
The Evil Fantasies of Rembert Weakland, O.S.B.



Weakland

U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on the economy: an anti-Christian hoax

by Allen Douglas

Ever since Vatican II declared the episcopal office (that of the bishops) to derive its authority and continuity from the Apostles, as the Pope's derives from Christ through St. Peter, the U.S. bishops have been feeling their oats. Using what they feel to be their "sure charism of truth," the bishops have launched two major interventions into U.S. national political life in recent years: first, their 1983 pastoral letter on "peace" and now, their also much-publicized pastoral letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy. It is difficult to tell which is the more evil, or the less Christian. But since the bishops, under the direction of the former chief of all the world's Benedictine abbots, Rembert Weakland, have embarked on a mass campaign to reorganize the U.S. economy on communalist, small-is-beautiful lines, coordinated at the top by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), some light must be shed on their activities.

Claiming Christian orthodoxy for their foray into economic matters, the bishops are at great pains to argue that the core of their prescriptions is both Biblically based, and within the mainstream of Catholic social action teachings. The argument is a fraud on both accounts. The central dictate regarding economic matters, reiterated in papal encyclicals over the years, is the famous command in the first chapter of Genesis, for man to "Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." This command, for man created in God's image to participate in the ongoing process of God's Creation, has been the pivotal organizing principle of Judeo-Christian civilization for almost 2,000 years. It is consciously, repeatedly, degraded in the bishops' pastoral to that of "faithful stewardship . . . in a world of limited material resources." Apparently the only unlimited resource in this newly defined Creation, is the arrogance of the bishops.

The real tradition the bishops are carrying on in their pastoral, is that of a 19th-century oligarchical concoction smuggled into Christianity, known as *solidarism*. Proclaimed as a "third way," neither capitalism nor communism, solidarism's chief premise is that, since the (anti-progress) guilds of feudal society, which worked so nicely, are no longer with us, we must create "mediating structures" be-

tween the individual and the state, to protect the dignity and living standards of man from the evils of industrial capitalism. While one could hardly argue with the premise that liberal capitalism, of the Adam Smith, hedonistic variety, is evil, nor that communism, for suppressing the individual dignity and creativity of man, is also evil, the sleight-of-hand of solidarism, which purports to define a "common good" absent to either of the other two systems (unspeakable) "small is beautiful," communalist premises. The application of solidarist theory is shown in the works of solidarist-trained E. F. Schumacher, author of *Small is Beautiful*, or in that faction of the Social Democratic-associated German trade union movement today, which believes that all profit (and therefore all ability to reinvest in expanding the economy) is intrinsically evil. This tendency in German trade unionism, now closely allied with the Soviets, was founded in the 19th century by solidarist theoretician Bishop von Ketteler through his funding of Social Democratic Party founder Ferdinand LaSalle.

More deeply, solidarism was concocted to oppose the doctrine within Christianity expressed by the 15th century Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa in his *Concordantia Catholica*. Cusa, the founder of modern physical science, laid the conceptual framework for a Christendom characterized by cooperating sovereign nation states, freeing the world from oligarchical-run feudal socialism, the socialism of feudal agriculture and urban guilds. This type of concord, embodied in the American System of "harmony of interests" of labor and capital, which threatened to spread worldwide in the 19th century, was the real target of solidarism, not Adam Smith's capitalism or Karl Marx's communism.

Likewise, the alleged opposition to the bishops' letter, the Lay Commission on the Pastoral Letter, led by the Jesuitical Michael Novak and "AIDS rights" supporter, ex-Treasury Secretary Bill Simon, is in reality not opposed to the bishops, but to the nation-state operating to foster scientific progress (the American System), every bit as much as the bishops' letter itself.

The "new institutions of economic partnership" around

which the bishops recommend reorganizing the U.S. economy are standard for solidarist doctrine: "sharing by workers in the profits of an enterprise; enabling employees to become owners of stock in the companies for which they work; granting employees greater initiative to improve the quality of work; cooperative ownership by the workers," with an overall focus on "self-help programs for the poor" and "job creation for the poor."

