

Religion by Augustinus

Behind the ouster of Virgilio Levi

Was Levi fired for writing that the Pope ordered Lech Walesa out of politics—or was it merely the last straw?

When on June 26 we heard the news that Virgilio Levi had been fired from his post as deputy director of *L'Osservatore Romano*, we were delighted, both because we had looked forward to such a decision by the Vatican and because we hoped this may open a new chapter in the editorial life of the newspaper which is supposedly the voice of the Holy See.

All those who read *L'Osservatore Romano* for reasons of duty or faith know that its cultural pages are more decadent than those of the ultimate "liberal-socialist" newspaper in Italy, *La Repubblica*. Articles that comment favorably on Freud's ideas alternate with essays on the degenerate John Ruskin and the 19th century Pre-Raphaelite School he founded, which proposed to destroy the scientific and humanistic values introduced into art by Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci.

And through all emerges raving neo-Hegelianism as the overall worldview of the paper, mixed with a hearty dose of appreciation for Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and their heavy Russian peasant fundamentalism.

If we pass on to the news, political information, and current events, the situation hardly improves. Imitating the lying editorial policy of the Soviets, *L'Osservatore Romano* was the only Western paper that never quoted a single word from the speech given by President Reagan last March 23, announcing the new strategic doctrine of defensive beam weapons.

So, in our view, the head of Virgilio Levi should not be the only one

to roll. The Pope must organize an actual control commission, not only to probe the newspaper (as was already done by the prefect of the Vatican Library, Mons. Adolf Stickler) but above all to reestablish an editorial line more consonant with the tradition of the Church Fathers and the protagonists of the mid-15th century Council of Florence, who strenuously defended the doctrine of the *Filioque*, the keystone of Western civilization.

The ousting of Father Levi, who recently spread rumors he was about to be named editor-in-chief of *L'Osservatore Romano*, may open the classic Pandora's box of the Pope's enemies in the Vatican and outside. Father Levi never hid his close links with neo-Malthusian organizations such as the Trilateral Commission, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Club of Rome, nor his personal friendship with Henry Kissinger, notoriously implicated in the assassination of Christian Democratic Party leader Aldo Moro.

But perhaps less known to the general public is the "journalistic" collaboration Levi maintained with *Acciaio*, the magazine of the unsavory extra-parliamentary group Stella Rossa ("Red Star"). It is well known that Stella Rossa has long been foddered by the leader of the Socialist Party-linked UIL labor confederation, Giorgio Benvenuto, and by that union's international office, headed for years by Luigi Scricciolo, now jailed as a Red Brigades terrorist.

This begs the question: Why did Father Levi write for *Acciaio*? Could

he have not known that the Bulgarian network to which Scricciolo was linked was organizing the attempt on the life of Lech Walesa—the same Lech Walesa who was the classic "banana peel" on which Father Levi slipped?

One thing is certain. The gist of the "incriminating" article by Father Levi on the relations between the Vatican and Poland was certainly not an interpretation of the state of these relations in the light of the Holy Father's recent visit to Poland, but represented an overt torpedo against the moderate and realistic line of the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Glemp.

Appealing to a potential opposition to the Cardinal's policy in extremist fringes linked to the Solidarnosc union, Father Levi fanned the flames by maintaining that the agreement between the Polish Church and government would sacrifice Walesa.

Cui bono—who benefits? Certainly not the very difficult operation Cardinal Glemp was already working on before the Pope's second visit to Poland. Certainly not those Polish government spokesmen who recently requested, and implemented, an eight-year debt moratorium, incurring the wrath of the Swiss bankers allied to the new Czar of the Kremlin, Yuri Andropov.

The cooperation between Levi and Stella Rossa opens another query. The group's magazine's big financial angel is Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, who is also totally involved in the "Bulgarian Connection" and the current Libyan oil scandal, in which many top figures in the Italian secret services and Church face charges. One of the three areas being scrutinized by magistrates in this latest scandal is Como, where the oil, weapons, and money to be recycled were exchanged.

It was from Como that Father Levi was catapulted to Rome.