

## THE THEOCRACY OF JOHN PAUL 11\*

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### *On the Church in the Modern World*

The Catholic church is the senior institution of Western civilisation, its unbroken line of succession running like a spine from the height of the Roman Empire to the present. This phenomenal endurance is the product of a genius capable of a fluid adaptation to the vicissitudes of history, while retaining a granite core of identity. The conjuncture of these two traits is of course a *sine qua non* for any successful religion; but in the case of Roman Catholicism it is all the more remarkable given the marked degree of temporal power associated with the church. The secular orders with which it has been associated have gone their way; but the church endures, borrowing, adapting, transforming its outer shell when necessary. Today, long past the tocsin announced for it by the Enlightenment, Catholicism continues to grow in influence.

The Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 312 gave Catholicism status as a centralised state religion and an enduring appetite for power. When Pepin, in 756, granted the Church extensive territories in central Italy, he created the base for Roman Catholicism's hegemonic role in feudal society. A spectacular trajectory ensued as the church soared at first over what came to be called Christendom, and then, with the coming of the modern era, sputtered into a long descent of irrelevance and corruption. Outflanked by Protestantism, increasingly subjugated by the modern state (especially in the course of the French Revolution), and unable to comprehend the class struggles set into motion by capitalism, Catholicism appeared for some time to be involuting. A nadir was apparently reached in 1870, when an enfeebled Papacy relinquished control of its territory to the emergent Italian state.

But it was in the same year that the remarkable adaptability of Catholicism asserted itself. Unfettered by temporal power, the church augmented its spiritual authority through a reinforcement of the papacy. This was done through the First Vatican Council, and through the principle it promulgated (not without a little chicanery)' establishing the

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moral and spiritual infallibility of Pope Pius IX and all his successors. Vatican I did more than adjust to the loss of temporal power; it actually turned that loss to the church's advantage. Obviously, an arrangement whereby the Pope's sayings are considered infallible is not serviceable in the administration of a modern state and the territory it controls. On the other hand, such a principle creates an extraordinarily potent system of religious administration, by providing the kind of absolute and centralised control essential for regulating the affairs of so far-flung an operation as the global church. At the same time, this adjustment formalised the adjunctive role the church had been playing since the beginning of the modern era as missionary to the conquistadore and handservant of authority. In other words, once the Church finally recognised that it could not compete directly in the secular sphere with the modern state, it reinforced itself as custodian of the 'heart of a heartless world', and the guarantor of spiritual and other-worldly compensations. In the ever-mounting spiritual crisis of the modern order, the Church, centralised and with a global reach, became a dynamic moral force in world events, while its pontiff became elevated to a kind of universal spokesman.

The message Catholicism delivered was one of extreme conservatism. Freed from the nagging liberal and democratic obligations entailed in the running of a modern society, the Vatican drew deeply from the well of its feudal memories and proceeded to an all-out attack on that corrosive modernism which it recognised as its greatest enemy. This meant that the ancillary role elected by Catholicism at the close of the nineteenth century and for three-fifths of the twentieth, was markedly and explicitly on the far Right in both cultural and political terms: rabidly anti-communist, allied with fascism wherever fascism could be found, sexually repressive to an extreme, unalterably hostile to anything smacking of the emancipation of women, and obscurantist beyond belief.' For example, Albino Luciani, the future John Paul I, was as a seminarian in Rome in the 1920s, prohibited by Papal decree from reading newspapers.<sup>3</sup>

Benito Mussolini, although possessed of a strong anticlerical streak capable of terrorising the Vatican, was not unmindful of the ideological services rendered by the Catholic church, and in 1929 he rewarded his ally with the Lateran Treaty. Ostensibly compensation for the seizure of papal lands in 1870, the Concordat of the treaty brought several notable advantages to the Papacy. The clergy received many financial easements and Catholic sexual morality was installed as the national norm (divorce was banned, Mussolini meanwhile proclaiming that the ideal number of children per couple was twelve and that childless couples should be taxed).<sup>4</sup> Of greater significance still, the Lateran Treaty recreated a state-within-a-state, the hundred-acre enclave known as the Vatican City within which the Church could operate with a heightened degree of autonomy and secrecy, and from which it could relate to the rest of the world as an

independent political entity. This afforded a considerable advantage over all other religions and restored a modicum of the past glory of the Church without any of the liberalising headaches of ordinary societies, e.g., working classes. As Paul Johnson has put it in his highly appreciative study of Karol Wojtyla, the present pope John Paul II:

Now [the Pope] gets the best of both worlds: the prestige and status of a state, with virtually none of its problems. Above all, in an age of expanding welfare expectations and human rights, including the right to housing, education and full employment, he does not have to look after people. From the window of his private apartments in the Vatican palace, John Paul can gaze over the city of Rome, with its appalling crime rate, its political and financial scandals, its housing shortages, its quasi-bankrupt treasury, its crumbling health and transport systems, and reflect: 'My kingdom is not of this world.' It is a comforting thought.'

