**“Catholicism was only a threat to Elizabeth when it had foreign support”**

**How far do you agree with this statement?**

Elizabeth faced several Catholic threats during her reign, some being external, some domestic. For example, such domestic threats were the threat of catholic ‘survivalist’ and the 1569 Northern Rising. However, there were external threats such as the Spanish War / Armada, the 1570 Papal Bull, the Douai priest and the Jesuits. Each of these threats had a different degree of relative importance and in some cases, were not a serious threat to Elizabeth at all.

To some extent, it is true that Catholicism was only a threat with foreign support, which can be supported with the Domestic issue of catholic survivalism. The survivalism was the way that Catholicism tried to hang on and not wither out in England in the 1560s. As J Bossy correctly states, there was no need for the Catholics to overthrow Elizabeth or her church, rather just for Catholics to adopt ‘survivalism’, wating for Mary Queen Of Scots to become monarch, who would be the only potential monarch to support the Catholic cause instead of trying to snuff it out. So, in this case, a domestic Catholic threat with not foreign support, was not serious in the slightest, supports the idea that Catholicism was only a threat to Elizabeth when it had foreign support.

Another example supporting the statement that Catholicism was only a threat when it had foreign support, was the external threats of the Spanish War and the 1570 Papal Bull. In 1570, Pope Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth in his issued Papal Bull. As GR Elton correctly states, it was ‘an unmistakable declaration of war”, a key example of the catholic threat being serious with foreign support. This almost directly caused the Spanish War (1585-1604), which was hugely based on the first-rate power of Spain challenging the Protestant England over the issue of Religion, especially with Pope Pius declaring the killing of Elizabeth to be God’s Work with her excommunication in 1570. The most prominent threats of the war were the Armada in 1588, and the other attacks in 1596, 1597 and 1601, where Philip II landed troops in Ireland. If the Armada had not been defeated, then Catholicism would not have just been a threat to the 1559 Religious Settlement, but to Elizabeth’s monarchy too. So, in this case, the dominant theme is that Catholicism was a threat with foreign support, agreeing with the statement in question.

On the other hand, the Northern Uprising is an example of a domestic catholic threat that was serious without any foreign support. It can be deduced that his rebellion was the most and arguably the only truly serious rebellion due to the measures that were taken to punish and snuff out the rebellion. GR Elton says 800 were executed (closer to 400) on Elisabeth’s orders and the new president of the Norther council was appointed as the Puritan Earl of Huntingdon. The extreme punishments are a way of noting the severity and seriousness of the threat, proving and setting an example that proves that the Catholics threat was still serious to Elizabeth even without foreign support and even pre-dating the Papal Bull in 1570.

Externally, the Jesuits and the Douai priests are examples of foreign supported catholic threats that weren’t too serious a threat to Elizabeth. Firstly, the Jesuits weren’t a serious threat due to 98 of the 438 Jesuit priests that came to England were executed. This was due to their view of rejecting any compromise with Elizabeth and calling for a foreign invasion (although were never supported by one), which was treason, rather than heresy. This use of charging them with a pollical crime rather than a religious one stopped the Jesuits becoming martyrs for the general public, furthermore subduing the Jesuit threat. Secondly, the Douai priests were an example of an external threat that was not serious to Elizabeth. The Douai priests were not serious due to the fact that all they did was create an “inward flow of priests” into England (J Bossy) in order to help Catholicism, grow and support the ‘survivalist’ movement in England, which has been previously mentioned as not serious Catholic threat, and therefore shows examples not supporting the statement in question, as the Jesuits and Douai priests were foreign supported Catholics movements that were no threat to Elizabeth.

The Dominant theme with the domestic threats is mixed, as some such as survivalism are not serious, however some such as the Northern uprising of 1569 were serious. Externally the dominant theme is also mixed, as the foreign supported Spanish War and Papal Bull if 1570 were serious, however the Douai priests and the Jesuits were not. So overall, I do not agree that the Catholic threat was only serious with foreign support, as there are several examples on both sides of this statement.