸ Perhaps Charles's own advisers favored this step as well, although we are unable to determine their role. Finally, with his perspective on Italy still limited to the Papal-Lombard dispute, judging by his willingness to acquiesce in the papal takeover in Spoleto,⁹ Charles probably saw the deposition of Desiderius as the surest way to prevent further distracting political quarrels from diverting the papacy from its spiritual duties.

But the smooth functioning of the Papal-Frankish spiritual alliance, according to Charles's idea of its purpose, was not assured by the deposition of Desiderius. On the contrary, the termination of the traditional Lombard pressure upon southern Italy prepared the way for the development of a far more complex political situation there. Freed from the fear of Lombard domination, the leaders of Ravenna and Spoleto

⁷See Martens, pp. 174-175.

⁸Abel, Jahrbücher, pp. 185-187.

⁹See above, Chap. V, pp. 123, 143.

imitated Rome in the attempt to carve independent positions for themselves. In the background, the aspirations of the Duke of Beneventum, the Eastern Emperor, and Desiderius's heir, as well as a number of lesser freebooters, all combined to increase pressure upon Rome's precarious political power. Rather than providing order and stability, the overthrow of Desiderius brought Italy to the brink of political chaos.

Soon after Charles returned to Francia to deal with the Saxons, who had made a retaliatory raid probably in the late spring or early summer of 774, Rome's fragile political position began to crumble.¹⁰ Archbishop Leo of Ravenna began a new drive for independence from papal authority. Leo successfully detached eight cities in the Exarchate from papal jurisdiction.¹¹ At the same time he boldly sent a missus into the Pentapolis to challenge papal authority there but, according to Hadrian, met with no success.¹²

Hadrian was disturbed by Leo's claim that Charles had conceded the territories in question to the archbishop.¹³ The pope sent Bishop Anastasius to remind Charles that papal claims to govern the whole

¹⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #49, p. 568: "Etenim . . . magne rex, postquam vestra excellentia a civitate Papia in partes Franciae remeavit, ex tunc tyrannico atque procacissimo intuitu rebellis beato Petro et nobis extitit." The letter probably reached Charles late in 774.

¹¹Ibid. Faventias, Forumpopuli, Farolini, Cesinas, Bobio, Comiacum, Imulas and Bononias were detached from the districts of Emiliae and Ferrara.

¹²Ibid. ". . . et continue direxit Theophylactum missum suum per universam Pentapolim, hoc ipsud denuntians, cupiens easdem Pentapolenses a nostro servito separare. Sed ipsi nullo modo sese illi humiliare inclinati sunt nec a servitio beati Petri et nostro recedere malverunt"

¹³See above, fn. 5.

Exarchate had been assured by Pepin and to order Leo to submit to papal authority.¹⁴ From this account we must conclude, with Martens, that the disposition of the "whole Exarchate" had not been decided either in 774 or in 756.¹⁵ Whatever the nature of the document presented to Charles for his examination in April, it had not been precise enough regarding the territorial limits of papal authority in the Exarchate, nor had the territorial promise which Charles made in 774.¹⁶

With nothing sharply defined regarding the entire Exarchate, perhaps Charles felt free to confirm the claims advanced by Leo soon after April 774. It is not necessary, however, to assume that Charles endorsed all of Leo's later claims as reported by Hadrian. Leo's loyalty was a valuable asset for which Charles apparently was willing to concede a measure of recognition to the archbishop's claims. Perhaps this came in an attempt to insure Leo's acquiescence in the new arrangement which Charles planned for the Kingdom of the Lombards. While we cannot be sure of this, it is possible that Charles wanted Leo's support in the event of a challenge to the Frankish hold on the Lombard throne.

Furthermore, it is also possible that Charles attempted to form a vague personal bond with Leo in order to restrain him from acting too

¹⁴Codex Carolinus, ep. #49, p. 569: "Sed magis peto te . . . ut ita desponere iubeas eundemque archiepiscopum sub nostra potestate contradere digneris, ut a nobis cuncta exarchatum disponatur, sicut saepe fatus domnus Stephanus . . . temporibus . . . genitoris vestri, domini Pippini, desponere visus est"

¹⁵Martens, pp. 174-175.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 175

vigorously against Hadrian. Perhaps the pope related his difficulties with Leo to Charles during their Easter meeting.¹⁷ It cannot be said with certainty that Charles's negotiations with Leo in 774 were necessarily inimical to Hadrian's interests. In any case, it seems that Charles himself prepared the foundation for a new problem that would be far more perplexing than that posed by Desiderius. From Leo's point of view, Charles had provided the wedge by which to force Ravenna and Rome apart, and the archbishop energetically exploited his advantage until his death in 777.

Although Hadrian thought the dispute with Leo could be settled by Bishop Anastasius's explanation of the details of the donation of Pepin, the Pope also noted that his "enemies" among the Romans had taken a much dimmer view of events.¹⁸ Hadrian's critics had concluded the Papal-Frankish alliance had been nothing less than a disaster. Not only had Rome failed to profit by the Frankish victory over the Lombards, but now it appeared that they were going to lose lands long in their

¹⁷Signs that Leo acted independently appear in the account of the death of Paulus Afiarta, *Vita Hadriani*, pp. 490-491: "Ecce qualem occasionem ipse archiepiscopus ecclesiae Ravennantium callide adhibuit ut ipsum Paulum extinguere valeret . . . Et continuo . . . archiepiscopus, acceristo consulare Ravennantium civitatis, praecepit ei ipsum interficiendum Paulum. Et dum reversus fuisset saepefatus sacellarius a Ticino, Ravennamque coniungeret, invenit praenominatum Paulum iam interfectum. Pro quo nimis increpavit eidem archiepiscopo cur praesumpsisset contra apostolicum praeceptum taliter de eodem Paulo agere."

¹⁸*Codex Carolinus*, ep. #49, p. 568: "Et ecce inproperatur nobis a plurimus nostris inimicis"

possession.¹⁹

The pressure to end the alliance had begun and would remain a major problem for Hadrian to contend with. The pope's troubles with critics of the alliance, presumably among the Roman nobility, was a problem to which Charles remained peculiarly indifferent. It is a tribute to Hadrian's political skill that he eventually managed to divert the attention of the nobility away from central Italy toward objectives in the south that were less likely to bring Rome into open conflict with allies or subjects of Charles. Thus, by 779 the future direction of Roman expansion had been established as Hadrian turned the nobility toward lands lying within the sphere of Beneventan influence or Greek control.²⁰

Before any response was received to the pope's first letter regarding the problem in Ravenna, Hadrian received news from Charles that the Franks had defeated the Saxons in the campaign of 774.²¹ Unlike his first letter, Hadrian's second letter was not strictly confined to papal problems. Before he could return to these affairs, Hadrian had to devote half of this communication to a discussion of matters presumably raised by the king. Charles's questions did not stray from his

¹⁹Ibid.: "Quid vobis profuit, quod Langobardorum gens est abolita et regno Francorum subiugata? Et ecce iam nihil de his, quae promissa sunt, adimpletum est; insuper et ea, quae antea beato Petro concessa sunt a . . . domno Pippino rege, nunc ablata esse noscuntur."

²⁰See below, pp. 165-170.

²¹Codex Carolinus, ep. #50, p. 569: "Reversus a vestris . . . regalibus vestigiis praescns Gausfridus . . . nostrisque praesentatus optutibus retulit nobis de inmensis victoriis, quas vobis . . . noster dominus Deus . . . concedere dignatus est"

central concern that the spiritual duties which Hadrian had agreed to perform were actually being fulfilled.

Hadrian first recorded his joy at the good news of Charles's victory. Immediately, Hadrian said, he "raised his hands to heaven" and praised God for aiding Charles.²² At the same time the pope prayed that God in his divine mercy would continue to protect Charles and multiply his victories until "all the barbarous nations were brought under his foot."²³ The pope expressed his belief that "while Charles will remain steadfast in love of St. Peter and will strive to complete that which he promised, God will provide both safety for the king and immense victories as well."²⁴

Departing from the topic of Charles's victory, Hadrian attempted to emphasize that the Romans had been dutifully looking after Frankish spiritual interests ever since Charles had left Rome in

²²Ibid., p. 570: "Quo audito, vehementi exultationis laetitia noster in Domino ovans relenatus est animus, et protinis, extensis palmis ad aethera, regi regum et domino dominantium opimas laudes retulimus"

²³Ibid.: " . . . enixius deprecantes ineffabilem eius divinam clementiam, ut et corporis sospitatem et anime salutem vobis tribuat et multipliciter de hostibus victorias tribuat omnesque barbaras nationes vestris substernat vestigiis."

²⁴Ibid.: "Et certe crede nobis magne . . . rex . . . et maximam habeto fiduciam, quia, dum tu fideli studio in amore ipsius principis apostolorum secundum tuam promissionem permanseris et cuncta eidem Dei apostolo adimplere studveris, et salus tibi et inmensa victoria ab omnipotenti Deo tribuetur indesinenter."

April 774.²⁵ The pope took pains to describe the ceremony that had become part of the daily ritual in Rome since April.²⁶ That these were not casual or formulary remarks can be seen by the opening clause in which Hadrian appeals to "God as our witness".²⁷ Was Hadrian's good faith already being challenged at Charles's court by critics as yet not directly acknowledged in this letter? The prefatory clause in which Hadrian appears to be taking a vow, rather than simply conveying information, suggests that this was the case.

