

Battle erupts over celebration of 500th anniversary of 1492 voyage

by Cynthia R. Rush

A brawl has broken out around the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, two years before its scheduled 1992 celebration. The Catholic Church plans to celebrate the anniversary as the introduction of Christianity to the New World. Pope John Paul II will tour Ibero-America in 1992, with stops in Argentina, Peru, Venezuela, Cuba, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic to celebrate, retracing the route of the first Spanish missionaries. The Church is also using the 1992 anniversary as an opportunity to address Ibero-America's social and economic injustices, caused by the policies of the Anglo-American banking elite, which is intent on destroying Western Christian culture. The anniversary, and the celebration of the Fourth General Meeting of the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM) in Santo Domingo will be the kicking-off point for what the Church calls "a new evangelization," one capable of realizing the Pope's characterization of Ibero-America as "the continent of hope."

Catholic culture predominates in Ibero-America, and remains an obstacle to malthusianism and the free-market lunacy pushed by the Bush administration and the international banking community. The Anglo-Americans have determined that this culture must therefore be destroyed, leaving in its place the paganism, ecologism, and terror exemplified by Peru's Pol Pot-like Shining Path group, which has declared war on everything "Western." Bankers intend to subject Ibero-America's populations to a beast-like existence, devoid of modern science and technology, forcing people to fight among themselves for dwindling supplies of food and other resources.

The attacks on the discovery of America and the 1992 celebration, which have suddenly begun to emerge from a variety of sources, are an integral part of Anglo-American strategy. If the banking elite is to reduce the continent to the level of cultural and economic bestiality represented by the Aztec and Incan cultures which existed in the Western Hemisphere of the 15th century, it must succeed not only in implementing its retrograde economic policies, but also in distorting the Christian evangelization of the Americas.

Black Legend revived

EIR founder Lyndon LaRouche points out (see below) that the introduction of Christian civilization into the Western Hemisphere was a "great good in and of itself." As "the highest form of civilization ever to exist," it liberated man-

kind from the bestiality and degeneracy typified by the Aztecs, for example, "who were cutting out tens of thousands of living hearts for their religious celebrations." Christianity can offer freedom, LaRouche asserts, because unlike what he terms "puke cultures," it has the image of "this particular sacredness, of the sovereign, creative individual personality." It is this very trait of Christian civilization which the propaganda organs tied to the Anglo-American establishment attack, as they revive the "Black Legend." This is the lie that the Indian inhabitants of the New World were really better off before the arrival of the Spanish, and that the conquest of America and introduction of Christianity constituted only wanton genocide and ravaging of indigenous lifestyles, carried out in order to impose Euro-centric culture.

The governing board of the National Council of Churches (NCC), whose sympathy for the "human rights" of Ibero-American terrorists is well known, has passed a resolution condemning Christopher Columbus for importing "racism and moral decadence" into the Western Hemisphere. It claims that his landing in America led to the enslavement and murder of the hemisphere's populations.

Similarly, Kirkpatrick Sale, author of the recently published *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy*, asserts that the New World was paradise until Columbus and the Spanish arrived. American Indians lived in "ecological harmony," he claims, and their technology, religion, and ethics were superior to their European counterparts. He asserts that the "Columbian legacy" was one of environmental pollution. Almost all reviews of the book published thus far are like the one in the Nov. 5 edition of *Newsweek*, which states that while Sale exaggerates, he's not necessarily wrong. "He's got 500 years of environmental degradation on his side of the argument," writes Malcolm Jones, Jr. In the Oct. 8 edition of *U.S. News and World Report*, Alvin P. Sanoff ends a review of Sale's book with the bald statement that "it is not really so important whether Columbus was a good man. What matters is that he brought over a culture centered on its own superiority. The failings of the man were and remain the failings of the culture—a fact that is worth reflecting on as the quinticentennial of Columbus's landfall approaches."