It will be helpful to reflect on this as we discuss John Paul's policies below. We will have to bear in mind, too, the sequelae of another aspect of the largesse of *Il Duce*. The Lateran Treaty included among its terms a grant to the Vatican of 750 million lire (worth \$81 million at the current rate of exchange, and \$500 million in 1984<sup>6</sup>) to do with what it pleased. This considerable sum was particularly welcome in light of the highly impecunious state of the Holy See at that time; and it became rapidly augmented through shrewd management, which exploited the advantages accruing from the secrecy and autonomy afforded by the political terms of the Lateran Treaty. For a goodly period, it appears that this money was invested legally, although the results, such as the Vatican's control of Italy's main gas utility, were somewhat jarring to the image of a 'kingdom not of this world'. As we shall discuss, the legality of this aspect of the Vatican's affairs was to undergo a shift, with significant implications for the Papacy. Even had it not, however, the outcome of Mussolini's legacy had transformative implications, for it brought the Vatican into the modern world with a substantial degree of liquidity, and tied it even more firmly to the fortunes of the international bourgeoisie.<sup>7</sup>

The careers of Popes Pius XI and XII, the former being he who negotiated the Lateran Treaty, fitted smoothly into the ideological mould established by these tendencies. Pius XI is known for his remark, delivered in the encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (i.e., the state of things forty years after Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* began the Church's explicit intervention in modern politics), that 'No one can be at the same time a good Catholic and a good Socialist.' As to Pius XII, who took power in 1938, we need only be reminded that his anti-communism was so severe as to lead to the covert abettment of the Nazi cause in World War II.<sup>8</sup> Pius, by playing a decisive role in fostering the ultrareactionary career of Francis Cardinal Spellman,<sup>9</sup> also helped forge the US Catholic church—the world's richest and a mainstay of fiscal support for the Vatican—into

an instrument of the extreme Right.

**Pius'** death in **1958**, however, marked the end of the era of unmitigated Catholic reaction, and initiated the period of dynamism and turbulence now presided over by Wojtyla. Essentially, the present phase of Catholicism's history is marked by the co-existence of a progressive and even emancipatory moment along with the traditional conservative one. This has led to severe inner turmoil and an outward role marked by a number of daring and radical interventions. It is customary to view this period as the product of the Second Vatican Council of **1962-65**, and the influence thereupon of **Pius'** great successor, John XXIII. It would, however, mistake the true nature of the transformation of the church to see it as the product of an individual will, even if the individual involved be as great a person as Pope John; or even the collective will of the Second Council called by John and completed during the Papacy of his successor, Paul VI. Vatican II (in which Wojtyla played a major role) was the crucial formalisation of the new tendency of the church; the Popes John and Paul provided the crucial leadership that permitted this formalisation to take place. But none of it would have occurred unless immense changes at the social foundation of the Church were already underway. It was the genius of Pope John to permit these changes to manifest themselves (as it was the genius of Catholicism to produce a John XXIII). As Catholicism is a global religion, this sea-change may be schematised across the great divisions of global society in the late twentieth century, in order of causal priority.

— The principal force impinging upon the contemporary church has been the uprising of the *Third World*. This has entailed changes in both the composition of the Church and the valance of its intervention—or rather, the dialectical moment of the various **valences**.<sup>10</sup> The church had always played a multivalent role in the world. In Latin America, where the most dynamic struggles are now unfolding, its predominant function as an instrument of the colonising classes concealed an enduring emancipatory and utopian flame, as well as a syncretic preservation of native culture against the assimilating forces of **empire**.<sup>11</sup> The increasing bankruptcy of imperialism (whether as Christian Democracy or the military fascism which followed) weakened the shell of repression; and the global revolutionary movement which has seized the Third World since the Second World War fanned the flame. The **con-**junction before Catholicism was rather suddenly reversed. It had the choice of staying more or less totally with the elites or throwing in its lot with the rising masses. Since the latter tendency converges with the unmistakable 'option for the poor' contained in the Gospels themselves, as well as with the nonhierarchical nature of the Pre-Constantine church, it has exerted an irresistible pull. None of this might have been decisive were it not for the fact that most of the world's population consists of the masses of the Third World, and that these masses,

precisely because they are poor and relatively unexposed to modernity, are considerably more devout than the people of the church's metropolitan\* centres. The result is a shift away from the traditionally reactionary centre of the church's gravity. All of the conservative forces mustered by Catholicism are still in place, and indeed, fight all the more fiercely for being challenged. Nevertheless, a shift to a position of relative parity between progressive and conservative forces is an immense change indeed, which introduces a highly dynamic factor into a hitherto frozen situation. Vatican II was a major result of this; and the altered post-conciliar climate (along with subsequent episcopal convocations such as that in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968, and Puebla, Mexico, in 1979) provided the matrix for the remarkable development of liberation theology. All this has resulted in a conviction that has more or less penetrated the consciousness of many in the upper reaches of the Catholic hierarchy, including, to some degree, the last four Popes, that the time has come for the Catholic church to cut loose from capitalism, a social order with which it has never been on the most comfortable of terms. We shall have occasion to return to this theme below. It may be added that Catholicism has had to react to two broadly different fronts in the Third World: those areas, such as Latin America and the Philippines, where it has long been entrenched; and those such as Africa, where decolonisation and the rise of new nation-states have provided fertile new ground for the cultivation of souls. Statistics tell something of what has happened. Thus John XXIII was elected pope by 55 Cardinals, of whom 36 were from Europe (no less than 18 Italians), 5 from North America, 1 from Australia, and 13 from the Third World. Wojtyla was elected, in 1978, by 111 Cardinals, of whom 55 were European and 56 non-European, with 44 from the Third World.<sup>12</sup> More striking yet are changes in the demography of the Catholic laity. Between 1965, the end of Vatican II, and 1985, growth occurred in the Catholic church as follows:<sup>13</sup>