Thus, the description of the ceremony invoking St. Peter's intercession was described not merely to convey impressive information but to dispel doubts reflected by Charles regarding papal performance of an essential function. To allay these fears Hadrian asserted that since the day Charles had left Rome, "every day all priests and monks plus three hundred deacons and nobles raised their voices in the Kyrie eleison. And, bowing without ceasing before God, they implored most merciful God to concede to Charles the greatest prosperity and joy and to multiply his victories."²⁸

²⁵Ibid.: "Et quidem nos Deum proferimus testem, cui omnium cordium occulta reserata existunt: ab illo die, quo ab hac Romana urbe in illis partibus profecti estis, cotidiae momentaneis etiam atque sedulis horis omnes nostri sacerdotes seu etiam religiosi Dei famuli, monachi, per universa nostra monasteria simulque et reliquus populus tam per titulos quam per diaconos trecentos 'krieleyson' extensis vocibus pro vobis Deo nostro adclamandum non cessant flexisque genibus eundem . . . dominum Deum nostram exorantes, ut et veniam dilictorum vobis et maximam prosperitatis etiam laetitiam et copiosas victorias vobis multipliciter e caelo concedat."

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

Hadrian's attempt to raise his spiritual prestige among the Franks was accompanied by a request for Charles to support the papal envoy, Gausfrid, by turning over to him certain farms. Gausfrid later was exposed as a fraud much to Hadrian's embarrassment. Coming at a time when the spiritual performance of the Romans was being challenged, this episode must have further undermined confidence that the pope could be relied upon.²⁹

It was not until 775, perhaps in the spring or early summer, that Hadrian again addressed a letter to Charles. Two Frankish missi, Archbishop Wilcharius and Abbot Dodo had brought news of Charles's "great prosperity" to Rome.³⁰ Apparently they also brought Charles's reaction to Hadrian's initial letter informing the king that some of the Romans had begun to question the value of the alliance. What had been Hadrian's response to his enemies? Did he remain firmly committed to the alliance? Perhaps these were questions raised by Charles which the pope attempted to answer first, even though, from Hadrian's point of view, the detention of his missus Anastasius, was perhaps a more serious concern.

²⁹Ibid.: "Quem, petimus, ut pro amore beati Petri et nostra postulatione benigne suscipere et protectionis atque favoris vestri opem illi impertire dignemini, deprecantes et hoc: ut masas illas quas ei concessistis, per vestram auctoritatis largitatem possideat." Ibid., ep. #51, p. 572: "Nam de Langobardo illo, qui cum eodem Anastasio misso nostro apud vos properavit nomine Gaidifridus, unde nobis significastis, ut dum vestro fuisset palatio, fraudem agebat adversus vestram regalitatem . . . sed testis nobis est Deus . . . per nullum argumentum eum infidelem vestrum cognovimus."

³⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #51, p. 571: "Quas relegentes et de vestra immensa prosperitate agnoscentes, nimis sumus gratulati, quoniam vestra prosperitatis nostra esse comprobatur letitia"

Once again calling upon God as his witness, Hadrian asserted that he strove always to receive Charles's missi with decent honor (in contrast, no doubt, to the treatment accorded Anastasius), and to carry out the king's wishes with sincere efforts.³¹ Nothing, neither the temptations of this world nor human persuasion, could turn the pope from the promise he had made to Charles.³² The agreement they had mutually made before the tomb of St. Peter remained in effect, and Hadrian intended to resist all efforts to make it void.³³ He was satisfied to remain firmly and permanently in Charles's love. Concerning those people who spread false stories about the pope in order to ingratiate themselves with Charles, Hadrian asked that the king ignore them.³⁴

Charles seemed unusually sensitive to charges originating at his court that somehow the pope was inadequate to the great and crucial

³¹Ibid.: "Sed cognoscit omnipotens Deus noster, cui archana cordis reſerata assistant, quia omnium miſſum a veſtris regales obtutibus directum cum nimio amore et decenti honore ſuſcipere ſtudemus et omnem veſtram voluntatem ſincera mentis integritate inplere ſatagimus atque cum proſperitate ad vos repedandum abſolvere feſtinamus"

³²Ibid.: ". . . neque nulla nos poſſe huius mundi transitori ac labentibus opibus vel humani ſuaſioni blandimentis ab amore et dilectione veſtrae inclytæ ſublimitatis vel ab ea, quæ vobis polliciti ſumus, declinari, dum hic advixerimus ſed firmi et ſtabiles in veſtra permanemus caritate."

³³Ibid.: "Abſit namque a nobis, . . . fili, ut ea, quæ inter nos mutuo coram ſacratiffimi corpus fautoris tui, . . . Petri, confirmavimus atque ſtabilivimus, per quovis modum irritum facere adtemptemus, quoniam et nos ſatisfacti ſumus, qui et vos in noſtra caritate firmiter eſſe permansuros."

³⁴Ibid.: ". . . ſi quis de nobis nequiſſimas dictas veſtris auribus proferre malverint, cupiens per fallatiam ſe vobis commendare, nullam credulitatis illi admittatis copiam"

task of calling upon St. Peter to defend the Franks. Leo of Ravenna probably contributed his share of stories to undermine Hadrian, but perhaps they found a receptive audience among some of the Frankish bishops who preferred to see the Frankish clergy responsible for prayers for the king's safety and success.³⁵ Anti-Roman sentiment, which we have encountered in the past, apparently died hard among the Franks.³⁶ The persistence of Anastasius in pressing papal claims,³⁷ which perhaps caused Charles to detain him, and the corruption of Gausfrid did little to enhance the spiritual prestige of Pope Hadrian.

Although smarting under the stings of Anastasius's detention, Hadrian was cheered to learn that Charles planned to visit Rome in October, 775.³⁸ The purpose of the visit, as Hadrian saw it, was to complete all that had been promised to St. Peter.³⁹ Whether in fact this was what Charles had in mind it is not possible to say. Perhaps

³⁵Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae*, pp. 53-54, traces the origin of the singing of laudes for the king to Francia between 751 and 774, probably closer to 751. It is, therefore, possible that a minority of Frankish bishops disapproved of the transfer, or at least the sharing, of this vital function to Rome in 774.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 58, and above, pp. 154, 156.

³⁷*Codex Carolinus*, ep. #51, p. 572: "Illud vero quod de Anastasiam missum nostrum indicastis, quod aliqua inportabilia verba, que non expediaebat, vobis locutus fuisset"

³⁸*Ibid.*: ". . . et pro hoc adhuc vos eum (Anastasius) detenetis, nimis noster fraglat animus: dum Langobardi et Raviniani fatentur inquietes, quia nullo modo rex in apostolico permanet caritate, dum eius missum apud se detinet." *Ibid.*: "Interea continebatur series vestrae excellentiae, quod, accedente proximo mense Octobrio dum Deo favente in partibus Italiae advenerilis."

³⁹*Ibid.*: ". . . omnia, quae beato Petro . . . et nobis polliciti estis, ad effectum perducere maturatae"

Charles intended to find some kind of workable compromise between Archbishop Leo and Pope Hadrian. The king's presence in Rome was perhaps seen as necessary to prevent any attempt by the lay nobility to depose Hadrian and set in his place someone who would seek Roman fortunes elsewhere. Hadrian's remarks in the first letter of 774 had probably sufficiently alarmed Charles to make this course of action necessary.

Another letter from Charles came during 775, this time brought by Possessor and Rabigaudus.⁴⁰ Charles's letter made reference again to his planned visit to Rome following the end of the campaign against the Saxons.⁴¹ His visit was to be, in part, a pilgrimage to holy places in Rome and in part a political visit.⁴² Hadrian was overjoyed to learn of the visit as he had been before. He was very eager that Charles should see with his own eyes how firmly Hadrian had adhered to his promise. Charles would be "satisfied of the truth" of papal claims to this effect when he arrived in Rome.⁴³ So anxious was he to see the king that he was prepared to meet with Charles at any place convenient

⁴⁰Ibid., ep. #52, pp. 573-574.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 573: "Itaque . . . fili, coniungentes ad nos fidelissimi vestri missi, scilicet Possessorem . . . seu Rabigaudum . . . detulerunt nobis . . . vestre sublimitatis syllabas."

⁴²Ibid.: " . . . ad limina protectoris vestri . . . Petri, ad implendis, quæ ei polliciti estis properare desideraretis."

⁴³Ibid., p. 574: " . . . eo quod nimis desiderabiles sumus . . . vestrum conspicere vultum; quoniam - satisfaciat te veritas . . . magne rex - in eadem sponsione . . . firmi atque incommutabiles diebus vitæ nostre cum universo nostro populo permanere satagimus"

should that be necessary.⁴⁴ Hadrian probably was under great pressure to produce results from his policy of cooperation with the Franks. This last remark suggests the urgency which he had begun to feel in this respect. A visit to Rome would not only dispel any doubts Charles might have had about the firmness of the papal commitment but it would, hopefully, lead to the desired territorial settlement which Hadrian's critics in particular expected.

