

COMMENTARY

On 'The Social Doctrine of the Church' Morals and Immortality: The U.S. Crisis Now

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

November 17, 2004

There is a deliciously ironical aspect to *EIR*'s receipt of the accompanying report by our Italian correspondent, Liliana Gorini. Since it was her ancestor who, quite literally, buried Giuseppe Mazzini, there is a certain exquisitely ironical appropriateness in her informing our English-speaking audience of the Vatican's release, by the Holy See's Press Office, of the 500-page *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. It is to be hoped that this excellent work might inform, and thus improve the future behavior of many presently still misguided U.S. citizens who voted against Democratic Presidential candidate John Kerry on the pretext of "moral" issues.

As Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino reports, the composition just released was begun by Cardinal François Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, a late dear friend of mine.* It is now published as the completion of work in which he was engaged at the time of his death, matters which, in part, I discussed with him on several visits during the years before his death. It were appropriate, on this occasion, that I confine myself here to a matter of morals which must be raised on account of the great flood of disgustingly self-righteous sheer hypocrisy shown by a large number of self-styled "moral" citizens in, specifically, the recent, November 2 election in the state of Ohio.

Among the most notorious of the sundry pseudo-Christian cults which are echoed within the U.S. citizenry today, those which have proliferated so since



"Among the most notorious of the sundry pseudo-Christian cults which are echoed within the U.S. citizenry today, are those strains of Gnosticism which award reign in the real world to Satan, except on the rare occasions God the Creator might rudely intervene."

times in ancient Imperial Rome, are those strains of Gnosticism which award reign in the real world to Satan, except on the rare occasions God the Creator might rudely intervene. For ancient and modern dupes of that and kindred varieties of pagan cult-traditions, morality is essentially a code of conduct adopted for the shrewdly politically cautious inhabitants of a domain ruled by Satan, a domain in which Jeanne d'Arc's or the Rev. Martin Luther King's courageous confrontation with death, are popularly viewed as "mistakes" by our typical, cowardly, moralizing opportunists of today.

Typical of such lack of a true sense of immortality, is the behavior of the pastor who fancies himself a rooster servicing the hens of his flock, but points the finger of rage in thunderous pronouncements against what he alleges to know to be the sinful fornication among his

parishioners. Or compare the behavior of those Ohio citizens who, like the hypocrites they were, did not blink with shame when they voted for a continuation of economic and related health-care policies which are the cause of vast increases in the deaths among our citizens and others. How could such preachers of such so-called morality lead anyone to immortality, when we know by their deeds, that they do not actually believe in it themselves?

In short, the essence of Christian morality in such matters is typified most efficiently by the Apostle Paul's famous 1 Corinthians 13, where the principle known to Plato's Socrates as *agapē* (e.g.,

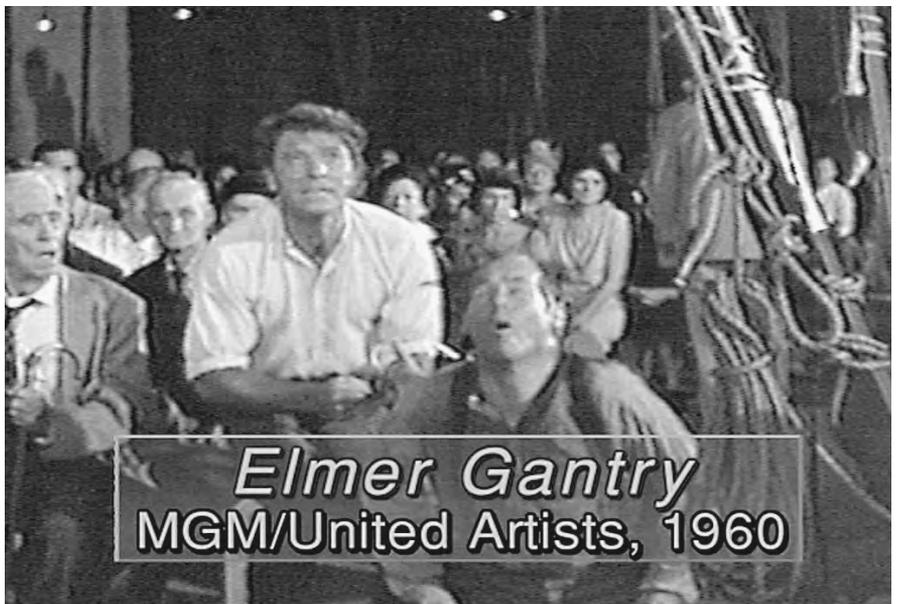
This article first appeared in Executive Intelligence Review, Nov. 26, 2004 (Vol. 31, No. 46).