	1965 (in millions)	1985
North America	55	63
Mexico, Central America	64	113
South America	142	233
Western Europe	195	212
USSR, Eastern Europe	58	63
Africa	29	66
Asia	44	69
Australasia, Pacific	4	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>590,040,000</b>	<b>825,592,000</b>

- It is not hard to see from the above figures where the future of the Catholic church lies. What mere numbers cannot of course suggest is

the qualitative shift occurring in the various sectors. The figures for the *First world*, i.e., the traditional Western centre of Roman Catholicism, show an unmistakable flattening, but fail to convey the corresponding levelling off of religious ardour in the industrialising, post-modern West. Nor, of course, can they suggest the fact that Western Europe and the United States still provide the vast bulk of resources to the Church. It may be said that a main principle of Vatican strategy in the contemporary period has been to transfer resources from the First to the Third Worlds. At the same time the Church has had to deal with a marked shrinkage of its authority at its traditional centre. This has been much worse for Western Europe, where the great Cathedrals are now mainly museums and audiences have to be bussed in when the Pope visits, than for North America. However, even in the relative strongholds of the US and Canada, the great majority of practising Catholics no longer subscribe to Papal authority in matters of sexuality, especially in the case of artificial contraception (as of 1976, 80 per cent of Catholics disobeyed Vatican teaching).<sup>14</sup> Of particularly grave concern has been a decline in the recruitment of young priests in Europe and North America. We shall return to these themes below, but the core of the matter may be stated now: The Catholic church has been unable to solve the problems of modernity, especially in the sexual sphere, where its repressive morality is hopelessly out of step with the exigencies of life under advanced capitalism. After all, who can afford large families in a time when children have become consumers rather than producers? And what is the attraction of a celibate priesthood under conditions of contemporary sexual morality, or of an all-male hierarchy given the restructuring of gender roles? Faced with modernity, the Church all-too-often simply appears irrelevant. The resulting loss of authority has weakened traditional Catholic resistance to other modernising notions, including the impact of workers' movements and Left-wing ideology in general. The Vatican began to pay conscious attention to the rising power of labour in 1891 with Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. This defined what came to be known as 'Catholic Social Doctrine'. It was a fairly bold attempt to take into account class antagonism whilst containing it within pacified channels of the Church's choosing. The message was repeated, as we have observed, forty years later by Pius XI in his *Quadragesimo Anno*. However successful the containment of socialism may have been, the very fact of admitting elements of class struggle into Papal doctrine opened Catholicism to radicalising influence and repeated, albeit on a gentler scale, the leftward development of the Latin American church. As a result, various progressive interpretations of Thomism, the reigning Catholic philosophy, were articulated;" and the worker-priest movement developed in France. These influences were not transformative, but

they stirred the pot and affected the young Karol Wojtyla, who was sent to study the worker-priests shortly after his graduation from seminary, and became considerably affected by the example of Emmanuel Mounier, founder of the journal *Esprit* and the doctrine of Personalism, and disciple of the neothomist, Jacques Maritain.<sup>16</sup> Nor should it be forgotten that Angelo Roncalli, who became John XXIII because a stalemate had developed between progressive and conservative factions (the former headed by his successor, Montini), was expected to do nothing, in part because he was too old, and in part because he seemed too simple, being the son of peasants. Thus John XXIII became the first Pope in memory to have come from the lower classes.

- The situation of the *Second World*, or nations of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, in the contemporary conjuncture of Catholicism is dominated by the encounter with Communism. The pattern has acquired greater interest through the fact of Wojtyla's own Polish background, although its main elements had been established while the future John Paul II was only a rising young priest. When the Red Army occupied Eastern Europe at the close of World War II, it was to the Vatican as if the Antichrist himself had arrived on earth. Soviet Russia was considered the single greatest threat to organised religion in human history, even if the Church it suppressed was only the Greek Orthodox. Eastern Europe, on the other hand, having been something of an archaic backwater so far as the modernising West was concerned, was the home to a Roman Catholicism of the old school. The sudden 'loss' of the churches of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and, most of all, Poland, was an incalculable blow to the Vatican of Pius XII, and ushered in a Dark Age of confrontation with Stalinism, marked by the spectacles of Archbishops Stepinac of Yugoslavia, Beran of Czechoslovakia, and Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary doing battle with godless totalitarianism. What few people in the West realised was that a very complex but nevertheless viable pattern of accommodation was in the process of being worked out between Church and state in Eastern Europe behind the propaganda barrage and the high drama of these skirmishes.<sup>17</sup> With Stalin's death and the Khrushchevian thaw, this process was accelerated. We may note that the Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, where Karol Wojtyla came to teach philosophy in 1954, succeeded in becoming independent of the State by 1958, owing in part to a successful rebellion in the Polish Academy of sciences against the exclusive teaching of dialectical materialism.<sup>18</sup> Later, in 1962, Khrushchev sent word to Pope John (through Norman Cousins<sup>19</sup>) that the Soviet Union strongly desired better relations with the Vatican. Palmiro Togliatti had already taken the first steps toward *rapprochement* between the Italian Communist Party and the Vatican (during the reign of Pius XII, when they were of no avail).<sup>20</sup> Such initiatives on

the part of 'godless communism' undoubtedly contributed to John XXIII's radical departure from previous Papal doctrine, announced by his great encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, a document that played a major role in *détente*, as well as in the general opening up of Catholicism to the world. These initiatives from the top aside, the salient lesson drawn by Catholicism from its encounter with 'actually existing communism' was that it had much less to fear than it had first imagined. Not only were communists capable of pragmatic accommodation; more significantly, it was realised that the social order of the Second World was actually less threatening to Catholic hegemony than that of the West. Where the latter had its modernity and consumerism to dissolve the 'bonds of faith, the former offered a **spartan** and severe environment quite compatible with the discipline demanded by Catholicism, and with a great deal of existential room left over for the appeal of religion. Certainly one person on whom these lessons were not lost was Karol Wojtyła.