Although it is possible that Charles's promised visit to Rome was a calculated effort to placate Hadrian which the king did not intend to carry out, it is also possible, and more likely, that Charles was disturbed by developments in Italy. The question of Ravenna was by now too difficult to settle through missi. Furthermore, Hadrian's remarks about enemies were possibly unsettling enough to cause Charles to investigate the situation for himself. In addition, the king seemed dissatisfied with Hadrian's assurances that all was being done to secure St. Peter's support, and perhaps wanted to see for himself that the Romans were meeting their obligations satisfactorily. Finally, perhaps Charles confidently expected a decisive victory over the Saxons to emerge in 775 that, in turn, would enable him to meet his obligation to St. Peter. It was at about this time that Charles had vowed either to convert or to exterminate the Saxons.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Ibid.: " . . . quia, si mora de vestro adventu provenerit, magna nobis imminet voluntas, ibidem in vestri obuiam, coniungere, gradiendum proficiscere. "

⁴⁵Annales Einhardi a. 775, p. 41: "Cum rex in villa Carisiaco hiemaret, consilium iniit, ut perfidam ac foedifragam Saxonum gentem bello adgrederetur et eo usque perseveraret, dum aut victi christianae religioni subicerentur aut omnino tollerentur. "

The missi whom Hadrian had sent to deliver this letter returned bearing another message from Charles. They brought reassurances of the "constancy of Charles's heart" regarding his commitment to St. Peter for which Hadrian returned thanks to God.⁴⁶ Hadrian included in his prayer for Charles's prosperity the hope that Charles would speedily bring forth the "many fruits" to the Roman Church that should follow from his promise.⁴⁷ Again, the pope registered the need for speed in fulfilling the king's promise since Peter would be an even greater protector before the power of Divine Majesty.⁴⁸ The note of impatience reflected in these remarks probably indicates once again the growing pressure upon Hadrian to show the results of his policy.

Without abandoning the idea that speed was essential in fulfilling Charles's promise to St. Peter, Hadrian took up another topic that probably was raised by Charles's letter. The king apparently sought assurances from the Pope that St. Peter still supported the Frankish

⁴⁶Codex Carolinus, ep. #53, p. 575: "Revertentes ad nos missi nostri . . . detulerunt nobis . . . vestrae apices; quorum series dum nostris recitaretur auribus, liguido cuncta in eis adnixa didicimus. Sed et ipsi . . . missi indeminutae nobis, quae illis a vobis iniuncta sunt, retulerunt plenissime, adserentes de vestra benivola puritate et magna cordis constantia, quam erga . . . Petrum . . . secundum vestram promissionem habere videmini. Pro quo nimio repleti gaudio . . . immensas referuimus grates"

⁴⁷Ibid.: ". . . impensius pro vestra prosperitate eius divinam exorantes clementiam, ut confirmet isdem dominus Deus noster hoc ipsud in vestro florigero pectore, quatenus velociorem atque copiosum fructum sancta spiritalis mater vestra, Romana nostra ecclesia . . . de vestra consequatur promissione."

⁴⁸Ibid.: ". . . velociter ea quae beato Petro . . . per tuam donationem offerenda spopondisti, adimplere iubeas, quatenus isdem princeps apostolorum multo amplius tibi protector et auxiliator apud divinae maiestatis potentiam existat."

cause.⁴⁹ Evidently, as he prepared for the Saxon campaign of 775, Charles felt the need for spiritual support. For a brief moment Charles must have hesitated to implement his program of conversion or extermination pronounced at a synod in this year. Unlike Pepin, whose military campaigns were undertaken without reference to the papacy, Charles appeared reluctant to proceed without St. Peter's approval as conveyed by Pope Hadrian.

Hadrian's support was firm and direct. He assured Charles that St. Peter's defense of the Franks had been clearly demonstrated in the defeat of the Lombards, and Hadrian remained confident that God would continue to aid the king in bringing all the barbarous peoples under his authority.⁵⁰ At the same time, the pope expressed his satisfaction with the alliance and his confidence that Charles would speedily complete his promise to St. Peter.⁵¹ Perhaps to separate himself from critics of the alliance, Hadrian asserted that "we know best what was firmly agreed upon by us in the confession of St. Peter, and 'we know whom we trust and

⁴⁹Ibid.: "Plenissimae enim satisfactus es, . . . regum, qualis fortissimus ac validus ipse ianitor regi callorum beatus Petrus tuae extitit excellentiae adiutor, et quomodo eius sacris interventionibus omnipotens dominus Deus noster victoriam tibi tribuit regnumque Langobardorum tuae tradere iussit potestatis dicioni; et in antea magnam habeto fiduciam, quia, eius suffragiis circumvallatus, tuis regalibus vestigiis caeteros barbaras nationes omnipotens Dominus substernet."

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.: "Quia nos omnino satisfacti sumus et magnam habemus fiduciam in vestri cordis constancia, celeriter vos omnia perfici, quae eidem apostolo apostolorumque principi spopondistis"

we are confident."⁵²

Meanwhile, even as Charles turned to Hadrian for spiritual support, the king was meeting with Archbishop Leo who had come to Francia unbeknown to Hadrian until Charles told him.⁵³ The results of this meeting were felt in Rome soon after Leo's return to Ravenna, as a letter written by Hadrian in late October, 775, testifies. Leo intensified his efforts to dislodge the papacy from the disputed areas of the Exarchate of Ravenna.⁵⁴ In addition, according to Hadrian, Leo interfered with a papal attempt to convey important news, probably of the impending revolt in Italy, and informed the Duke of Beneventum of the letter's contents.⁵⁵ This was probably a desperate effort to

⁵²Ibid.: ". . . optime enim cognoscimus, qualis firmitas et integritatis stabilitas inter nos Deo auspice in apostolica aula corroborata est, et 'scimus, cui credidimus, et certi sumus'."

⁵³Ibid.: "De vero eo, quod innotuists; ad vos properasse Leonem . . . nos quippe, testatur veritas, libentissimae acceptamus eos, qui ad vestra regalia accelerant vestigia, quoniam una delectio, una caritas eademque puritatis affectio inter nos consistit."

⁵⁴Ibid., ep. #54, p. 577: "De reliquis vero civitatibus Emiliae simulque et Gabello hi, qui a nobis ibidem ordinati sunt, ab eo exinde rproiecti sunt, et alios ex eis unculis detinet; at vero de civitatibus Imulense seu Bononiense ita profanizat dicens, quod vestra excellentia ipsas civitates minime beato Petro et nobis concessit, sed ipse sibi archiepiscopus a vobis fuisse concessas ac traditas asserit sub sua potestate permanendas."

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 576: "Itaque innotescimus excellentiae vestrae, suscepisse nos epistolam directam nobis a Iohanne patriarcha Gradense, Vicesima septima enim die Octobrii mensis ipsa ad nos pervenit epistola, et protinus . . . ipsam antefati epistolam cum his nostris apostolicis syllabis vobis transmisimum . . . Itaque valde tristest effecti sumus, quoniam sifoniatas bullas euisdem epistolae repperimus: a Leone archiepiscopo primitus relecta nobis directa est. Etin hoc conprobare potest excellentissima christianitas vestra qualis est fraudulenta fides ipsius Leonis . . . , quia non pro alio praesumserit eandem epistolam primitus reserare ac relegere, nisi ut omnia, quae ibi oscrupta sunt, ut certe omnibus manifestum est, adnuntiaret tam Argliis duci Beneventano. . . ." Ibid., ep. #57, p. 582.

discredit Leo on Hadrian's part, as most historians have assumed.⁵⁶

When no action to rectify the situation came from Charles in September or October of 775, Hadrian dispatched missi to Francia in November.⁵⁷ They were sent to plead the papal cause regarding Ravenna and to urge Charles, once more, to fulfill his promise. The pope made clear that he did not doubt the "constancy of Charles's heart" and that he waited to receive from Charles the "many fruits" which should come as a result of God's aid to Charles through the intercession of St. Peter.⁵⁸

But Leo, meanwhile, continued to deny papal authority in the Exarchate of Ravenna. Leo had even gone so far as to deny Count Dominic of Gebellum the power to rule that city.⁵⁹ Dominic, according to Hadrian, had been commended to the pope by Charles, probably in 774, and the pope had given his permission for him to rule

⁵⁶E. Caspar, Das Papsttum unter Fränkischer Herrschaft, pp. 40-44. Martens, pp. 174-175. Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 239, fn. 2.

⁵⁷Codex Carolinus, ep. #55, pp. 578-580.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 579: "Nos enim magnam fiduciam habemus in vestri cordis firma constantia, et certi sumus omnino de benigno mentis vestre proposito. Unde et copiosam a vobis suscipi prestolamus fructum, ut, sicut caepisti, bonum opus perficias tuisque temporibus sancta Dei ecclesia multo amplius exaltata permaneat, quatenus omnipotens Dominus, intercedente beato Petro principe apostolorum, dignam vobis remunerationem tribuat"

⁵⁹Ibid.: "Nam et Dominicum, quem nobis in ecclesia beati Petri tradidistis atque commendastis, comitem constituimus in quandam brevissimam civitatem Bagellensem, praeceptum eiusdem civitatis illi tribuentes: minime illum permisit ipsum actum agere, sed, dirigens exercitum vinctum eum Ravennam deduxit et sub custodia habuit."

Gabellum.⁶⁰ Perhaps Hadrian hoped that this insult to a Frankish official, if he was in fact a Frank, would prompt Charles to intervene.⁶¹ If so, the pope was disappointed.

So far, Charles's efforts to deal effectively with Leo and Hadrian at the same time had failed to produce harmony and peace between the two. If, as is assumed here, Charles had attempted to form some sort of personal bond with Leo in 774, then Leo had interpreted this move as license to work his will upon Ravenna. While Charles probably did not endorse Leo's behavior, there was little, short of the use of force, that the Frankish king could do to restrain the archbishop. But force was not the answer since Charles needed Leo's loyalty in the event that the enemies of the king tried to move against him in the Lombard Kingdom. Ravenna was strategically situated to hinder the advance of the Duke of Beneventum, for example, from the South. The news that external enemies were preparing an attack upon Italy perhaps served to reinforce Charles's toleration of Leo.