Not everyone is swallowing this drivel. Mario Paredes, director of the Northeast Hispanic Catholic Center in New York, issued a statement last July criticizing the National

Council of Churches' resolution on Columbus, calling it a "global distortion of reality . . . sheer arrogance" which "promotes a racist depreciation of the heritages of most of today's American peoples, especially Hispanics." Paredes said that "the majority of men and women in this hemisphere share tremendous pride in their Hispanic—and *mestizo*—heritages and in their Spanish language . . . [and] in their Christian faith and belongings." Paredes added that "millions of other men and women of every race and many languages in other of the Americas' island and continental nations join Hispanic people in pride . . . they recognize that the voyages of Christopher Columbus were a key point in their coming into existence."

The ecology angle

It is not accidental that many of the attacks on the 1992 celebration contain an environmental focus. Aside from being the date of the celebration of the discovery of America, 1992 is also the year in which the United Nations will sponsor a mammoth, 12-day-long Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The international ecology movement has already begun mobilizing for this conference, whose intent is to set the stage for imposing limited sovereignty on Brazil under the guise of "defending the Amazon" and the indigenous cultures allegedly being preyed upon by advocates of economic development. Inside Brazil, in preparation for this conference, allies of the Anglo-American establishment have begun the debate, questioning the "development model" which sought to transform Brazil into an industrialized nation during the 1960s and 1970s.

As part of this campaign, the defrocked Dominican priest Frei Betto, a spokesman for the Brazilian Church's Theology of Liberation faction and chief ideologue of the Marxist Workers' Party, has recently fully embraced ecologism, and denounced the injunction of Verse 28 of Genesis that man must "replenish the earth and subdue it." Betto's colleague, leftist theologian Leonardo Boff, has just authored a tract attacking the evangelization of America, titled *New Evangelization: From the Perspective of the Oppressed*.

The policy document written by CELAM in preparation for its Fourth General Meeting in 1992, responds to this leftist, ecologist nonsense. The document states that in the face of a leadership crisis, the failure of political parties, and the growing pauperization of the continent's peoples, the Church has a responsibility to create greater political consciousness to help create a society "placed at the service of the human being and the community." CELAM echoes the remarks made by the Pope in Mexico last May, implying that a "third way—free of Marxist collectivism or neo-liberalism—is required to preserve the dignity of the human being." That call for a "third way," also associated with the economic proposals put forward by Lyndon H. LaRouche, has been reproduced in publications of Brazil's Armed Forces and by other nationalist currents in Ibero-America.

Documentation

Evangelization is only real meaning of Columbus

On Oct. 14, Lyndon LaRouche made the following remarks on Christopher Columbus and the evangelization of the Americas. He refers to various historical research projects carried out in the past by the philosophical organization he founded, the International Caucus of Labor Committees.

There was a massive commerce, over the millennia, between Europe, the Mediterranean generally, and the Americas, particularly North America and the Caribbean, so that the mere fact of the voyage and so-called discovery by Columbus is not particularly unique, and the issues usually posed on the priority of the act of discovery, that is, planting the flag on some piece of dirt someplace, in the name of some king, is not what is crucial. What is crucial about Columbus, what caused the Columbus voyage to differ from all earlier discoveries of America, all other contenders, is that the Columbus discovery led directly, in chain reaction, to the evangelization of the Americas.

The evangelization of the Americas can be understood in several respects. One, that Christian civilization, which is the highest form of civilization ever to exist, although it is a secretion of European development, is not a property of Europe, but belongs to all mankind. It is held by Europe only in trust for the benefit of all mankind. I.e., the right of developing nations to technological progress, to access to science, to nuclear energy, for example.

The flip side of the same point is that typified by the Aztecs, who were cutting out tens of thousands of living hearts for their religious celebrations. The cultures which were Christianized were bestial, degenerate, and therefore, Christianity lifted mankind in the Western Hemisphere out of barbaric degeneracy, moral degeneracy, degradation—puke, puke, puke. That applied to Afro-centrism, Aztec centralism, and all these other puke cultures.

We can say that there were puke cultures in Europe. Yes, we're talking about British imperialism, for example. We're talking about the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, at least its higher strata. We're talking about Anglo-American banking, Lombard banking. These are puke, puke, puke, puke cultures. These are diseases which Europe suffers. This is an aspect of Europe which reflects *pagan, heathen* Babylon,

pagan, heathen Rome. Puke, puke, puke.