The pontificate of Paul VI, sandwiched between the flamboyant reigns of John XXIII and John Paul II (with the brief interlude of John Paul I), often seems a dim memory. Paul was not a popular Pope, and suffered from indecisiveness and a tendency to agonise, as well as from the customary sexual complexes of celibate men in power (his reinforcement of the Church's ban on artificial contraception in 1968—against the advice of his own experts<sup>21</sup>—was a bitter blow to progressives and cost the Church dearly). Nevertheless he was a man of considerable vision who crafted the institutionalisation of the changes that had underlain the radical innovations of his predecessor. Paul also combined these with variations in the papal style (which would become seized upon by his successor), for example, travelling to distant countries. His pontificate will most be remembered for its consolidation of a more truly global church. This was most marked by the efflorescence of liberation **theology**—a development which represents, whatever its doctrinal implications, a decisive shift in ecclesiological power from First to Third Worlds. Paul's activity in bringing the Second World within the orbit of the church is also notable. For example, when Cardinal Montini was elected Pope Paul, only one Cardinal was present from the Communist bloc. Fifteen years later, six took part in the election of Wojtyła, while a seventh was ill. (Of this number, three are from Poland, and one each from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Vietnam). Meanwhile, Paul had met on seven occasions with Andrei **Gromyko**.<sup>22</sup> His very active role in opposition to the Vietnam War brought Paul into very sharp conflict with the rabidly jingoistic Cardinal Spellman. This greatly weakened the power of the 'American Pope', and cracked the American Catholic church wide open to radicalising **influence**.<sup>23</sup> Although in Paul's last years, he appears to have been eager to retreat from some of the progressive changes **con-**

solidated during his pontificate, his increasing debility and agonised nature made this impossible to do. It is undoubtedly the case that without Paul's efforts on behalf of globalising the Church, a Polish Pope, the first foreign Pope since **1522**, could not have been chosen in **1978**.

This fundamental shift did not however, alleviate the deep malaise of the Church in its traditional strongholds. Holmes and Bickens state, in their quasi-official *A Short History of the Catholic Church* that 'it is not difficult to paint a bleak picture of Catholicism during the pontificate of Paul VI'.<sup>24</sup> Again, statistics reveal something of the predicament. In the United States during Paul's pontificate, ten million Catholics stopped going to mass, while the enrollment in Catholic schools declined by two million, and there were a half-million fewer baptisms and **50,000** fewer converts. Similar figures could undoubtedly be cited from elsewhere in the Western world.

In the meantime, another set of developments was taking place in the financial sphere that would cast a long shadow over the Church. It is not my intention to explore this amazing story; and if it were my intention, I should be frustrated in realising it, since many essential facts are as yet unknown though the Italian government, not to mention a host of journalists, have been trying to investigate the situation for years.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, one wonders at times whether even the Vatican has any good idea of church finances<sup>26</sup>—and in any case, it has shown no interest in talking. But acknowledge it we must, since the financial dealings in question do a lot of the paying for the elevated work of the Church—and since the Pope, given his absolute power over Catholicism, is ultimately responsible for the whole affair.

In any case, it may be noted that by **1973**, the Vatican, for some decades on top of its finances, began running deficits again. By **1979**, the first year of Wojtyla's pontificate, these had reached **\$20** million per year. Whether this was aggravated by shady financial practices is not something that can be determined here. What is certain is that the basic cause has been the great expansion of the Church's role in the world. A curial staff of **1322** in **1961** had grown to **3150** by **1977**. Then there are very expensive junkets initiated by Paul and greatly expanded by John Paul II—who has gone on twenty-nine expeditions as of this writing (April **1986**). All this costs a great deal, and the yearly donations of 'Peter's Pence' (greater under John Paul than Paul) cannot keep pace. We must assume, then, a more or less steady fiscal constraint upon Vatican activities—and a corresponding drive to overcome this constraint.<sup>27</sup>

This is not to say that the succession of popes from Pius XI to John Paul II were actively engaged in formenting anything underhanded. It is rather more likely that these lofty men, preoccupied with the 'kingdom not of this earth', only had a dim idea of what was going on far beneath them—and chose whenever possible to keep things that way. They pro-

bably responded to scandal—when they did so at all—out of an understandable desire to keep things quiet at whatever cost. It is not hard to imagine, however, that such a dynamic could eventually make even a very principled pope captive to some extremely corrupt parties. In fact, the more outrageous the behaviour to be concealed, the more strenuously would it be concealed (whether by ignorance or evasion), and so the more entrenched it would become. A very fearless and free Pope like John XXIII might have been able to do differently. But in his pontificate, the problem had not yet assumed ugly proportions. Paul VI, by contrast, did not seem able to bear the burden of uncovering what had happened.

The institution in question is the Vatican Bank, more formally known as the Institute for Religious Works, and founded in 1942 by Pius XII to further expand the legacy ceded to the Church under the Lateran Treaty. The new bank (which is not by any means the only financial organ of the Vatican; but only the one most involved in later troubles) was helped along smartly by Mussolini's decree of the same year exempting the Holy See from paying taxes on stock dividends.<sup>38</sup> This symbiosis between Church and state had to change in the post-fascist era. Accordingly, the Italian government began a frustrating campaign during the sixties to bring the Vatican to some degree of accountability, including rescinding the tax-exemption. But where in ecclesial matters the Church had responded to the contemporary world with a leftward swing, when it came to the means of financing itself an option was taken that drove the Holy See into the arms of fascists once again, and added a heavy criminal element for good measure.