Perhaps the king was less concerned about his position in the Lombard Kingdom in 775 than he was about the success of the Saxon campaign. His Italian policy, though not to Rome's liking, had so far preserved the alliance with Hadrian. The pope, by supplying assurance of St. Peter's support, had played the part envisioned for him by Charles. In this sense, Leo was no threat to Rome, thereby allowing Charles to devote his full resources to what perhaps was seen as a last major effort to subdue the Saxons.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Hodgkin, VIII, 27.

With the matter of Leo's intransigence still unsettled, Pope Hadrian found himself confronted with another crisis, this time in Spoleto. Toward the end of 775 Hadrian communicated his dismay at the independent action of Charles's missi, Possessor and Rabigaudo, who had gone directly to Spoleto to negotiate with Duke Hildebrand.⁶² Disregarding the papal injunction that they should come to Rome to prepare a common course of action toward Benevento, Charles's missi left Spoleto to visit the Duke of Beneventum, Arichis.⁶³ The result, as Hadrian said, was that the Spoletans increased their impudence toward Rome.⁶⁴

The details that would explain why Charles abruptly became interested in the Duchy of Spoleto and moved so quickly to establish ties with Duke are missing. We may only guess that his action was related to the growing threat posed by Desiderius's heir and his allies, particularly the Duke of Beneventum.⁶⁵ Spoleto, like Ravenna, was strategically located in central Italy to protect the southern boundary of the Kingdom of the Lombards. However, Spoleto could also have been seen as a threat to the

⁶²Codex Carolinus, ep. #56, p. 581: "Ille nempe, dum Perusiam coniunxissent, relaxsantes recto itinere ad nos coniugendum - secundum qualiter a vestro a Deo protecto culmine directi fuerunt et ut vestros honorandos apices relegentes invenimus -, nos despicientes apud Hildibrandum in Spoletium perrexerunt, dirigentes nobis per nostros missos: 'eo quod tantummodo cum Hildibrandum loquimur; et diende, ut directi sumus, una vobiscum apud domnum apostolicum coniungemus.'"

⁶³Ibid.: "Postmodum enim, dum cum praedictum Hildebrandum locuti fuissent et apud eum diucius morarentur, nostris apostolicis eis adiurantes direximus syllabas . . . Sed illi, nescimus quid pertractantes statim a Spoleto in Beneventum perrexerunt, nos in magnum derelinquentes ignominium. . . ."

⁶⁴Ibid.: ". . . et Spoletinos ampliaverunt in protervia."

⁶⁵Hodgkin, VIII, 36, 41.

Papal-Frankish alliance because the Spoletans represented another distraction for Hadrian in the performance of his spiritual role in Frankish policy.

It should be noted that Hadrian had avoided any reference to difficulties with Duke Hildebrand in his previous letters to Charles. Yet, from the remark that the Spoletans had "increased" their hostility to Rome following the visit of Possessor and Rabigaudus we must assume that relations with Rome had been strained at least during 775.⁶⁶ Perhaps Charles had learned of these difficulties from Leo or from the Franks at Pavia and moved to prevent Duke Hildebrand from allying with Arichis of Beneventum as a means of shaking off papal control.

The terms governing the new political relationship between Hadrian and Hildebrand have not been preserved. It is possible that Hildebrand entered indirectly into a personal tie with Charles in 775 that only remotely resembled vassalage, as Hodgkin noted, thereby removing papal authority over Spoleto.⁶⁷ Charles's policy has appeared high handed, tactless, and crude and motivated by the desire to recover an area rightfully his as a result of his possession of the Lombard crown.⁶⁸

This evaluation ignores important scraps of evidence which suggest that the Frankish missi, Possessor and Rabigaudus, managed to find an acceptable compromise in 775.⁶⁹ A compromise was necessary to

⁶⁶See above, fn. 64.

⁶⁷VIII, p. 50-51.

⁶⁸Martens, p. 154.

⁶⁹Codex Carolinus, ep. #61, 64, 65, pp. 588-589, 591-593.

extricate Charles from an extremely delicate situation. Since the king had confirmed papal authority in Spoleto in 774, according to Hadrian, by offering the duchy as a religious gift, an abrupt reversal of this policy in 775 would have been an insult to his patron, St. Peter. Furthermore, the Romans, already chafing over Charles's stand on Ravenna, could not be expected to tolerate this humiliating turn of events. It was necessary perhaps to soften the blow to Roman pride and to preserve the idea that Spoleto was part of St. Peter's dominion.

Thus, we must argue that Roman interests were not wholly ignored in the creation of the bond between Hildebrand and Charles. Some papal rights were probably preserved in the economic sphere, particularly the right of Rome to secure wood from the Spoletans.⁷⁰ However, here, as in the political realm, the Spoletans chose to ignore Hadrian's attempt to exercise that right.⁷¹

While Duke Hildebrand acted upon the assumption that the negotiations of 775 had freed Spoleto from papal control,⁷² Hadrian took a different view of the political relationship between himself and Spoleto. The pope had, under protest, agreed to share power with Charles in the duchy. This idea is reflected dimly in the papal correspondence of 779 or 780.⁷³

⁷⁰Ibid., ep. #65, p. 593: "Et tunc per vestram regalem praeclentiam iussionem dirigatur ipse magister in partibus Spoletii, et demandationem ibidem de ipso faciat lignamen, quod in predicto ypochartosin, hoc est camarado necesse fuerit, quia in nostris finibus tale lignamen minime reperiter."

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Hodgkin, VIII, 30-31.

⁷³Codex Carolinus, ep. #61, 64, pp. 588-589, 591-592.

In response to an attempt by Duke Arichis of Beneventum to detach the city of Terracina from papal control, Hadrian tried to negotiate a settlement.⁷⁴ When that failed to produce results, the pope, aided by troops from Charles's "general power", sent an army to recover the city.⁷⁵ Although Hadrian does not so specify, it is possible that Spoletans were included among the auxiliary troops.

If this encounter occurred early in 779 instead of 780, then possibly we have a motive for the visit of Duke Hildebrand to Charles, recorded in the annals as having taken place sometime in the spring of 779.⁷⁶ Hildebrand's visit to Charles could have been prompted by Hadrian's effort to enlist Spoletan troops into the service of Rome. Charles probably supported Hildebrand's claim that Spoleto served the Franks and only served Rome if the Frankish king ordered it.

That some such clarification of Hildebrand's obligation to Hadrian was made can be inferred from a second letter dealing with the pope's military ventures against Arichis.⁷⁷ Hadrian complained that the city

⁷⁴Ibid., ep. #61, pp. 588-589: "Et hoc agnoscat a Deo protecta precellentia vestra: quia, aliquantos civitates nostras Campanie operantes, emuli vestri atque nostri, nefandissimi Beneventani, ipsum nostrum populum suadent atque subtrahere a nostra dicione decertant una cum habitores castri Caietani seu Terracinensium Nec tunc ammonitionibus se accommodere voluerunt."

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 589: "Dum vero eorum nequitiae praevalere minime potuimus, disposuimus cum Dei virtute atque auxilio una cum vestra potentia generalem nostrum exercitum illuc dirigere, qui eos constringere debeant et inimici beati Petri atque nostri seu vestri emendare."

⁷⁶Annales Einhardi, a. 779, p. 53: "At rex de Heristallio, ubi hiemaverat et ubi natalem Domini ac sanctum pascha celebraverit, prima veris temperie movens Compendium venit. Et cum inde peracto, propter quod venerat, negotio revertisset, occurrit ei Hildebrandus dux Spolitanus cum magnis muneribus in villa Virciniaco."

⁷⁷Codex Carolinus, ep. #64, 591-592.

of Terracina, "which we had subjected before to your, our and St. Peter's service", had been invaded by the Greeks of Naples.⁷⁸ Instead of combining forces as before, Hadrian now asked Charles to send a Frank, Vulfiunus, to Rome before August to order all Tuscans and Spoletans who were "equally" in the service of Charles and Hadrian to join in the recovery of Terracina.⁷⁹ This sudden shift to reliance on Frankish authority to do what Hadrian himself had done before suggests that Charles had asserted the right to decide when troops from outside Rome would be mustered into papal service. However, Hadrian's pointed reference to the dual service of the Spoletans indicates that the pope still had in mind the settlement of 775.

Charles, so far as we know, did not support Hadrian's request for him to marshall troops in his service in Spoleto to aid Rome later in 779. However, this does not mean that Charles rejected the idea of shared power over Spoleto so much as it suggests that the king opposed Hadrian's adventurous policy in southern Italy.⁸⁰

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 591: "Quatenus salutantes triumphatorissime erga vos benivolentiae vestra, per hos nostros affatus enucleatus vobis de partibus istis insinuamus, qualiter . . . Neopolitani una cum deo odilibus Grecos . . . subito venientes Terricinensum civitatem, quam in servitio beati Petri . . . et vestro atque nostro antea subiugavimus, nunc autem in valido consilio iterum ipsi iam fati . . . Neopolitani cum . . . Grecis invasi sunt."

⁷⁹*Ibid.*; "Nos quidem sine vestro consilio nullatenus ibidem dirigere volumus, sed poscimus vestram a Deo promotam regalem excellentiam, ut sicut solita est, . . . disponere debeat et celeriter nobis Vulfuinum dirigere, ut hic apud nos Kalendas Augustas paratus esse festinet; atque talem eidem mandationem facere iubeatis, ut cum omnes Tuscanos sue Spoletinos . . . in servitio vestro pariterque nostro ad recolligendum ipsam civitatem Terracinensem eveniant, simulque Domino annuente ad expugnandum Caietam seu Neopolini, nostrum recolligentes patrimonium, quod ibidem in territorio Neopolitano ponitur, occurrant ut eos in omnibus subiugantes, sub vestra atque nostra sint dicione."