* See a review of Cardinal Van Thuan's book, *Testimony of Hope: The Spiritual Exercises of John Paul II*, by William F. Wertz, Jr., *Fidelio*, Spring 2001 (Vol. X, No. 1).

love, charity) is contrasted sharply with the behavior of those among our citizens who had just recently cast their vote for the perpetration of crimes against humanity, and implicitly God himself. The immortal soul, who knows that he or she is immortal, trusts immortality, as Jeanne d'Arc and the Rev. Martin Luther King did, and therefore does the deeds which even the future alone may harvest, because he or she is certain of that future. In contrast, these hypocrites, who often esteem themselves as sincere and patriotic as the cock-of-the-walk in the pulpit, care nothing for that anti-Locke Preamble of our Federal Constitution which places sovereignty, the general welfare, and posterity above all other law which might be tolerated by our republic.

The radically consistent offshoots of pro-Satanic Gnosticism, such as the preaching of traitor Aaron Burr's grandfather, the thundering Jonathan Edwards, are the model of reference to be considered when weighing the morality of those hypocritical American moralists who condone the teachings of Locke (human slavery as property), Mandeville (that the general good comes of private corruption, such as Enron), François Quesnay (for whose religion those persons employed on the estate were merely human cattle), and the plagiarist and hater of the U.S.A., Adam Smith, who copied the Gnostic dogmas of Locke, Mandeville, Quesnay, Smith, and, worst of them all, Jeremy Bentham, as that immoral dogma of "free trade" which has wrecked and ruined the U.S. economy and many other parts of the world over a period of more than three recent decades.

Actually, these poor believers in such Gnostic trash as "free trade" are not actually Christians. They do not believe that human beings have actual souls. They do not believe that they are accountable for those consequences of their having lived in a way which must have shamed their forebears, and will disgust their descendants. They take pride in the assumption that they are not "their brother's keepers," but, like the cow not yet herded to the slaughterhouse, they fancy themselves, foolishly, as men and women passionately, and



Elmer Gantry
MGM/United Artists, 1960

"I think back to the 1920's of my childhood. I think hopefully of the waning of the religious fervors of the 'Elmer Gantrys' then. The religious insanity simmered down considerably under the cold realities of the Great Depression and the warmth of the Roosevelt-led recovery."

also shrewdly aware of their immediate, sensual self-interest.

So, in these times, we have many Americans who are studiously indifferent to the kind of future they are bestowing upon even their own young-adult children. Their behavior attests, that they desire nothing as much as to dwell, themselves, in a fantasy-realm of ideological "comfort zones," in which they may overlook the consequences they will leave behind at the time of their deaths. Thus, we have the gambling mania spread among demoralized Americas of various generations today. They have no sense of personal immortality; therefore, why should they expect any? Therefore, how could they be Christians? Why should we be surprised, therefore, when we see how they behave, at the polls, or otherwise: as disgusting hypocrites?

I think back to the 1920's of my childhood. I think hopefully of the waning of the religious fervors of the "Elmer Gantrys" then, disgusting hypocrisies not unlike those which the Falwells and even worse peddle today. I recall, that with the economic realities of 1929-33, there was a crushing of the prevalent religious devotion to the rhetoric of Coolidge and Hoover by the simple fact

of a rude confrontation with reality. I do not think theology improved much during the 1930's U.S.A., but at least the religious insanity simmered down considerably under the cold realities of the Great Depression and the warmth of the Roosevelt-led recovery of our nation. Unfortunately, there was no President Franklin Roosevelt in Germany, and we saw what turns such Gnostic varieties of religious fervor took under Hitler there.