The parties to this shift were Bishop Paul Marcinkus, elevated by Pope Paul to leadership in the Vatican Bank in 1968 (Marcinkus, from Chicago and a protégé of Cardinal Spellman, had been Paul's bodyguard); and the financial wizard, Michele Sindona, chosen soon after to advise the Vatican as to the best way of accumulating yet more for its good works. (Sindona had been known to Paul since 1959, when the latter was in Milan and sought his fiscal advice). What Paul undoubtedly did not know was that Sindona brought the Mafia in his wake—and beyond that, an international neo-Nazi cabal. This involved the figure of Licio Gelli, boss of the notorious P-2 Masonic Lodge which operated as a shadow Italian neofascist government; Roberto Calvi, the unlamented director of the Banco Ambrosiano, who formed another alliance with Marcinkus; and a network of international thugs ranging from Klaus Barbie to the CIA.

Whether anybody will unravel this web remains to be seen. All that needs to be noted here is that the Sindona-Gelli-Calvi group found the Vatican Bank, with its lofty façade and seclusion from the prying eyes of the modern bourgeois state, quite useful for its purposes—and that Bishop Marcinkus seems to have reciprocated the sentiments. The effects on

Catholicism of introducing such an extraordinary degree of contradiction between its financial 'base' and its ecclesial '**superstructure**' cannot be fully gauged. We should say something however about the effects on the papacy, or at least, one of its occupants.

There was a pope who attempted to bring the criminal elements of the Church to bay, that is, who was courageous (and perhaps naive) enough to face up to the shock waves which were sure to ensue upon the exposure of Marcinkus and his ties to **Sindona, Gelli, Calvi, et al.** He was Albino Luciani; and he was elected upon the death of Paul VI. Chosen in part like Roncalli because he seemed 'simple', it was assumed that Luciani's pontificate would be an opportunity for the conservative elements of the Vatican bureaucracy, or Curia, to reassert themselves after the long leftward march of John XXIII and Paul VI. John Paul I's politics are subject to a number of interpretations, which are irrelevant here (though it should be noted that he was elected with the enthusiastic support of the **left-leaning Cardinals of the Third World**). What appears to have created consternation in the Curia, however, was the alacrity with which he set about investigating the Vatican's finances, and the outrage he expressed at beginning to learn the results of the investigation. This may have been aided by a grudge held against Marcinkus for having been swindled by the Vatican Bank when Luciani was Archbishop of Venice. In any case, on September 23, 1978, John Paul I announced to his Secretary of State, Cardinal Jean Villot, that he wanted Marcinkus removed as Director of the Institute for Religious Works—a step that would inevitably blow open the entire cabal.

Sometime during the next night Albino Luciani died, mysteriously, of a 'heart attack'—though no autopsy was ever done, and a bottle of cardiac medicine which the Pope took every night disappeared from his bedside. There are other sundry details which we need not mention.\*\* He had been Pope for thirty-three days. His successor, Karon Wojtyla, has shown considerably more tolerance in his approach to Vatican finances. As late as 1984, he was discreetly trying to foist Marcinkus off as the Papal Nuncio to Great Britain (and backing off upon receiving a howl of **protest**).<sup>30</sup> However, it may be observed in the wake of the collapse of the fabled Bulgarian Connection, that **Ali Mehmet Agca, John Paul II's near-assassin**, is now turning out to have had connections to the same **ultra-right circles** as embraced the Holy See back in the **1970s**.<sup>31</sup>

The Byzantine details of Vatican politics and its relation to the **shadow-world** of contemporary society are beyond our scope here. We may reflect briefly upon the severe contradiction between the disparate elements of that vast, tangled entity known as Roman Catholicism, however. If we are to speak of the real Church, as contrasted to the sentimental and mystified image conjured up by its legions of propagandists and apologists—or, from the other extreme, that of the standard 'materialist' critique that

reduces the Church to its obvious role as a prop for the ruling class—we must be true to this severe degree of contradiction.

It is the relative autonomy of the Church from both civil society and the state which determines its **contradictoriness**.<sup>32</sup> Because it is both of the world and removed from the world, Catholicism is left open to oscillate widely from the norm of social relations. It is free, on the one hand, to develop as a critical and, to at least some degree, transcendent voice opposed to the wrongs of the state and civil society, alike; and it is also free to develop itself into an ultrasecret bureaucracy wielding a mystified power and operating behind the back of the normal regulating mechanisms that promote a modicum of honesty and rationality in 'civil' society. Of course it is free to develop all kinds of concrete possibilities in which these abstract tendencies are admixed. For these reasons, we must not expect any kind of transparent configuration to emerge from the social role played by Catholicism. There is often no point in saying whether the Church is one way or the other in its social relations. More than any other social formation, perhaps, it is capable of being progressive and reactionary all in the same gesture.

For the new Pope, John Paul II, the conjuncture of the Church whose pontificate he inherited included a mixture of tendencies extraordinary even in the fabulously long experience of Catholicism. To summarise, these included from one side, a moment of exceptional dynamism in which the standoff between mundane centres of power provided a wide opening for ecclesial intervention; and from another, a moment of fundamental internal dislocation, away from the ancient centre of ecclesial power—now revealed as corrupt and hopelessly out of phase with the pace of modernisation—and toward a Third World undergoing a painful and uncertain birth. To this conjuncture has now been added yet another element: the **dynamism** of Wojtyla himself.