⁸⁰See below, p. 183.

In any case, it is difficult to see the effort made in 775 to resolve the Papal-Spoletan clash and to retain Hildebrand's loyalty without losing St. Peter's support either as the result of deliberate "deception" wrought by Charles upon Rome or the total disregard for Roman interests in Spoleto. Given the mounting threat to his Lombard crown, Charles was forced to alter the unsatisfactory arrangement between Rome and Spoleto which had emerged since the meeting of 774 with Hadrian. Until the actual crisis developed it appears that Charles had continued to follow his father's policy regarding Spoleto by considering it outside his sphere of interests in Italy. If we assume that Charles had been aware of papal troubles with Hildebrand before the negotiations of 775, then it is possible that he could have moved at any time to recover his rights in Spoleto, if his rights had been his chief concern. But when he did act, Charles left the issue of rights unsettled, for Hadrian assumed that the Spoletans remained at least partially under Roman authority. Hildebrand, on the other hand, read the results of the negotiations as a declaration of independence from Rome. Not until 779 did the compromise of 775 return to cloud the political situation in Italy. As in the case of Ravenna, in 775 Charles's missi had planted the seeds of further trouble, by giving Hadrian the impression that the Spoletans still remained in Roman service as well as in Charles's.

Not all the Romans could be persuaded to accept the results of the settlement of 775 with Spoleto. Though Hadrian hastened to assure Charles of continued papal spiritual support, the pope made it clear that enemies of the Papal-Frankish alliance had raised protests once again.⁸¹

⁸¹Codex Carolinus, ep. #57, p. 582: "Ne nos derelinquas aut differas solatiandum, ut dicant gentes, quae in cuncto orbe terrarum sunt: "Ubi est fiducia Romanorum qua in post Deum in regem et regnum Francorum habebant? '"

Perhaps it was with the vain hope of winning Charles's help in subduing Hildebrand that Hadrian now denounced him as conspiring with the Duke of Beneventum in a plot to restore Desiderius's son to the Lombard throne and to depose Hadrian as well.⁸²

As it turned out, Charles had only the Duke of Friuli to deal with. A swift winter march with a small army brought this rebellion to an end early in 776.⁸³ Hildebrand and Leo of Ravenna had clearly cast their lots with the Franks. The death of the Eastern Emperor, Constantine V, in September of 775 had removed a key source of support from the conspirators. Desiderius's heir had no resources of his own to pursue his claims, and Eastern interests in Italy rapidly faded as the new Empress Irene tried to strengthen her position in Byzantium. The Duke of Friuli thus stood, and fell, alone.

By Easter of 776 the Italian situation appeared to be under control.⁸⁴ The Lombard rebels had been defeated in Friuli and Frankish counts were installed there. Charles did not go to Rome, probably because he had no

⁸²Ibid.: "Ipse nempe noster missus cum eum apud coniunxisset, in magna eum invenit protervia, eo quod missi Arigisi Benevantani ducis seu Rodcasi Foroiulani nec non et Regengaldi Clusinae civitatis ducum in Spoletio cum praefatum reperit Hildebrandum, adibentes adversus nos perniciosum consilium: qualiter . . . proximo Martio mensae adveniente . . . cupientes hanc nostram Romanam invadere civitatis"

⁸³Annales Regni Francorum a. 776, pp. 42, 44: "Tunc domnus Carolus rex Italiam ingressus est partibus Foriulensium pergens. Hrodgaudus occisus est, et . . . domnus Carolus rex ad Tarvisium civitatem pascha celebravit, et captas civitatis Foroiulem, Tarvisium cum reliquis civitatibus quae rebellatae fuerant, et disposuit omnes per Francos et iterum cum prosperitate et victoria reversus est in Franciam."

⁸⁴Ibid.

desire to face Hadrian's reproaches. In addition, Charles probably did not look seriously upon the papacy as a political entity. Not only did Charles prefer to see a primarily spiritual role for Rome, but also Hadrian had demonstrated Roman incapacity to provide firm political leadership in Italy.

Perhaps this view of the political weakness of Rome was further underscored by the report, early in 776, of Hadrian's troubles with Duke Reginaldus of Clusia, who had detached from Rome an area, the Castello Felicitatis, that had come under Roman control at the same time Spoleto had been acquired.⁸⁵ Here was another area formerly under Desiderius's authority, indicating that Charles should have been equally concerned to protect his rights as Lombard King in this region as he was in Spoleto, according to the Realpolitik view. However, we have no indication that Charles reacted by seeking to tie Reginaldus to the Franks.

The reason for Charles's apparent lack of interest in this problem is uncertain. It is important to note that Charles did not, so far as we can determine, relentlessly pursue his rights in Italy based upon his Lombard title. Since the crisis created by the conspirators against him had passed, Charles had little reason to concern himself with Duke Raginaldus. The king was thus content to leave the situation alone.

⁸⁵Vita Hadriani, p. 496: "Sed et omnes habitores tam ducatus Firmani, Auximani, et Anconitani simulque et de castello Felicitatis, et ipsi dum clusis Langobardorum fugientes reversi sunt, ad praefatum . . . pontificem concurrentes, eius se tei beatitudini tradiderunt praestitoe sacramenti in fide et servitio beati Petri . . . more Romanorum tonsorati sunt." Codex Carolinus ep. #58, p. 583: ". . . omulum Raginaldum dudum in castello Felicitatis castaldum, qui nunc Clusinae civitate dux esse indetur . . . et per semet ipsum cum exercitu in eandem civitatem nostram, castello Felicitatis, properans eosdem castellanos abstulit."

Hadrian had lost control of the territory, and we may assume that Charles was under no obligation to maintain the area as a possession of St. Peter. Hadrian implied that Charles had also given this territory as a religious gift, but, unlike Spoleto, the pope avoided a direct statement to this effect.⁸⁶ If Charles had acknowledged papal control of Castello Felicitatis in 774, as he had done with Spoleto, we must assume that Frankish missi would have appeared to negotiate another face-saving compromise that would have preserved St. Peter's dominion while allowing effective political power to pass from Hadrian.

For papal territorial aspirations, the period from mid 774 until February, 776, had been one of a series of disasters. Ravenna remained an open wound. Leo had gained ground in 775 by his visit to Charles's court since, from the Roman point of view, Charles appeared to have ignored the papal claim that Pepin had donated the "whole Exarchate". Hadrian clung tenaciously to Roman claims upon Ravenna, making a final political settlement impossible, from Charles's point of view.

As for Spoleto, Hadrian had apparently not yet seen any way to turn his greatly weakened political hold there to his advantage. The idea of shared power had probably been established at the 775 negotiations with Hildebrand, however. By 779 or 780 Hadrian was prepared to turn this idea to advantage by extending the principle to the lands of southern Italy, as we have seen.

⁸⁶Codex Carolinus, ep. #58, p. 583: ". . . eo (Raginaldus) quod plurima mala per suas iniquas summissiones spiritalis matris vestrae, sanctae Dei ecclesiae, et nobis ingerendum non desinit, dum omnino ea, quae beato Petro . . . a vestra excellentia pro animae vestri mercede offertae sunt, per suum iniquum argumentum abstollere anhelat et in suo proprio servitio eos habere desiderat"

Charles's attitude toward these developments in the Italian political situation is less easily established. His chief concern had been to know that the papacy was faithfully devoting its spiritual resources in support of the Saxon war, as we have seen above. However, a deepened political awareness of the complexity of Rome's role in Italy had led him to compromise his ideal of the papal role. Thus, the king, we think, acknowledged albeit vaguely, Hadrian's political claims in Spoleto. Meanwhile the status of Ravenna, far from being determined by the simple expedient of forming a vague personal bond with Leo, remained an all but unsolvable problem as long as Leo refused to restrain his ambitions and Hadrian refused to give up papal claims.

The more or less constant political turmoil in Italy since 774 had grim social consequences for which Hadrian's enemies at Charles's court tried to hold the pope responsible. In 776 Hadrian found himself under attack for allowing Romans to engage in the slave trade with the Saracens.⁸⁷ Patiently, Hadrian explained that the Lombards, not the Romans were responsible and that the Greeks, not the Saracens, were buying slaves along the Italian coast. Hadrian insisted that he had tried to stop them but lacked the necessary ships. The slaves were Lombards driven by famine to desperate measures. They had lost hope and saw slavery as the only means of survival.

With these charges came a more familiar claim that the Roman clergy were corrupt.⁸⁸ All along we have noted an undercurrent of

⁸⁷Ibid., ep. #59, pp. 584-585.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 585: "De autem sacerdotibus nostris quod vobis false et contra Deum et animae eorum suggere ausi sunt, 'mentita est iniquitas sibi, ' et nulla est Domino annuente, in nostris sacerdotibus pollutio"

concern among the Franks that the pope and the Romans in general were inadequate to their great task. Charles's worries about St. Peter's support were perhaps connected with this vein of criticism which, in part at least, is perhaps traceable to those disaffected by Charles's decision to transfer the spiritual function of calling upon St. Peter for aid from the Frankish Church to Rome.⁸⁹

Even though answering serious, and insulting charges, Hadrian made it clear that he continued to carry out his promise.⁹⁰ He and his clergy returned thanks for the safety of Charles and all the Franks and prayed that God would bring victories, expand the Frankish kingdom, and exalt the Roman Church.⁹¹ "Your exaltation is our joy."⁹²

Furthermore, the Romans desired the Franks to prosper "because after God we have faith in none but your strong arm."⁹³ If, as was suggested above, a faction among the Romans tried to coax Hadrian to abandon the alliance, then it may be that this group had an alternative ally in mind, possibly Tassilo. The duke had aspirations to be a king and

⁸⁹See above, p. 154.