So, the evangelization of the Americas, like the attempted evangelization of Africa, is the attempt to bring *freedom*, the freedom which exists only in Christian civilization. No other culture is capable of sustaining freedom, because it doesn't offer freedom, because it has no image of this particular sacredness, of the sovereign, creative individual personality. Other cultures may be better or worse; people may be better or worse, but this specific thing is absolutely essential for mankind.

The further proliferation of this Christian civilization is a great good in and of itself. It also liberates mankind, in this case, from bestiality, as typified by the degenerate, immoral, puke, puke, puke Aztecs in the Western Hemisphere.

That's the significance of Columbus, and Columbus has very marginal significance otherwise.

Council of Florence had the idea

However, the marginal significances are subsumed by this same Christian civilization. The *idea* of the colonization of the Americas was set forth in the work of the Council of Florence, and that you need to have access to—the assembly of maps and so forth, but more than the assembly of maps. We have this all over the place; I've discussed this many times, in connection with the colonization projects of Greece, which led, for example, to the emergence of Magna Graecia, which was a colonization project. The reference to this by Plato was transmitted to Europe, and we find that right after Columbus, for example, in the case of the Dudleys and others, the colonization project—Thomas More's circle had this, for example—the colonization of the Americas, the evangelization of the Americas, was a common theme, and was referenced to Plato's views on colonization.

So that's another part. Not only was the colonization, the discovery and evangelization itself a great good, which flowed from Christian civilization, but the initiative behind this came from Christian civilization per se, that is, as a direct secretion of Christian civilization, and nothing else.

Now, let's look for comparison at the other voyages. We had settlements in Newfoundland, which means the Norman Irish were all over the place, 500 years at least before Columbus, and probably much earlier. They were up the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi—the Norman Irish settlements in the Mississippi. We have Indians who are not Indians. Then, we have the Portuguese fishermen. We don't know how early they were doing that, but they were doing it much earlier than Columbus. For example, when the Pilgrims landed in 1620, in Massachusetts, the first place they stopped was at a Portuguese fishing settlement, in what is called Provincetown now, where they had directions to the so-called Indians, with whom the Portuguese had extensively intermarried, and since the Portuguese had intermarried with these Indians, of course the Europeans were able to discuss with these Indians, who were actually Portuguese.

Scientific approach to the problem

It's obvious from sources we've discussed before, that there was much regular contact. This was noted by the Humboldt brothers, who noted certain philological connections between the languages of Central America and the pre-Celtic languages or pre-Indo-European languages of the Iberian Peninsula, and things like that. We've had discussions of this back in 1978-79 extensively, into 1980. All this is known. So, for thousands of years, with ebbs and flows, this communication was going on.

As to winds and things of that sort: Maritime culture is based on *fish*. And whence go the fish, goes the maritime culture, chasing the fish. Very obvious business! And the Portuguese fishermen were the basis for the Portuguese colonization, so to speak, of the New England area, long before the Pilgrims arrived. They were out for the fish, not for the colonization. The colonies were established, of course to package that fish, and salt it down, and put them into casks, and take the cod back to Portugal.

In the era of sailing ships, conditions of sailing, such as winds, and, obviously, magnetic compasses of various kinds, had a part. From various Vedic sources, we know that the compass isn't much older than China—the lodestone, or something equivalent, something that had the function of a compass—in a ship, and was used as an aid to navigation.

The evangelization of the Americas, like the attempted evangelization of Africa, is the attempt to bring freedom, the freedom which exists only in Christian civilization.

But all that aside, the locomotion depends upon the design of the ship, and the prevailing currents, including water currents and wind currents. We know, generally, some of the history of these wind currents. We know, also, something of the cycle of the magnetic North Pole and its effects. We know something about the ships, for example, the existence of copper-bottomed ships, very much like Viking ships, into the second millennium B.C. So, by the second millennium B.C., a civilization which existed, say, at the Straits of Gibraltar, could have made regular trips westward, to the Caribbean, and would have done well to get back by taking a more northerly course backward. That sort of thing, we went through.

You take an oared ship with sail—40 oars, something like that, with sail, and we can estimate pretty clearly how long it would take to get from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Caribbean. And we look at Columbus's three vessels, which weren't much bigger than that, though relying upon sail rather than oar—and it's all fairly obvious.