### Enter Wojtyla

Karol Wojtyla inherited a church in crisis, and has raised that crisis to new levels. This has been in part because of the policies of the man, to which we shall presently turn, and in part because of the sheer quantity of his energy, ambition and range. **John Paul II** makes images as well as events happen, indeed, he makes images into events. It is more than a flair for the dramatic, though it is that, too, as one could expect from an actor. The man is a genius at promotion. Given a different roll of the dice, he could have been another **Lee** Iacocca. His career has been a series of tableaux, in which Wojtyla, as actor, director, writer, producer and distributor, is seen advancing the Cross across the historical stage: Wojtyla the orphan deprived of a mother, the actor in the Polish theatre, the labourer in the Solvay plant at Cracow (yes, the first Pope to have sweated his brow, hence peculiarly qualified to deal with the working class), the

clandestine seminarian during the Nazi occupation. And later, Wojtyla the phenomenological philosopher (yes, also the first Pope with formal philosophical training) and critic of Max Scheler, the leader of youth brigades into the countryside, the skier and nature mystic. . . going onward and upward through the numberless chambers of the Holy, Roman, United and Apostolic Church, becoming an architect of the Second Vatican Council, and eventually the Cardinal sitting in the Sistine Chapel awaiting the verdict of October, 1978. (And creating yet another tableaux, by coolly, almost insouciantly reading a 'marxist journal' while passing the time before judgment.)<sup>33</sup>

Since his succession to the throne of Peter, Wojtyla has continued creating and projecting a heroic legend about himself. Now a kind of mendicant wanderer materialising everywhere and anywhere, now a Sir **Galahad** after the Grail, Pope John Paul II has mastered all the arts of the modern state and mass media in presenting himself as a throwback to the heroic age of Catholicism when pontiffs were supreme and kings would wait in the snow for their attention. The images are of one so fully in command of power that he can cast it off without blinking: John Paul prostrating himself on the tarmac as he leaves the jet on one of his pilgrimages; giving the papal ring to a destitute Brazilian; sitting alone in his cell with Agca, his would-be assassin. As a showman, Wojtyla makes Reagan look amateurish.

Then there is the matter of the Pope's Polish origins, and its effect on his **pontificate**.<sup>34</sup> The Polish church is both ancient (founded in 966) and remarkably integrated throughout its history with the administration of Polish society. Until quite recently, Poland was governed by what could be called a democratic monarchy, the King being elected by the lower nobles. In this system, which accounts in some degree both for the persistence of feudal relations well into the twentieth century as well as the Polish spirit of liberty, the bishops played an active role. The bishops were voting members of the Diet; most significantly, the Primate of Poland was *Interrex*, the ruler of Poland during the interregnum between the death of one King and the election of the next.

The critical theme of liberty in the Polish experience, won as it has been through numerous invasions and occupations by its neighbours to the North, West and East, is manifest in an attitude which is **revolutionising** without being liberal or democratic. It may be said that bourgeois experience touched very lightly upon Polish society, which was furthermore scarce affected by the Anglo-American tradition as such, remaining much closer to French influence insofar as it was affected by the West. In any case, the Polish church—with its long feudal traditions and power in society—remained hostile to modernity and was virtually unaffected by the modern, democratic interpretation of liberty, as the enhancement of a free, independent and critical spirit, and the empowerment of the

ordinary citizen. For all that Wojtyla played a significant role in Vatican II, the Polish church retained a jaundiced view of the council, with its collegiality and ecumenism. (In fact, Primate Wyszynski forbade the translation into Polish of the progressive journal, *Concilium*, which emerged from the Council and reflected its approach, on the grounds that the theologians who edited it 'had helped empty the churches of the

The Polish spirit of liberty, instead of devolving downward onto civil society where it could empower each citizen of the polity, became transferred instead to the figure of a redeemer, identified variously with Christ or the Polish nation itself. Accordingly, long-suffering Poland is to redeem humanity, and especially the poor. Hence Polish messianism, with the whole world, including Poland's traditional oppressors, Germany and Russia, as its object. Wojtyla is not a Polish messianist in any strict sense. His favourite poet is Cyprian Norwid, who was critical of the messianic movement (though involved with abolitionism in the United States); while the messianists themselves were often critical of the church. However, he is messianic in his fierce, almost reflexive concern for liberty, as well as his optimistic, millenarian spirit. And, consistent with the Polish experience, Wojtyla associates liberation with the figure of a redeemer, and not the development of a democratic ethos.

Finally, Polish Christianity is deeply matriolatric, which is to say, the Virgin Mother is more or less the equal of her martyred Son. Such an attitude is very characteristic of the present Pope; and it may help to illuminate some of his curious sexual convictions. In any case, John Paul's matriolatry puts him in harmony with the elemental style of Third World Catholicism, especially in Latin America, where it seems sometimes as if Jesus is an afterthought.