⁹⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #59, pp. 584-585: "Et deprecamus Dei omnipotentis clementiam cum nostris episcopis, sacerdotibus, clerum atque servatum et universum nostrum populum, ut vobis indesinenter victorias tribuat et vestrum dilatet regnum ad exaltationem spiritalis matris vestrae, sanctae Dei Romane ecclaesiae"

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid., p. 585: ". . . et salutem populi nobis a Deo commissi, quia vestra exaltatio nostra est letitia."

⁹³Ibid.: "Et semper desideramus et cupimus, quae bona sunt atque prospera, de vestro a Deo protecto regno et omnium Francorum salutaria addiscere, quia nos post Deum alii fiduciam non habemus visi in vestro fortissimo brachio."

might prove a useful ally. Furthermore, the Lombards might be tempted to oppose Charles in favor of Tassilo, considering his Lombard bride. Such speculation cannot be supported, however. All that appears likely from Hadrian's stout affirmation that Charles was his sole defender is that papal critics had suggested alternatives to the Franks.

The relationship that had existed between Stephen and Pepin was what Hadrian sought to establish, on a much greater scale, with Charles.⁹⁴ As he indicated, Hadrian, as much as Charles, was eager to expand the points of mutual interest between the papacy and the Frankish kingdom. So far Charles had taken much and had given little in return although Hadrian was too tactful a diplomat to suggest this point. Perhaps the pope recognized that his hold upon the papal throne depended upon Charles's continuing support. To have abandoned the alliance would have probably invited an attempt by his critics to depose him.

The political tensions which had marked 775 fell off sharply during the latter half of 776. We hear no more of Hadrian's troubles with Leo, nor did the pope comment further on relations with Spoleto. Hildebrand, meanwhile, appeared content to maintain his agreement with the Franks. It is possible that a letter urging Charles to order the Duke of Friuli to intervene on Rome's behalf in Istria was written during this year, or perhaps in 777.⁹⁵ This prevents us from adopting Wilhelm Marten's view that the letter defending the moral fiber of the Roman clergy marked

⁹⁴Ibid.: "Et sicut predecessor noster, domnus Stephanus papa, bonam habuit fiduciam genitori vestro . . . domno Pippino regis, ita et nos multo amplius in vestro fortissimo regno confidimus et certi permanemus.

⁹⁵Ibid., ep. #63, p. 590.

a break in Papal-Frankish relations that lasted until May, 778.⁹⁶ The real reason for the supposed break, as Martens argued, was the loss of Spoleto.⁹⁷ But, as we have indicated, Charles's missi took steps to prevent such an event by preserving the fiction of papal political authority in the dual service concept. Marten's argument, therefore, must be rejected.

Furthermore, had Hadrian withdrawn from the alliance, as Martens assumed, Charles would have been forced to take action to restore it because the intercession of St. Peter secured by the pope was an essential element in Charles's military policy. We must take very seriously Charles's concern for the performance of the religious services which the pope had agreed to institute. The spiritual welfare of the kingdom, from Charles's point of view, was closely tied to Hadrian's fulfillment of his promise. Thus, Hadrian, had he abandoned the alliance in 776, would have done more than withdraw friendship, he would have threatened the safety of Charles's kingdom.⁹⁸ Martens's assumption that Charles and Hadrian finally worked out their differences during this long silent period cannot be supported.⁹⁹ It seems likely that Frankish sources would bear at least a trace of such an important achievement. At the same time it

⁹⁶Martens, p. 159.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸We agree with Martens, p. 197, in his view that Papal-Frankish relations were defined as special situations arose and not from long term, clearly defined, legal positions. However, the basis of the alliance was more than mere "Liebesbund" as Martens contends (p. 26); it was a spiritual alliance in which St. Peter, working through Hadrian, communicated his support to Charles.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 159-160.

seems very unlikely that Hadrian would have continued to press old claims while asking for the return of patrimonial lands when correspondence resumed in May, 778, if a new agreement had been negotiated.¹⁰⁰

In addition, as was indicated above, it would have been dangerous for Hadrian to have severed his tie with Charles not only because Charles himself might have taken steps to restore the alliance but also because Hadrian would have lost his one sure defense against his critics. At worst an attempt to depose him could have followed from his failure to achieve the territorial goals which we have attributed to the lay nobility among his supporters.

Thus, rather than a precipitate break in Papal-Frankish relations, the period from mid 776 to May, 778, was one in which papal correspondence with Charles decreased because the political tensions in Italy that prompted such correspondence decreased. The death of Archbishop Leo in 777 was the most important change in this direction. His successor, John VII, apparently did not share Leo's consuming ambition to rule Ravenna in his own right.

The election of John brought no response from Charles so far as we can tell from the available sources.¹⁰¹ Hadrian's reassertion of

¹⁰⁰Codex Carolinus, ep. #60, p. 587: "Et hos deprecamur vestram excellentiam, . . . pro amore Dei et ipsius clavigeri regni caelorum, qui solium regni patris vestri vobis largiri dignatus est: et secundum promissionem, quam polliciti estis eidem Dei apostolo pro animae vestrae mercaede et stabilitate regni vestri, omnia nostris temporibus adimplere inbeatis, ut ecclesia Dei omnipotentis . . . in omnibus amplius quam amplius sancta Dei ecclesia exaltata permaneat et omnia secundum vestram pollicitationem adimpleantur."

¹⁰¹Ibid., ep. #85, p. 621: "Nam nos nullo modo meminimus: . . . neque a vestra in triumphis regali victoria missum ad electionem Ravennae directum esse tam in electione Iohannis archiepiscopi quam in electione Gratosi archiepiscopi eiusdem."

papal claims did not lead Charles to challenge papal temporal power. Though the king looked upon the pope's role as a spiritual one, Charles did not insist on the denial of papal authority in Ravenna. The impression left by the episode of Leo, therefore, is that Charles simply reacted to a situation over which the pope appeared to have little control in an effort to protect Frankish and Roman interests. Charles's policy of binding the leading political figures of Italy to himself as a means of stabilizing the political situation had failed to achieve that objective with respect to Leo.

Thus, in 777 Hadrian proposed to try once more to rule Ravenna through a more tractable representative, John VII. As luck would have it, Hadrian was successful, but by the time of John's death in 788, Charles was ready to experiment with his old policy once again.¹⁰²

The need for a Frankish role in Ravenna was dramatized earlier, in 783, when Hadrian ran afoul of two corrupt officials who refused to accept papal authority.¹⁰³ Like Leo, these men went straight to Charles for support.¹⁰⁴ Charles's response to their appeal is not known although we may guess that the king supported Hadrian. In 788 the personal bond

¹⁰²Ibid.: "Directus a vestra insigne regale precellentia, videlicet Ermenbertus religiosus presbiter, inter responsionis suae verba obtulit nobis commemoratorium, ut asserebat vestre excellentiae exaratum, scilicet de electione episcoporum Ravennatis ecclesiae: quia, quando Sergius . . . obuit, in electione Leonis archiepiscopis fuerunt missi vestri, Huchaldus vel pares sui."

¹⁰³Ibid., ep. #75, pp. 505-507.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 506: ". . . neque recipere ipsos nefandos vultu dignissimo dignemini sed . . . ad nos deonestatos per fidelissimos missos vestros humiles veniant"

between the king and the new archbishop was to be launched on the firmer footing of legality. But Hadrian rejected the Frankish attempt to assert a right to a voice in the election of the archbishop and apparently Charles retreated from the effort to insure a greater measure of stability in the Exarchate.¹⁰⁵

Perhaps to avoid further situations in which his court was clogged with appellants from Italy, Charles hoped to invest the Archbishop of Ravenna with the prestige associated with the king's name. Indirectly, assuming Hadrian's firm control over the archbishop, perhaps Charles sought to reinforce rather than weaken Hadrian's position in the Exarchate. The Frankish king was not engaged in a power struggle with Rome over Ravenna. Instead, he seemed to be searching for a way to blend Frankish and papal power in order to insure the political stability of the area. This compromise was forced on him by Hadrian's spirited defense of claims which the Franks themselves had helped create. As Charles had learned since 774, political stability was not easily secured in Italy but it remained essential if the energies of the papacy were to be fully directed toward the essential task of providing spiritual support for Frankish undertakings which were directed not only toward extending the Frankish kingdom but exalting the Roman Church as well, to borrow Hadrian's phrase.

We have digressed briefly to indicate the extent to which the problem

¹⁰⁵Ibid. ep. #85, p. 621: ". . . quatenus, una concordia, una eademque voluntas unoque consilio conglobati, apostolicam suscipientes admonitionem, talem sibi eligerent pastorem, qui nec a sacris canonibus respueretur nec ullo extra capitulo possit obsistere . . . sicut et nunc canonicae factum est."

of Ravenna provided incentives for continued political experimentation in Italy on Charles's part. Now we must return to the period from 778 to 780 to examine additional facets of Charles's Italian policy. Most historians have assigned great significance to a letter of May 778 in which Hadrian not only addresses Charles as potentially a "new Constantine" but also in which the pope adopted a new approach to the territorial problem in Italy by requesting the return of patrimonial lands in Tuscany, Spoleto, Beneventum, Corsica and Sabina.¹⁰⁶

Opinions have varied regarding the reference to Charles as a "new Constantine". By some it is taken as a sign of the existence of the Donation of Constantine.¹⁰⁷ But this argument is not convincing. As Schnitzer has observed, "It is possible to perceive in the pope's letter no more than the legendary background against which a later unscrupulous but very learned forger was able to elaborate his fabrication."¹⁰⁸ The author suggests that the reference represents instead the beginning of a plan to elevate Charles as Constantine's successor and emperor of the West, but this view is conjectural.¹⁰⁹

In somewhat the same vein, Walter Mohr found the importance of this passage to lie in the fact that it provided a new foundation for the

¹⁰⁶Ibid., ep. #60, p. 587: ". . . ut omnes gentes, quae hec audierint, eddicere valeant: 'Domino salvum fac regem . . . quia ecce novus christianissimus Dei Constantius imperator his temporibus surrexit' Ibid.: "Sed et cuncta alia, quae diversos imperatores, patricios . . . in partibus Tusciae, Spoletio seu Benevento atque Corsica simul et Savinensae patrimonio beato Petro . . . concessa sunt"

¹⁰⁷Caspar, Papsttum unter fränkischer Herrschaft, pp. 60-62.

