

Pope John Paul II: Pursue The Common Good In Argentina, Mideast

by Claudio Celani

In his yearly speech to the diplomatic corps on Jan. 10, Pope John Paul II addressed the situation in Argentina and stressed that policies to find a way out of the crisis must pursue the common good. "Most recently," he said, "the difficult situation in Argentina has given rise to public unrest which has painfully affected people's lives. This is yet another reminder that political and economic activity at the national and international levels must always be inspired by the pursuit of the authentic good of individuals and peoples. With insistence I wish to encourage the people of Latin America, and Argentina in particular, to hold on to hope amid the present difficulties, and not to lose sight of the fact that, given the great human and natural resources available, the present situation is not irreversible and can be overcome with everyone's help. If this is to happen, private or partisan interests must be set aside, and the interest of the nation must be promoted by every legitimate means, through a return to moral values, open and frank dialogue, and the renunciation of what is superfluous in order to help those who are in any way in need. In this spirit, it should be remembered that political activity is above all a noble, demanding, and generous service to the community."

No to the 'Clash of Civilizations'

The meeting was opened by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps to the Vatican, San Marino Ambassador Giovanni Galassi. He warned against a clash of civilizations policy, saying that nations must reject "armed reprisals against whole, harmless civilian populations, due to wrongly and simplistically identifying the primary cause of terrorism in their ethnicity or their religions." In particular, he said, "we live with interest and hope for the ongoing dialogue with Islam, recently erroneously demonized, which is instead the heir of a millenary culture which has nothing to do with fringes of extreme integralism."

Galassi also warned against "a new and more dangerous economic colonialism," and called for "new supranational bodies which are able to steer the free market not only on the basis of financial profits, but above all, in agreement with the dictates of international law and the ethical values which all legislation involves." This is a concept very close to Lyndon LaRouche's idea of a "New Bretton Woods" monetary and financial reform. Indeed, Galassi has used the expression "New Bretton Woods" in previous public speeches.

The Pope, speaking after Ambassador Galassi, praised his



Ambassador to the Vatican Giovanni Galassi's presentation, welcomed by the Pope, was influenced by LaRouche's ideas in EIR.

"thoughtful greeting" as being "accompanied by a penetrating analysis of the international scene during the past year." "The horizon indeed appears dark," said the Pope, "and many of those who have lived through the great movement toward freedom and the changes of the '90s are surprised to find themselves gripped today by fear of a future which has once again become uncertain."

The Pope also issued a clear condemnation of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's policies against the Palestinians. The Pope said that "no one can remain indifferent to the injustice of which the Palestinian people have been victims for more than 50 years. No one can contest the right of the Israeli people to live in security. But neither can anyone forget the innocent victims who, on both sides, fall day after day, under the blows of violence. Weapons and bloody attacks will never be the right means for making a political statement to the other side. Nor is the logic of the law of retaliation capable any longer of leading to paths of peace." The Pope then called for "the application of international law, the evacuation of the occupied territories, and an internationally guaranteed special status for the most holy places in Jerusalem."

"One against the other, neither Israelis nor Palestinians can win the war. But together they can win peace," the Pope said. Finally, he addressed the issue of terrorism. Fighting terrorism, he said, means not only "legitimate defense," but also applying "the most effective means of eradicating terrorism, the search for the factors underlying such acts, and the measures to be taken to bring about a process of 'healing' in order to overcome fear and to avoid evil being added to evil, violence to violence."