

## Editorial

### *1992, the year of Columbus*

It is a sign of how much our culture has degenerated today, that anyone could take seriously those who question the morality of bringing western Christian civilization to the New World—the evangelization of the Americas by Columbus in 1492. The context for such a cynical repudiation of the great 15th-century Renaissance is given by the colonial policies of the present British and American governments. The backers of Christopher Columbus wished to share the best of their world and to open up major sea routes in order to enhance the potentialities for global development, whereas today the Anglo-Americans wish to turn Africa, Ibero-America, Asia, and now eastern Europe into areas which they can exploit at will.

There can be no question about Columbus's fundamental purpose. The project of expanding the known world to encompass easy routes to Asia, and to explore the far reaches of our globe, was defined by leading thinkers of that period, such as Nicolaus of Cusa, as an extension of the ecumenical work of the Council of Florence, which sought to reunify the Catholic and Orthodox confessions in one Church. A key to such unity was the recognition that man, created in the living image of God, was placed upon this earth to imitate his Creator.

Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa was personally involved in furthering the sciences of astronomy and navigation through his geometrical studies. His close friend, Martins, played a key part in the Portuguese side of Columbus's experience and education, and in the correspondence between Columbus and Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli, who gave Columbus the directions in which to go. When the West Indies were discovered, they were, at the time, believed to be the islands lying between the Atlantic Coast of Europe and the Eurasian land mass. Their colonization was a strategic cultural effort, at a time when western Europe was under threat of military conquest by the Turks. Pagan forces were threatening Europe from Asia.

The crucial cultural point of difference between the pagan and Christian world view, then as today, centered precisely upon the question of man's God-

given task in the Universe. Are men and women simply one among many natural creatures, as the pagans assert, or have they creative powers which not only separate us from the beasts, but give us special moral responsibilities? Does God not expect us to devote ourselves to participating in the task of perfecting His Creation—and thereby perfect ourselves?

Columbus's voyage 500 years ago can only be compared to a project such as LaRouche's plan to establish a city of 100,000 people on Mars in 40 years. It was a glorious extension of man's reach.

It is asserted against Columbus that the Europeans destroyed the indigenous Indian culture of the New World. Aside from the fact that the atrocities are magnified, the assertion is nonsense on two counts. The Indian culture of the period was so brutal that in fact the Spaniards under Cortés were aided in the conquest of Mexico by Indians who opposed their Aztec oppressors. Actual atrocities, such as those committed in the running of mines in Ibero-America, can be traced to the actions of the usurious bankers who controlled the finances of all of the European monarchies.

From the time of the American Revolution through to the 20th century—despite many serious flaws—the United States was a temple of liberty and beacon of hope to all of suffering humanity, because the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution recognized the God-given rights of man. That is the true heritage of Columbus.

Today the United States, led by Britain's pagan Prince Philip, is forcing a bankers' dictatorship on the nations such as Brazil, in order to prevent them from improving the abysmally impoverished conditions of life of their Indian populations, among others. Cynically claiming that they are protecting the rights of the Indian tribes to preserve their own culture, they are really intent on grabbing rich mineral resources of the Indian lands. Philip and his like are assuming the mantle, not of Columbus, but of the Turkish invaders of Europe.

Let's be clear upon who the real enemy is, of God and of mankind, so that finally the Good can prevail!