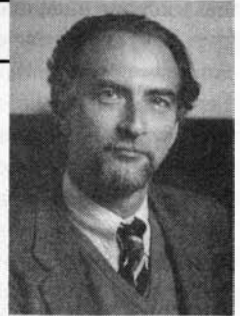

Interview: Maurizio Blondet



European journalist sees new kind of fascism in the U.S.

Maurizio Blondet is one of the most experienced and insightful journalists in Italy, one of the few who does not bow to the changing winds. Well known as a Catholic author, Blondet believes that professionalism and morality are one and the same thing. Blondet has worked for such major Italian media as Domenica del Corriere, Il Settimanale, and Il Giornale Nuovo. He collaborates with several cultural magazines, in particular Studi Cattolici. He has been special correspondent to Japan, Colombia, El Salvador, Argentina, and Lebanon, and is now a special correspondent for Avvenire, the newspaper of the Italian Bishops Conference. He gave this interview to Umberto Pascali on Feb. 24.

EIR: You have been following the Gulf war from Washington for *Avvenire*. You were telling me that this assignment has provoked in you an impression even stronger than the one in Lebanon during the civil war.

Blondet: Yes, one of the things that struck me is the psychological atmosphere of the people. The support for the policy of President Bush—a debatable policy to say the least—is an intolerant support. These are good people with whom one could talk, up to the day before, who suddenly came out with an attitude of intolerance, with the symbols of so-called American patriotism: the yellow ribbon, the “I support my President” button and a total rejection for every opinion that is seen as slightly different. I fear this recalls a phenomenon that took place in Germany in the 1930s. For example, here in Washington I often go into a colleague’s office, a correspondent for a major newspaper. We often talked, in the presence of his secretary, an intelligent and efficient American lady, and we expressed some criticism toward the attitude of the White House. She protested, and the day after, she came into the office with a button: “I support the troops” and a defiant attitude. If you speak to people who lived during the 1930s in Germany, the case of the good employee, or housewife who suddenly became patriotic was very usual. Also here, good people suddenly become accomplices of something very debatable—like a ruthless war against a Third World country by the biggest military power on Earth. This makes me think that this democracy is becoming something different. . . .

EIR: Do you think it’s becoming a dictatorship?

Blondet: Not in the usual sense of the word. What is happening is the perversion of the conformist, mass democracy, but it is the expression of seeds that were already in that democracy. Now there is a “democracy” without opposition, a choral democracy. We should not forget that Hitler was elected by a very large majority and, I believe, the same would have been true for Mussolini if free elections had been called. This is what worries me. A democracy must have an organized opposition. Instead, anyone who really protests is being discredited, beaten back, put aside. This reminds me of the onset of Nazism.

But there is also a fundamental difference. We Europeans at this point are able to smell a dictatorship when we see one. The difficulty in pinpointing the onset of American dictatorship is this: The classic 1930s-style dictator has a secret police, one-party system, etc. Here in the U.S., on the contrary, it seems to me what is being created is the dictatorship of the 21st century. New instruments are being experimented with. There is no need for a one-party system. Rather, there is apparently a pluralistic society, but one in which the freedom of dissent and ideas is exercised on meaningless issues like being for or against smoking, or homosexuality, etc., things that are perhaps very serious from a moral standpoint, but totally marginal politically.

Why doesn’t anybody ask the real fundamental questions? Like, why should we spend \$56 billion in a war for a country which is clearly impoverished and in need of investments for its infrastructure? This is a new kind of dictatorship where you are not forbidden to ask questions, but it is made impossible to ask the right questions—and without people realizing it. The general ignorance of the population and television culture deprives people of the language capable of expressing deep thoughts. There are only two languages: either Biblical language, too lofty to, for example, approach social problems; and soap opera language. The destruction of language and culture is one of the real instruments of the 21st-century dictatorship.

EIR: As you know, the U.S. people were able to express a real alternative to all this, Lyndon LaRouche.

Blondet: Yes, it is true. I am familiar with the LaRouche case. I think that LaRouche is the typical American figure I learned to love since I was a child: the American who says

that someone must make justice in this world and who never gives in to any obstacle. In this sense, here there is an American ingenuousness that is different from Europe. In Europe there is a lot of cynicism. LaRouche's associates never said, the power is against us, it is stronger, we have lost. No, we see in this case the determination to fight for ideas even when the persecution is apparently overwhelming.