¹⁰⁸Church and Culture in the Middle Ages, I, 454.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

government of the "Church-State" that had naturally evolved during the eighth century.¹¹⁰ Since the death of Pepin, according to Mohr, the idea of the Church-State had lost clear definition. Charles's policy had revealed no clear sign of his sympathy for this view of government.¹¹¹

However, Mohr's interpretation places too little emphasis upon the spiritual significance of the alliance of 774. As we have attempted to point out, Charles request for spiritual support represented a tremendous expansion of the role of the papacy in Frankish affairs. The institution of formal, daily observances on behalf of the Frankish army was a sign that Charles had committed the welfare of his military ventures into papal hands insofar as Hadrian prayed for the intercession of St. Peter on Charles's behalf. Church and State had never been more completely intertwined. Where Pepin had seen Rome as a prop to his family's claim to rule, Charles involved the papacy in the most essential affairs of his government. The difficulty lay in implementing this idea of Papal-Frankish relations. The political problems of Italy stood in the way, and Charles sought the most efficient way to remove these obstacles to the far broader role which he had assigned the papacy. Unlike Pepin, Charles could not successfully draw arbitrary lines beyond which he refused to take an interest in Italy.

Hadrian could not totally abandon a temporal role in Italy for the spiritual duties that Charles expected him to perform. Practical needs, such as revenues to finance church repairs, forced Hadrian to seek larger territorial possessions. The thought that political control should

¹¹⁰Die karolingische Reichsidee, pp. 37, 41.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 35

accompany these possessions is not surprising. In addition, Hadrian had to deal with the Roman nobility who aspired, perhaps unrealistically, to restore Roman prestige and power in Italy. That they saw the Church as an instrument to achieve political goals seems evident both from the papal biographer of Hadrian and from Hadrian's letters to Charles. Mixed with the notion that the Romans expected "many fruits" to accrue to Rome from the alliance was Hadrian's understanding that the expansion of Charles's kingdom in the northeast would exalt the Church as well. These contradictory positions reflect Hadrian's dilemma - on the one hand, he had, in 774, agreed to accept a primarily spiritual role perhaps defined by Charles, on the other hand, the Romans expected the alliance to raise the prestige and power of Rome in Italy.

Fortunately for Hadrian, Charles had not totally denied the papacy a temporal role. The settlement of the problem of Ravenna in 777 is a case in point, as is that of Spoleto. However, no further expansion of papal jurisdiction in central Italy was considered by Charles as the case of Spoleto also seems to indicate. By 778 Hadrian had apparently accepted this decision. But, since he was still confronted by the demands of an aggressive aristocracy, Hadrian had to find a new outlet for their energies. By interpreting the settlement of 775 regarding Spoleto to mean that Hadrian and Charles shared power there, Hadrian was able to seize the political initiative in southern Italy, only to be frustrated by Charles's lack of support. If the king had been forced to compromise in 775 by encouraging Hadrian to think that the papacy could play a political role in Spoleto, Charles had apparently no desire to see this principle extended to cover lands now in dispute with Beneventum and Naples. That Hadrian had this goal in mind can be seen in his negotiations with the Neopolitans

for the recovery of patrimonial lands in Naples in exchange for Terracina.¹¹²

Although Charles might have advised Hadrian to seek Frankish counsel before making war in southern Italy a second time, the king did not apparently speak out strongly against the idea, held by Hadrian, that he and Charles shared political power in Italy.¹¹³ Thus, although Hadrian's complex negotiations with Naples fell through, his intention was to bring Naples, and Beneventum as well, under both papal and Frankish authority.¹¹⁴ As far as we know, Charles failed to support Hadrian's scheme to expand the range of Frankish political interests to include Beneventum in 779, and by 781 papal interest in the area had diminished under the influence perhaps of the effort to restore good relations with the Eastern Empire through a marriage alliance with the son of the Empress Irene and one of Charles's daughters.¹¹⁵

The thrust of Charles's Italian policy during the period from mid 774 until 780 aimed primarily toward removing the papacy from the political role it had attempted to carve for itself since the days of

¹¹²See above, p. 169, fn. 78, 79.

¹¹³Charles's admonition in this respect is possibly reflected in Codex Carolinus, ep. #64, p. 591: "Nos quidem sine vestro consilio nullatenus ibidem dirigere vobimus" and Ibid., "Sed nos sine vestro consilio neque obsides neque ipsam civitatem reddere habuimus"

¹¹⁴See above, fn. 78, 79.

¹¹⁵See Mohr, Die karolingische Reichsidee, p. 40.

Gregory II.¹¹⁶ Each time the Romans demonstrated their incapacity to control areas they claimed to govern, Charles was forced to intervene. His method, insofar as it can be discovered, was to tie the leaders of the various foci of power to himself, but this technique was inadequate to stabilize relations between Rome and Ravenna. It worked with more success in Spoleto, but here Charles had to compromise, thereby opening the door to a new problem as Hadrian sought to apply the dual power concept to lands in Beneventum.

Thus by 780 the pattern of Charles's Italian policy had been set. Though imperfectly realized, Charles's ideal of the role of the papacy as the spiritual foundation of the expansion of Frankish power north of the Alps had led to the narrowing of independent papal political activity in Italy. With the ultimate failure of Hadrian's attempt to share in the direction of the political future of Beneventum, the pope fell back upon his claim to govern Ravenna. Meanwhile, by reducing the political role of Rome in Italy, the Frankish political horizon below the Alps gradually came to encompass the entire peninsula. Open-ended and often vaguely defined, Charles's policy for Italy grew out of his greater reliance upon the papacy to support Frankish military goals. Thus, the motive of Charles's Italian policy was religious. If Charles sought power in Italy, he did so not for its own sake but to impose his vision of the proper role of the papacy in the West on a situation that threatened to deny that vision.

¹¹⁶Both Duchesne, Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes, p. 105 and Abel, Jahrbücher, p. 211 acknowledge Charles's concern for Rome's spiritual support, but they do not, as is done here, connect that concern with the direction of Charles's Italian policy.

CONCLUSION

The expansion of the Frankish political horizon in Italy between 739 and 781 was thus the product of a complex of political and religious changes during these years. From 739 until 781 the Frankish attitude toward their role in Italy was conditioned primarily by their view of the papacy. As that view changed, in company with changes in the Frankish attitude toward the Lombards, the obstacles to Frankish political activity beyond the Alps were diminished or removed.

The reigns of Charles Martel, Pepin the Short, and Charlemagne revealed three distinct attitudes toward Frankish involvement in Italy. The spiritual authority of Pope Gregory III was too weak and Frankish friendship with Liutprand too strong to draw the Franks into the papacy's political troubles with the Lombards in Charles Martel's era. In addition to more clearly political issues, a religious problem also entered into the political arena. Rival claims to be St. Peter's chosen people emerged to insure that the Franks and the Romans would have little common ground upon which to stand to confront the Lombards.

The reform of the Frankish Church by Boniface strengthened the spiritual authority of the papacy in Francia. Still, in 753, Pepin moved against the opinion of the Frankish nobility in seeking closer ties with Pope Stephen II. Stephen, however, appeared to possess a clearer understanding of Frankish religious psychology. Supported by the solid achievements of Boniface's reform efforts, Stephen found a satisfactory solution to the lingering dispute over Frankish claims to be St. Peter's

chosen people. At the placitum of 754, the anointment of Pepin and his family was interpreted to mean that St. Peter, acting through his vicar, had adopted the whole Frankish people and thus acknowledged them as superior to all other nations of the West. Without this fundamental concession the Franks might have rejected Pepin's alliance as politically unwise since a war with the Lombards was the high price Pepin paid to secure the Frankish crown for his heirs. Papal acknowledgment of Frankish equality with the Romans combined with the possible reaction to Carloman's appearance at the placitum as a sign of Lombard meddling in Frankish affairs to carry the day for Pepin's decision to support the papacy.

The spiritual and political ties that bound Stephen and Pepin apparently were stronger than those which bound the Frankish nobility to Pepin's alliance. In the critical months between the first and second war with Aistulf, Stephen learned how narrowly the Franks defined their role in Italy. The renewed territorial dispute that grew out of the peace terms established between Pepin and Aistulf in 755 ended up in Pepin's court where Aistulf perhaps made a good case against Stephen's claims. Pepin was reluctant to serve as a referee in Italy, and he urged Stephen to find a settlement with Aistulf.