But local control is not all the bishops have in mind. "Our public policy . . . should also work to strengthen those international financial institutions that can stabilize the international monetary system and directly contribute to meeting the basic needs of the poor of the world. . . ." At a time when those "international financial institutions," led by the IMF, have already killed more people worldwide than Hitler ever dreamed of, the bishops, in their infinite concern for the poor, call for precisely *those* institutions to be strengthened. Indeed, their prescriptions for the ravaged developing sector are almost identical, even in jargon, with the IMF's: "Progress toward development will require Third World governments to curtail spending on inefficient public enterprises, to reduce borrowing, to streamline bureaucracies, and to take very difficult steps toward empowering their people."

As a worldwide movement against the genocide of the IMF grows daily, Weakland is now making noises of "concern" about IMF conditionalities. Yet his crocodile tears for the nations being ruined by the IMF is simply one more fraud. The letter is characterized throughout by ranting against the institution of the nation-state, crushing the sovereignty of which is the major intention of the "international institutions": "Creation by God and recreation in Christ make us realize that the commonality we share with people of other nations is more basic than the barriers national borders create. A true Biblical vision of the human condition relativizes the claims of any state or government of total allegiance." While the German poet Friedrich Schiller proclaimed a true republican to be "both a patriot and a world-citizen," the sophistry of Weakland and his cronies aims to create a "biblical" acquiescence in the destruction of the nation state of the United States, first through their disarmament pastoral, and now through attacking what is left of the U.S. economy.

While the "claims of allegiance" go to the IMF and other supranational institutions at the top, the bishops point to their own 15-year-old Campaign for Human Development as the model for "claims of allegiance" on the bottom. "Though small, the Campaign for Human Development has achieved much in its efforts to empower the powerless. It provides a model that we think sets a high standard for similar efforts, especially in its support for new cooperative ventures." This operation, founded by two priests who were trainees and co-thinkers of the late Saul Alinsky, notorious for the creation of such local "self-help" and "empowerment" units as Chicago's black urban gangs, is recommended as the model

vehicle for pouring funds into. Never mind the \$1 trillion infrastructure collapse in the United States, the disappearance of machine tools and heavy industry, the ruin of energy production, the vanishing of the productive owner-operator farms. There is to be no credit flowing into production, but as is already happening in the nation's former steel belt in Pittsburgh and Ohio, workers are to be organized into Alinskyite self-help operations and encouraged to buy up collapsing plants, speeding themselves up in a vain attempt to keep industries afloat which the IMF has already consigned to oblivion.

'Insurance companies and priests'

Several years ago, Orio Giarini, the chief economist for the Venetian-Swiss reinsurance cartels as well as the genocidal Club of Rome, predicted that the emerging post-industrial "world will be run by the insurance companies and the priests." What the American bishops are doing, underneath the whited sepulchres of their "solidarity with the poor," is precisely what their solidarist forebears did: attempting to give an ideological, a "religious," basis, for a social structure run by the oligarchical families through their family funds, the single biggest pool of which are the reinsurance cartels. Not surprisingly, the bishops' letter on the economy was dreamed up in 1980 by Auxiliary Bishop Peter Rosazza of Hartford, Connecticut, a frequent "dialogue partner" of the insurance companies headquartered in his diocese. These companies played a prominent role in the "consulting" process of the letter.

Needless to say, not everyone in the Church is happy with the "charisms" which Weakland and his cronies, the bishops, are exercising. In a recent article in the Jesuits' magazine, *America*, "Explaining Myself to Rome," Weakland attempts to argue that his adult life was shaped by the struggle against fascism. After discussing Mussolini and Hitler, he makes the astonishing statement that "By its very structure—hierarchical, that is,—the church can easily tend toward such fascistic traits," arguing that criticism from Rome against him is due to these "fascistic traits." Perhaps the good monk should be reminded that it was the flagship monastery of his own Benedictine order, St. John's Abbey of Collegeville, Minnesota, which served as the organizing base for a real live Nazi, Dom Bernhard Strasser, O.S.B., during and after World War II. According to declassified records of U.S. Military Intelligence, Dom Bernhard, whose brothers Otto and Gregor were key figures in helping Hitler to rise to power, was coordinating a far-flung "fascist international" from the Collegeville Abbey for deployment against the United States after the war. While agreeing with Hitler on essentials, Dom Bernhard noisily insisted that Hitler's fascism was not radical enough. What was needed, according to Dom Bernhard, was a *universal* fascism that would eliminate any vestige of nation states once and for all.