America, in my opinion, should take up the example of LaRouche if it wants to find itself, this figure who still stands, in the midst of one of the most repulsive frameups and persecutions, something against which I, as a citizen of the West, strongly protest. One can agree or disagree with LaRouche, but I saw recently some writings by the Anti-Defamation League which include real falsehoods, false accusations that in a normal country would lead to an immediate conviction for defamation. The fact that the "legal" system does not accept this is very alarming. What has been done against LaRouche and others should scare any American citizen. I had the illusion that there were forces in the United States which could get scared and react to these persecutions. But I did not see anything adequate. Yes, there has been the position of Ramsey Clark, who said, I do not agree with LaRouche's ideas, but to throw someone into jail who did not commit any crime is unbearable. A correct position. I think we are witnessing the rotting of the roots of the American freedoms, those freedoms to which we Europeans have been looking for hope since the postwar years. Still, LaRouche and his associates continue to fight, and this is very remoralizing.

EIR: You write for the largest and oldest Catholic daily in Italy. As a Catholic and a journalist what do you think about the Gulf war?

Blondet: A couple of months ago I interviewed Edward Luttwak, and essentially he told me the truth: We have to destroy Saddam Hussein, because he is different from the other Arab rulers who spent their oil money on the casinos of the French Riviera, champagne, and sex. Saddam is building a strong army but also a strong economy, education system, and society. Thus he must be destroyed. I think that the war has been conducted with means of incalculable ferocity. Bombing of cities, bridges, infrastructure of a Third World country; this leaves terrible wounds, because it destroys the hope for the future. This seems to me a war not just to free Kuwait, but to destroy a country which could have made it by itself, which could have built its own technology, not be just an exporter of raw materials.

EIR: Can this be construed as a religious war in any sense?

Blondet: No, for sure not for the Catholic Church. If you want, this war can be called a Crusade, but a Crusade of the modernist Western technocracy, of the "enlightened" or post-Enlightenment technocracy against a religion like Islam, which cannot be swallowed into its logic. I give you

an example. The Agnelli Foundation (which is very similar to the Rockefeller Foundation) recently started a project aimed at "reconciling" modernity with some religions that, until now, were recalcitrant. Two religions were indicated: Islam and Catholicism. Anyway Catholicism—they said—had made a lot of progress. The Jewish religion was not considered at all. Evidently it did not need to be modernized because it was already useful to technocratic imperialism.

EIR: This leads us to the issue of fundamentalism.

Blondet: Exactly. I have been writing on this subject for *Avvenire*. On Billy Graham, for example or on the British Israelites, a subject I intend to study carefully. This Protestant fundamentalism and also certain mystics of British imperialism, like Kenneth de Courcy, consider the Gulf war as a sort of Crusade against one of these religions. It is a fact that the Protestant fundamentalists are helping the Jewish fundamentalists who are determined to rebuild the Third Temple of Solomon.

EIR: One of the principal reasons why LaRouche has been targeted so ferociously is because of his refusal to accept the strategy of the de Courcy group to support a war in the Middle East. Also we know that you are going to publish soon a book on the *Reconstruction of the Temple*. Why is this relevant now?

Blondet: I used to believe that this was an issue for a few specialists, but I had to change my mind. First of all there is a theological question. The reconstruction of the Temple should be only the first step. There is even an article in the *New York Times* confirming this. The second step is the repetition of the sacrifice of Abraham which can be done, according to this belief only in the Mosque of Omar [Jerusalem's Haram Al Sharif, which is also called the Dome of the Rock]. These Jewish fundamentalists are convinced that, by doing that, they could force God to fulfill his part of the old covenant.

All this looks very strange. But this kind of rite, far from being a religious one, is an act of black magic in the worst sense. The difference between religion and magic is that in a religion a man prays to God and aspires to the epiphany, i.e., to a revelation of God, maybe in his heart. On the contrary, the aim of such an act is a cratophany, i.e. the use of a "power" for evil aim, to force God to do something for you through a magic act. These Jewish fundamentalists insist that God keep literally his promise to the Jewish people: Essentially, you will be creditor to everybody and debtor to none, you will be given power over the world, etc. This is a sacrilegious act for Islam, Christianity, and also Judaism. For us Christians, the last lamb sacrificed was Christ. For the Muslims, obviously this is a sacrilegious act because it would involve the profanation of one of the holiest mosques. For Orthodox Judaism the Temple will be one day rebuilt, but only because this Temple will descend from heaven

mysteriously in the last days after the coming of the Messiah.