Putting this together, it might be said that if one is to be a 'Polish Pope', one would find it second nature to take an active, aggressive role toward the Church's position in the world; and moreover, would assume this role with a seemingly contradictory mixture of libertarianism, on the one hand, and a more or less feudal notion of authority, on the other. Such a pontiff would find some affinity with the currents of liberation theology sweeping the Third World, on the basis of a shared sensitivity to oppression and a drive toward emancipation. That affinity would be taken, in a different direction from the liberation theologians, however—not toward the empowerment of the masses, but toward a redemptive synthesis with the Body of Christ under the aegis of a transforming and transnational church. A 'Polish Pope' would also be matriolatric, and would dwell on the virginity and purity of the Holy Mother, subsuming all women into this category and **turning** decisively away from modern sexual mores. In this way the traditional sexual doctrine of the Church would be buttressed against a global transformation of personal relations which

bids to erode that doctrine. Finally, one could, as a Polish Pope, feel equidistant from all three global spheres, being part of the **First World** by tradition, of the **Second World** by historical immediacy, and of the **Third World** by marginality and attachment to a maternal image of deity. This would give one a distinct range of freedom in one's work as Pontiff and would enhance the globalisation of the Church in the late twentieth century. In fact, a Pope who manifested this 'Polish profile', and combined it with shrewdness, energy and a genius for handling large crowds and projecting an image could be a very dynamic pope indeed, considering the present balance of forces affecting **Catholicism**. This is not to say that he could ever rid himself of the basic contradictions affecting the Church in the modern world. But he might well seem the logical choice of the conservative wing of the **Church** which recognised **the** need to move with history in order to restore their domination.

For all the mountain of material published about Pope John Paul II, the inner man remains shielded. Any attempt, therefore, to psychoanalyse Karol Wojtyła in view of all that is hidden and ideologically distorted in his *persona* is simply a fool's **game**.<sup>36</sup> And so we will have to content ourselves with such knowledge as we can glean from his public statements and cultural matrix. And as for the Polishness of the Pope, the usefulness of whatever generalisations can be derived is limited, too, by the obvious fact that there are other ways to be Polish, for example, that of General Jaruzelski, or Lech Walesa. Wojtyła took certain of the inherent tendencies of his situation—and not others—and with them, made himself into Pope John Paul II. And the ultimate political impact of Pope John Paul II may be illuminated, but can never be explained, by the psychology of Karol Wojtyła.

### *The Doctrines of John Paul II*

*The Central Doctrine:* John Paul II has spoken out copiously on virtually every issue of significance before the modern world. Some of what he says is magnificent, some mediocre, and some appalling. There have been occasions to warm an ardently Left heart, and others to give comfort to arch-reactionaries. Consider the Pope's remarks to a packed Yankee Stadium, in New York City: 'It is not right that the standard of living to rich countries should seek to maintain itself by drawing off a great part of the reserves of energy and raw materials that are meant to serve the whole of **humanity**.'<sup>37</sup> Or that he is credited with a significant role in the popular insurrections that led to the downfall of Duvalier in Haiti, by proclaiming, in March, **1983**, that 'something must change in this country'; and by affirming the initiatives taken by the Haitian church to confront the regime: 'I have come to encourage this awakening, this leap, this movement of the Church for the good of the whole **country**.'<sup>38</sup> What Pope has gone half so far in active advocacy on behalf of the oppressed?

John XXIII and Paul VI may have opened this door. But they never stepped through it to intervene in a concrete revolutionising situation.

But consider also that in Nicaragua one knows that one is in the presence of an anti-Sandinista household if there is a picture of John Paul II on the wall; or that he has swept like a scourge through the Church, trying to crush all independent spirits; or that his views on sexuality are amazingly reactionary even by Catholic standards. With respect to the latter, we may quote George Huntston Williams, scarcely a hostile observer,

**For Wojtyla. . . the woman is by nature closer in her manner of relating to a man to the way both men and women. . . should be related to their Creator. The woman yields to the man, or subjects herself willingly to him in devout surrender. . . The author here goes somewhat beyond the Deutero-Pauline [Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:13] injunction that wives submit to their husbands as they do to Christ.<sup>21</sup>**

These attitudes, seem inconsistent to us because we tend to put the Pope's zeal for liberty into the framework of the Western post-enlightenment tradition—of which marxian-socialism is an example. This is a mistake. Wojtyla's feeling for liberty is real enough; of this there can be no doubt. But it does not lead to a transformation of secular society in which hitherto oppressed people are reconstituted as the subject rather than the object of history. Instead, Wojtyla sees liberation as a process of being freed from secular society and reconstituted in a theocratic order—i.e., under divine aegis as mediated by God's designated representative on earth (who happens to reside in the Vatican City), and the hierarchy arrayed below him. The source of authority in Wojtyla's theocracy is not of this world, but it is a very real authority for all that. What is contradictory to a secular view of liberation is therefore quite consistent to the Pope. It seems an odd way of being religious to those of us who live under the influence of the Enlightenment, this bi-modal liberation from secular oppression succeeded by a gathering into divine authority, but it fits well with Wojtyla's heritage. And because such a complex can fit into itself both the radical and conservative tendencies now raging within Catholicism, Wojtyla emerges as the man who can possibly hold the Church together.

Wojtyla's personal ideology of emancipation into theocracy—and the activism that goes with this—critically affects the dialectic of the Church in the world. We should always bear in mind that whatever a Pope thinks or feels, his job is to care for and advance the interests of the Roman Catholic church. These interests, however can be interpreted by different lights. In John Paul II's case, he has chosen, for the reasons advanced above, to plunge ahead by riding with the wave of emancipation sweeping the Church along, while trying to turn that wave to his own theocratic purposes. In other words, John Paul sees himself as a 'strong Pope', in the

sense that he feels that he can tame the dynamic elements of the Church and bring them under his will. Of course it cannot be doubted that he regards his will as a gift and a conduit from God.