We are not presently reliving past history, but we are facing the onrushing challenges which should warn us against repeating the kinds of mistakes which have repeatedly led nations such as our own to periods of ruin in the experience of past generations.

In summary: there is a fundamental difference between the Christian, for example, who knows what the concept of immortality means for guiding one's own behavior and that of the nation, and those like the so-called "moralists" of Ohio and elsewhere, whose idea of morality is "going along to get along" within the mortal boundaries of what they accept in their practice as a Gnostic's Satan-run domain.

Cardinal Van Thuan gave me his blessing personally a few hours before his demise. His latest work, delivered as

Signora Gorini reports here, attests to my sense of my own immortality, as seen in his eyes, and as I saw his, in return, as he blessed me then. We who sense the reality of immortality, have a courage to act for good, a kind of courage which is lacking in those who have yet to come up

to this standard of morality. How many among my readers could say much the same of themselves? Is that not a key to the real moral crisis of the U.S.A. today? The parts of the work released by Cardinal Martino of which I know, express that intention for those who will receive

the message; on that account, it is, in addition to its principal virtue, also an ecumenical work, which merits the study by all, of whatever nominal profession or confession. However, to really understand it, you must find a sense of true immortality in yourself.

Vatican Moral Issues: Physical Economy, Peace

On October 25, one week before the U.S. elections, Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, gave a press conference at the Holy See Press Office at the Vatican to present the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, a 500-page book published by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana, which had been commissioned by Pope John Paul II. As Cardinal Martino explained, “This document has been prepared—at the request of the Holy Father, to whom it is dedicated—by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, which is fully responsible for its content. It is now made available to all—Catholics, other Christians, people of good will—who seek sure signs of truth in order to better promote the social good of persons and societies. This work began five years ago under the presidency of my venerated predecessor, Cardinal François Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan. An unavoidable delay in the work was caused by the sickness and death of Cardinal Van Thuan and by the subsequent change in presidency of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.” In the introduction to the book, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State of the Holy See, emphasizes, “The Holy Father, while wishing that the present document helps humanity in the continuous research of the Common Good, invokes the benediction of God on those who will stop to reflect on the teachings of such a publication.”

What strikes one immediately upon reading the document, is the strong contrast between the “moral issues” raised by the Pope and his Pontifical Council, and the so-called “moral issues,” or rather *single issues*, such as gay marriages or abortion, raised by George Bush and

his senior adviser and chief political strategist, Karl Rove, during the Presidential elections, in order to attract the vote of Catholics and other Christians.

The document, commissioned by Pope John Paul II, dedicates one of its main chapters to “promoting peace,” stating clearly that any “preemptive war action, launched without any evidence that an aggression is upcoming, cannot but raise serious questions from the moral and juridical standpoint.” It emphasizes that “economic development is the new name for peace,” going back to two encyclical letters which are fundamental to the social doctrine of the Church, *Populorum Progressio* (*On the Progress of Peoples*), issued by Pope Paul VI in 1967, and *Centesimus Annus*, issued by Pope John Paul II in 1991. The other “moral issue” raised by the Vatican document, and

raised during the Presidential elections by former Democratic pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche, and by John Kerry, himself a Catholic, is that of “morality in economics” and the urgent need for a new economic and financial system, in order to punish financial speculation and to allow the development of the physical economy and of social welfare.

Progress of Peoples

Pope John Paul II himself stated, in a speech to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences in April 1997: “An economy based only on financial gain deprives itself of its own roots and of its original aim, which should be that of serving the real economy and should be, ultimately, the development of people and human communities. The economic picture becomes all the more dramatic if



“What strikes one immediately, is the strong contrast between the ‘moral issues’ raised by the Pope and his Pontifical Council, and the so-called ‘moral issues,’ or rather single issues, such as gay marriages or abortion, raised during the Presidential elections.”

EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

one considers the asymmetry characterizing the international financial system: innovative processes and the deregulation of financial markets tend in fact to develop only in some parts of the globe. This raises serious ethical questions, because the countries which are excluded from such processes, even if they are excluded from any benefit from such financial products, are not safe from the negative consequences of financial instability on their real economic systems, particularly if they are fragile and late in developing.”

From this standpoint, the Vatican document urgently calls on “international economic and financial institutions to identify the most appropriate institutional solutions” necessary to change the present financial system and solve the question of “foreign debt” of poor countries, another “moral issue” raised by Pope John Paul II on a number of occasions, including the Jubilee Year 2000.

These moral issues were blatantly ignored by George Bush, Karl Rove, and their supporters in many U.S. churches, including a number of Catholic priests in Ohio who were ready to “excommunicate” Kerry for his position on abortion, but had no compassion for the millions of Africans starving or dying of AIDS as a result of an immoral financial system and its International Monetary Fund conditionalities, no compassion whatsoever for the 50 million Americans without health care, or for elderly people deprived of the flu vaccine. One wonders

whether Bush, who claims God voted for him, or some of the Catholic priests who invited their parishes to vote for him, ever read any of the encyclical letters mentioned in the Vatican document as the basis for the social doctrine of the Church, starting with *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII (1892), *Quadragesimo Anno*, issued by Pope Pius XI 40 years after *Rerum Novarum*, in the midst of the economic depression of 1929, up to *Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth)* by Pope John XXIII, and to the already mentioned encyclical letters *Populorum Progressio* by Pope Paul VI and *Centesimus Annus* and *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* by the present Pope. One wonders actually if they ever read the Gospel, and, as LaRouche said in a number of radio interviews after the election, “what God are they actually praying to, if any.”

As a former Italian Premier of the Catholic party in Italy told *EIR* ten days before the election, “The position of the Pope on this war is very clear, it is that of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, that war is wrong under any circumstance and you do not remedy a wrongdoing with a worse one. It is not surprising that when President Bush was received by the Pope in Rome, his National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, refused to come with him.”

New, Just Economic Order

One of the key aspects of the social doctrine of the Church is its invitation to intervene in defense of the Common

Good, of peace, and of social strata hit by the economic crisis. A few years ago, Pope John Paul II summoned the heads of the three main Italian trade unions to the Vatican, to invite them to “fight for a new, more just economic order.” Since the beginning of the war in Iraq, he has repeated every Sunday, in St. Peter’s Square, his call to all heads of state to put an end to violence, and to launch an urgent initiative for peace in Iraq, and peace between Israel and Palestine.

The Pope and the Vatican have been also constantly intervening on the urgent moral issue of a new economic and financial system, At a conference on “moral orientation in credit and finance” organized in Milan on Nov. 24, 2003, by the Association for Development of the Study of Banking and the Market, Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi, Archbishop of Milan, answered my question on whether Italy could play a role in pushing for a new financial and economic system, a New Bretton Woods, saying, “Not only could Italy do it, but it should do it.” One can only hope that true Christians and “people of good will,” as Cardinal Martino said in his press conference, reading the summary of the Social Doctrine of the Church, will learn what the true moral issues are facing the world, and the present U.S. Administration, and act accordingly, finally accepting the idea that this financial system and this war are truly immoral.

—Liliana Gorini

from the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

The Economic Life

from Chapter Seven:

II. Morality and Economics

330. The social doctrine of the Church insists on the moral connotation of economics. . . .

332. The moral dimension of economics considers as inseparable aims, not as opposed and alternative aims, economic efficiency and the promo-

tion of a development of humanity inspired by solidarity. Morality does not conflict with economics, nor is it neutral: If it is inspired by justice and solidarity, it constitutes a factor of social efficiency of economics itself . . . in order to fight, in the spirit of justice and charity, wherever they exist, those “structures of sin” (John Paul II: *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*), which generate and maintain poverty,

underdevelopment, and degradation. Such structures are built and consolidated on many concrete acts of human egoism.