Aistulf broke the impasse by attacking Rome in January, 756. Stephen now called upon the Franks to remember that St. Peter had adopted them, had made them the brothers of the Romans, in return for their promise to defend Rome, the source of their spiritual support. With the situation made simpler by Aistulf's rash act, the Franks could not ignore the papal appeal. The result of the second campaign indicated that the Frankish attitude toward their role in Italy had advanced far

enough to allow Pepin a role as referee in the Papal-Lombard dispute. For the remainder of his reign Pepin played this role, employing diplomacy to forestall clashes between Rome and Pavia that would make further Frankish military campaigns in Italy necessary.

From the papal point of view perhaps Pepin appeared to have accepted an office in the res publicae Romanorum indicated by his title, patricius Romanorum. Unfortunately, we have no way to discover Pepin's assessment of his constitutional position. Perhaps he did not think in such terms. In any case, he did not challenge the idea of Rome as an independent temporal power, although he set limits to the extent to which he would support papal territorial claims. He narrowly defined the Frankish role in Italy to the Papal-Lombard dispute. If he had willingly accepted a vaguely defined office in the Roman "state", he did not take into his purview all that fell logically within the range of duties of that office. Pope Stephen's high hopes in this respect were quickly disappointed as Pepin made no move to interest himself in Papal troubles with Spoleto or Beneventum.

Italy thus drew only the most limited attention from the Franks during the reign of Pepin. The king's whole policy seemed calculated on the assumption that the Franks were reluctant to fight again in Italy. To avoid war in Italy became Pepin's personal problem rather than the problem of the Frankish people. Their interests were concentrated on lands closer to home.

The pursuit of Frankish military interests along the borders of the kingdom was carried out without regard to the papacy. This fact is significant insofar as it indicates the narrow role which the papacy played in the daily life of the Franks. Pepin and his followers probably continued

to assume that St. Peter himself supported their particular causes either in Saxony or Aquitaine. Popes Stephen and Paul I had assured the Franks that they would be victorious because they had helped St. Peter in Rome. However, no attempt by either side was made to fuse the spiritual resources of the papacy in any formal way with the military resources of the Franks.

When that fusion occurred in the reign of Charlemagne, one of its principal byproducts was that the door was abruptly thrust open on a far wider role for the Franks in Italy. Charles's political focus in Italy in June of 774 had not veered far, if at all, from that of Pepin. The Papal-Lombard dispute was the center of his concern. By eliminating decisively the Lombard threat to Rome, Charles probably hoped to divert the energies of the papacy toward Charles's own goal of the conquest and Christianization of Saxony. From 774 on the papacy played as essential a role in this process as Frankish military might.

Peace in Italy acquired a new priority, at a time when peace in Italy became far more difficult to secure. The removal of the Lombard threat also removed the incentive of various foci of power in Italy to seek close ties with Rome. Charles's decision to take up the Lombard crown, but not its policy of southward expansion, created a political vacuum which Rome could not fill without Frankish support.

As the realization grew among the Franks that papal problems in Italy went far beyond the dispute with Desiderius, Charles attempted to secure peace in Italy by the personal bond. The use of this instrument was bound to create conflict with the papacy since Hadrian was committed to protecting the territorial interests of the Roman nobility, largely as a matter of self-defense.

Because the pope stoutly defended Roman claims in central Italy, especially over the Exarchate of Ravenna and Spoleto, Charles could not ignore the papacy's temporal claims in the attempt to provide a stable political foundation for the spiritual alliance of 774. Ravenna could not be stabilized because of the ambitions of Archbishop Leo who might have read Charles's attempts to establish a personal bond as license for the archbishop to move against Hadrian's power in the Exarchate. This problem was pushed into the background by Leo's death rather than by the successful assertion of Frankish authority over Ravenna.

The settlement in Spoleto, reached in the face of a threat to Charles's hold on Lombardy, preserved, in theory, a measure of papal political authority over the Spoletans. At least, Hadrian later chose to interpret the compromise in that way. Duke Hildebrand, however, cast his lot entirely with Charles. It is interesting to note that Hildebrand's visit to Charles in 778 came only a short time before Hadrian attempted to test his view of the political tie that bound Hildebrand equally to Charles and to the pope. Although the pope's attempt failed to establish in practice in 779 what had perhaps been arranged in 775 to placate Roman sentiment, the theory of shared authority remained alive after 781. While Charles clearly preferred to have the pope play a strictly spiritual role, as the letter to Pope Leo III in 795 attests, Hadrian had kept alive a claim to temporal power in Italy. As long as the papacy could take the initiative, Charles was committed to an essentially open-ended policy. Thus, by 781, as the king moved to stabilize relations with Hadrian, the pope had begun to negotiate with the Eastern Empress Irene. The expansion of the political horizon of the Franks beyond Italy was thus assured.

Although the last Chapter of this study has made a strong case for the connection between Charles's military policy in Saxony and his desire to maintain a spiritual alliance with the papacy, it would be rash to conclude that this was Charles's concern with regard to the papacy. Walter Ullmann, in The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship, has provided ample evidence that the leadership among the Franks looked to Rome for far more than spiritual support, for a strictly military policy. In 774 we know that Charles received a collection of canons compiled by Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century from Pope Hadrian, and that the Frankish King gave special attention to them in 802 (Ullmann, p. 11). Rome supplied the tools by which Charles intended to effect a "rebirth" of European society. In this early period of his relations with Hadrian, perhaps Charles had not yet made it clear to the pope how very much the Franks would rely upon Rome for spiritual guidance in this task. From the point of view expressed by the pope in the Codex Carolinus it seems that, at this early stage, Hadrian had not fully grasped the range of Charles's vision for the spiritual future of the West. However, this is a matter that will require much further investigation, as will the problem of the "idea of Europe" and its possible conflict with the Roman conception of the right order of the world.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

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As practically every page of this study will testify, the most valuable work consulted was the Codex Carolinus. The best edition of that work is by Wilhelm Gundlach in the Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae III (Berlin, 1892). To extract from the papal letters contained in this source a Frankish "point of view" has been the most difficult task presented by this study. At every point along the way one had to decide whether or not the particular passage in question was an adequate reflection by a pope of Frankish concerns, or perhaps only a formula included for purposes of style. As an example, one should question the frequent references to the Frankish hopes to conquer the "barbarous nations" and to extend Christianity to new areas as a result. Walter Ullmann's study, The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship (London, 1969) has made it clear that the Franks, especially Charlemagne, looked to Rome for far more than the endorsement of a military policy. While we agree with his position, we must then ask to what extent Pope Hadrian in particular grasped the significance of the role that Charles was asking the papacy to play in reforming Europe. This is a question that surely deserves further study.

Louis Duchesne's edition of the Liber Pontificalis (Paris, 1886) is another source that was frequently consulted. Here one finds less of the Frankish viewpoint and a more clearly defined expression of Roman hopes and concerns. We have discussed the papal biographer's treatment of the meeting between Pope Hadrian and Charles in 774 in

this context. The biographer seemed to lack what Charles most desired: that the papacy acquire a much larger view of its role in the West. While Pope Hadrian perhaps understood that Charles intended to "exalt the Church" by his programs, the pope's followers within the curia cannot be said to have uniformly understood this point of view. This we suspect was a particular problem of the lay nobility for whom Hadrian seems to have found a greater role in papal affairs. Thus, the Liber Pontificalis offers a valuable contrast to the Frankish point of view that we have attempted to uncover in the papal letters.

In searching for other expressions of Frankish attitudes toward Italy we consulted a number of specifically Frankish sources. Among these were the Annales Regni Francorum, the Annales Einhardi, the Einhardi Vita Karoli Imperatoris, and the Codicis Carolini Epistolae. Useful secondary works that have attempted to convey a clear picture of the Frankish image of themselves were perhaps more valuable for the purposes of this study. Among the most valuable we should note, Ernst Kantorowicz, Laudes Regia: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship, (Berkeley, 1958). The author's investigations indicate convincingly that the Franks were not simply passive recipients of the Roman tradition. Ullmann's contention in the above-mentioned work that Francia was, intellectually and educationally, fallow ground (p. 2) is probably true enough, but we cannot ignore the set of ideas and assumptions which the Franks applied in adopting and adapting the Latin-Roman-Christian cosmology that Ullmann identifies. Again, this is an area that requires much further investigation. Unfortunately, neither Ullmann nor Kantorowicz has made any concerted effort to relate their particular line of investigation to the problems posed by Italy for the Franks.

Still the best study of Italy, though out of date in some respects is Thomas Hodgkin's Italy and her Invaders (Oxford, 1892-1899). Not only does Hodgkin provide valuable commentaries on the sources for a study of Italian history, but also he supplies a scholar's balanced view of the motives of Roman and Frankish policies. Rather than fit the historical process into a rigidly defined mold, Hodgkin prefers to acknowledge the complexity of the personalities and events that influence historical developments. He is still refreshing reading. Another study of Italian history of value for the present investigation was Ludo Moritz Hartmann's Geschichte Italiens im Mittelalter (Gotha, 1900). Other works of interest, but of less value, were Gabriel Pepe's Le moyen age barbare en Italie (Paris, 1956), Leon Homo's Rome medievale (Paris, 1956), and Pasquale Villari's The Barbarian Invasions of Italy (London, 1902). Ferdinand Gregorovius's History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages (London, 1894) is in some respects still useful.

The flood of journals and articles dealing with Carolingian history is enormous, as is well known. One useful bibliographical tool that helped the writer select secondary materials was the Internationale Bibliographie der Zeitschriftenliteratur issued annually from Leipzig and Osnabruck in two parts, one listing German the other non-German writings. A close eye was cast upon the lists of significant articles contained in various numbers of the American Historical Review and Historische Zeitschrift. These proved to be the most useful among the publications that attempt to keep scholars informed of recent literature.

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