

Vatican renews fight for Western values

by Augustinus

On Dec. 10 Moscow's *Pravda* vigorously denounced "the shift to the right of the Vatican leadership." The Vatican and the Pope, the Soviet paper stressed, have joined ranks with President Reagan and abandoned the "neutrality" on the East-West question which they had during the 1960s and the 1970s. After condemning the "Vatican's rejection of Liberation Theology," which was issued on Sept. 4, 1984, *Pravda* concluded wildly: "Washington is trying to achieve the religious ideological basis for the idea of creating an anti-communist, anti-Soviet crusade."

The frustration of the new czars of the Kremlin is understandable. As the year opened, as *EIR* warned in a Feb. 28, 1984 cover story, Pope John Paul II appeared on the verge of caving in to a deal with the Kremlin, a policy embodied in the "Ostpolitik" of Secretary of State Agostino Casaroli. Yet, in the last period there have been clear signs that the Vatican leadership is abandoning the appeasement line. Seen through the eyes of the Russian leaders, the Ostpolitik was a means of pushing the Catholic Church to favor the Soviet plans of destabilization of the West.

The Soviets had believed they could maneuver diplomatically to the point that the Vatican would not even dare to draw the obvious conclusion from the Soviet-inspired attempt on the life of John Paul II in 1981. But last Oct. 26, after a series of dramatic shifts, the magistrate in charge of investigating the crime finished his three-year probe and presented the evidence of Bulgarian (hence, Soviet KGB) involvement in the murder plot. Moscow's answer was savage: Polish Catholic abbot Jerzy Popieluszko, one of the brightest and bravest leaders of the Solidarnosc movement and believed to be very close to the Pope, was kidnapped, tortured, and thrown still alive into the Vistula river. The crime was ordered, organized, and executed by KGB agents inside the Polish interior ministry.

Indeed, the Soviets are rabid because the Vatican leadership is not only "shifting to the right" vis à vis the Russian empire, but has begun to confront Moscow's biggest ally in the West: the Venetian-Swiss oligarchy which dominates world finance and debt collection, and promotes the Malthusian doctrine of population control to halt scientific progress.

What is clear is that John Paul II is engaged in a fight to save Western civilization against a concentrated and potentially final attack.

On Oct. 12, speaking in Santo Domingo, the Pope took up the issue of the financial strangulation of the Third World countries. He denounced an "incorrect behavior in international relations and in commercial interchange, which creates new imbalances. And now the grave problem is presented of the foreign debt of the Third World countries, in particular of Latin America. This phenomenon can create conditions of undefined social paralysis and can condemn entire nations to permanent debt . . . to constant underdevelopment." After this cue, on Nov. 25 the Conference of the Central American Bishops frontally attacked the "International Monetary Fund's cold, dehumanized concept of economy." "The Catholic Church does not accept the supposed recommendations of the IMF," said conference spokesman Archbishop Roman Arrieta Villalobos, "for the simple reason that they affect our peoples. . . . The pressures brought by the IMF in its effort to recover loans are to be rejected with courage and firmness."

This attack against the IMF policy fits into a broader attack on what John Paul II called in his Santo Domingo speech "the action of the agents of neo-Malthusianism who wish to impose a new colonialism on the Latin American peoples." In the same speech, the Pope condemned "the spread of religious cults." On Nov. 13, utilizing testimony from the Catholic Cardinal of Rio de Janeiro, the government of Venezuela banned Tradition, Family and Property, the right-wing cult that advocates the assassination of the Pope (see p. 52). This cult is the counterpart of the Marxist-oriented Liberation Theology in a plan to have the Ibero-American continent explode in a bloody right-versus-left scenario.

Taking aim at the "left" side of these anti-progress cults, on Dec. 4 the Pope ordered the Society of Jesus to expell Fernando Cardenal, minister of education in the Nicaraguan government, a top "Theolib" figure.

With full diplomatic relations between Washington and the Vatican opened in 1984, the potential alliance between President Reagan and the Pope which the Soviets fear could be one of the determining factors in saving the West, if the programmatic content of this alliance is clear and capable of mobilizing the large majority of people.

In this regard one of the year's key developments was the Pope's success in pulling the rug out from under the Third Ecumenical Conference held on Oct. 5-7 near Trento, Italy, where appeasement-minded Catholic clergy were preparing to eliminate the *Filioque* principle contained in Latin versions of the Nicene Creed. The *Filioque* asserts the co-equal role of the Son with the Father in the ongoing process of Creation. This point of doctrine has been the basis for the unique *republican* achievements of Western Judeo-Christian civilization, pivoted on the necessity of technological progress. The *Filioque* is the point most ferociously rejected by the Russian Orthodox Church, for exactly that reason.