IV: Economic institutions at the service of Man

349. The idea that one can assign to the market the supply of all categories of goods cannot be shared, since it is based on a reduced vision of

the person and of society. In front of a concrete risk of “idolatry” of the market, the social doctrine of the Church emphasizes the limit, which can easily be seen in its inability to satisfy important human needs, for which goods are needed “which, by their nature, are not, nor can they be just commodities” (John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*).

V: *Res Novae in economics*

a) **Globalization: opportunities and risks**

364. The social doctrine emphasized more than once the imbalances of an international trade system which, as a result of protectionist policies, discriminates products coming from poor countries and hinders the growth of industrial activities and the transfer of technology to such countries. The continued deterioration in terms of exchange of raw materials and the worsening gap between rich and poor countries induced the Teaching of the Church to keep in mind the importance of ethical criteria which should orient economic relations: to promote the Common Good and the universal distribution of wealth. . . . Otherwise, “the poor remain all the time poor, while the rich become richer” (Pope Paul VI: *Populorum Progressio*).

b) **The international financial system**

368. The development of financial markets, whose transactions in volume go way beyond real ones, risks to follow a self-feeding logic, without any connection with the real economic base.

369. An economy based only on financial gain deprives itself from its own roots and from its original aim, which should be that of serving the real economy and should be, ultimately, the development of people and human communities. The economic picture becomes all the more dramatic if one considers the asymmetry characterizing the international

financial system: innovative processes and the deregulation of financial markets tend to develop only in some parts of the globe. This raises serious ethical questions, because the countries which are excluded from such processes, even if they are excluded from any benefit from such financial products, are not safe from the negative consequences of financial instability on their real economic systems, particularly if they are fragile and late in developing (Pope John Paul II, speech at the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, April 25, 1997).

371. The more the world economic and financial system reaches elevated levels of organizing and functional complexity, the more it faces the priority task of regulating such processes, aiming them at achieving the Common Good of the human family. Concretely this implies the urgency that, in addition to nation states, also the international community assumes this delicate function, adopting suitable political and juridical instruments. It is therefore indispensable that the international economic and financial institutions identify the most appropriate institutional solutions and work out the best action strategies in order to achieve a change, since otherwise, if things were left to themselves, this would provoke dramatic results hitting in particular the weakest and most defenseless layers of the world population.

c) **Foreign debt**

450. The right to development must be kept in mind in dealing with the debt crisis of many poor countries. This crisis has many and complex causes, both international—flexible exchange rates, financial speculation, economic neocolonialism—and inside the indebted countries themselves—corruption, bad management of public money, and distorted use of loans. The biggest suffering, provoked by structural questions but also by personal behaviors, hits the population of indebted and poor countries, who

have no responsibility for these conditions. The international community cannot overlook such a situation: even if it states the principle that debts must be honored, it must find a way not to compromise “the fundamental right of peoples to a decent standard of living and progress” (Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*).

Promoting Peace from Chapter Eleven

III. *The Failure of Peace: War*

497. The Teaching of the Church condemns “the incredible nature of war” and demands that it be considered with a totally new approach: in fact “it is almost impossible to think that in the atomic era war can be used as an instrument of justice” (Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*). War is a “calamity” and it never represents the right way to solve problems arising among Nations. “It never was and it never will be,” because it generates more and more complex conflicts. When it explodes, war becomes a “useless massacre” and an “adventure with no return” which compromises the present and jeopardizes the future of humanity.

498. The search for alternative solutions to war in order to solve international conflicts assumes today a character of dramatic urgency, because of “the terrifying power of means of destruction.” It is therefore essential to look for the causes starting a war, first of all those connected to situations of injustice, poverty, and exploitation, which have to be removed in the first place. “This is why development is the new name for peace. As there is a collective responsibility to avoid war, there is also a collective responsibility to promote development” (Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*).

501. . . . As to pre-emptive war, launched without any evidence that an aggression is upcoming, it cannot but raise serious questions from the moral and juridical standpoint.