But the fundamentalists try to accelerate this event by human means. It is something that Judaism would define as un-kosher, impure. Thus these are heretics, very powerful heretics. One could quote against them the prophet Isaiah when he assaults those who want to accelerate the coming of the Lord by human means: They will fall suddenly like a cracked wall. For the Christians and the Catholics in particular, this would be an incomparable blasphemy. This is what the Gospel calls the "abomination of the desolation." In the Gospel this is an allusion to the "coming of the Antichrist" who is introduced into the world through a sacrilegious act of immense relevance, because it is the fundamental act of the three monotheistic religions that is performed in an evil way for an aim of power instead of religious piety.

And these fundamentalists are doing this using exactly that rock where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son, that rock that could be the symbol of the concord among the three monotheistic religions. They are transforming it into the rock of scandal.

EIR: What do you think about the statements by the vice president of the European Parliament, Roberto Formigoni, that the life of the Pope has been threatened?

Blondet: Formigoni spoke of threats and insults expressed privately. The life of the Pope has been already threatened. There are enemies of the Pope who would be ready to kill him. I must say that these revelations of Formigoni came after a very violent campaign against the Pope launched by leaders of the Italian Jewish community. As soon as the Pope began talking against the war, which is his duty as well as his right, these characters began in an artificial and artful way to press the demand that the Church recognize Israel. Now how the two things are connected, we can only guess. This reminded me of the campaign launched indirectly against the Pope and directly against the Polish Church two years ago, when U.S. rabbis orchestrated the scandal in the former Auschwitz concentration camp, to the point of accusing Cardinal Glemp of anti-Semitism! This is difficult to understand, because in Auschwitz more Catholics died than Jews. It is unclear why this was done, except to create troubles for the Catholic and nationalist faction of Solidarnosc and to favor instead the so-called secular, radical wing.

In this story there are too many things which are incomprehensible. The U.S.A. is waging a war that if anything, Israel should have waged with all the risks involved, so as to neutralize a country that could be a danger only for Israel. The Pope is being abused and threatened because he calls for peace. According to some sources these threats are coming both from Jewish circles and from very high U.S. circles. A conspiracy? A sort of conspiracy to implement the new world order, of which we see the alarming effects exactly with this war?

World outrage at conduct of Gulf war

The following is a sampling of some of the international statements of opposition to the genocidal Persian Gulf war.

Europe

The Vatican daily Osservatore Romano, Feb. 26:

The heroism of making peace . . . [is] more demanding than the courage to make war. . . . It is true, the way of negotiations is more difficult than the way of weapons: The path of peace appears less full of glory, but substantially more heroic and effective than the way of war. History teaches that the footsteps of the builders of peace are lasting and clear, also because they are few; the footsteps of the builders of war are many and confused among themselves. . . . [Today] the pride of power has prevailed over compassion for man and for the helpless civilian populations. Now we all live between the memory of the days of hope and the concreteness of all the terror to come.

Jean-Louis Dufour, in the French newspaper Libération, Feb. 27:

The considerable weakness of the Iraqi Army could not be admitted. It was absolutely necessary to prevent the world from recognizing the fantastic disproportion between the most powerful coalition ever put together since the Second World War and the army of a developing country whose population is only equal to two-thirds of Yugoslavia's and whose GNP hardly amounts to one-thirtieth of France's.

Appeal by a faction of the French Socialist Party in Paris, associated with former Defense Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, issued Feb. 20:

We don't believe that massive bombings of cities or bloody battles will in any way bring democracy to the Iraqis. We do not believe that in the Near and Middle East . . . a war in which Westerners intervene, under the pretext of law, alongside dictators, to topple another dictator, can create favorable conditions for a just and global peace. We must reject the extreme hardline policy of the Bush administration.

Edward Pearce, in the London Guardian, Feb. 27:

There is no glory to be recorded there. How do we describe the unmenaced mowing of men like grass? . . . The conquest of Iraq, following smaller excursions like Grenada and Panama, intimates an America, trammelled by neither home politics nor by Soviet counterweight, seeking interna-