This attitude translates into a policy, or central doctrine, of acting so as to maximise the autonomy of the Roman Catholic church, which for Wojtyla means maximising its theocratic character. But the autonomy of the Church, is meant the fact of being in the world while remaining outside as well. This autonomy can be expressed in various ways, and it is always relative, which means that it is caught up in the play of historical forces and can be swept one way or the other, by among other things, papal leadership. In the words of **Otto Maduro**, religion is more than 'the inert and passive product of [social conflicts]. . . the complex relationship of the religious field to social conflicts is *not* reducible to the influence of the latter over the former'.<sup>40</sup> However, it is the very quality of its **other-worldliness** that gives the Church its concrete authority and power—its capacity to remain the 'heart of a heartless world', and the stance from which to mount a critique of secular society. In practice, this demand imposes a dialectical burden upon the Church, for it cannot afford to lose either of its moments. To stay only with the spiritual edge—the 'outside' of the world—is to lose the capacity to influence events (including, most basically, the maintenance of an active, disciplined and capable clergy); while to stay only with the secular edge—the 'inside' of the world—is to lose the basis of one's spiritual appeal, a fate which in modern times means to fall into the abyss of modernity, with its 'disenchantment of the world'. The genius of Catholicism has been its capacity to adapt to this dialectic over historical time. Of course the very ambition of the Church puts it in constant jeopardy of losing its spiritual authority—a fate which has befallen Catholicism more times than one cares to count, and which certainly loomed before Wojtyla—a man who is nothing if not **ambitious**—upon his accession to the papacy. Indeed, it has been his hubris—a blind identification of his own human, authoritarian will with divine **grace**—which has proven catastrophic for John Paul's pontificate.

The end of the 1970s was a tempting time for an activist Pope. As John Paul II began his reign, the strategic situation differed significantly from that faced by his predecessors. It might be said that for the first time in modern history, the secular order, both East and West, appeared exhausted—not of course in material power, but as a vital ideological force. Neither superpower appeared to have an edge, and both seemed to have lost their historical dynamism. The US defeat in Vietnam, stagflation, the end of the 'American Century', the nuclear parity of the Soviet Union and the general disillusionment with socialist models of development—all of this combined to produce a relative vacuum in secular authority. The second Cold War was launched as a result; but this only compounded the dilemma for the main centres of secular power, as the

nuclear arms race triggered a world-wide outburst of fear and disillusionment.

The crisis of superpower authority has been perceived by Wojtyla as an opportunity to overcome the crisis of the Church, by turning it into a third focus of world power, neither capitalist nor socialist, but theocratic. John Paul's vision of the Church may be seen as of a piece with the global surge of religious fundamentalism in the late twentieth century, in reaction to the crisis of modernity. Just how far John Paul thinks such a process can go is something of a moot point. It is plain that theocracy in this case is not along the same model as that of an Ayatollah Khomeini, with its immediate control of a state apparatus. Indeed, Wojtyla's commitment is to advance Catholic power precisely as an other-wordly force in the interstitial space of the modern nation-state. Such power would become dissipated in the control of any material domain beyond the Vatican City. As he has sensibly stated, 'God. . . does not contain his promise in any single terrestrial country. . . no temporal condition of human existence can fulfill God's promise.'<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, a spiritually-centred power can go a long way; and in the imagination of Pope John Paul II, it is hard to say just where this ends. After all, he has the example of the *Interrex* behind him, and the messianic spirit within him.

It is certain that Wojtyla's ambitions are more grandiose than those of any Pope within memory, and that, to a qualitatively greater extent than any of his predecessors, he sees the Church as a genuine third force in the world: a theocratic order. These ideas are grounded theologically in a subtle but highly important totalisation of Catholic doctrine. For example, in his *A Sign of Contradiction*, Wojtyla wrote that: 'He [Christ] is with the Church, He is with every man, woman and child, He is with the entire human family. . . [There is] the indissoluble link forged with every human person and with the entire human race through Christ's liberating death and resurrection'.<sup>42</sup> To which Williams comments

perhaps never before in such rapid succession was the emphasis so clearly laid upon the universality of the application of the work of Christ to all mankind, even though only a portion of it is Christian and a still smaller portion of it in communion with the Successor of Peter. But the Church is by God's intention co-terminous with humanity.

As another specimen of the reach of John Paul's Catholic ambition, consider the following, from the important encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*,

Every man without any exception whatever has been redeemed by Christ. . . Christ is in a way united even when man is unaware of it.

This may sound like something every Catholic child learns in Sunday

School. But when combined with John Paul's reading of Catholic Social Doctrine, it becomes the ontological basis for theocracy and a divine mandate for universal intervention by the Vatican.

Wojtyla's interpretation of Catholic Social Doctrine (CSD)—the formal entry of the Vatican into political affairs signalled by Pope Leo XIII in 1891—deviates significantly from that of his predecessors. Pope Paul's social activism, for example, though it resembled that of John Paul II in a number of respects, was never developed as a universally applicable formula. Instead, social questions were to be taken cautiously and empirically, on a case-by-case basis. Not so for Wojtyla. He believes he has the answer to everything, and that this answer is directly revealed in Catholic theology, i.e., theocratically. As Peter Hebblethwaite sums up the distinction,

. . . Paul VI . . . said, 'In view of the varied situations in the world, it is difficult to give one teaching to cover them all or to offer a solution which has universal value' (*Octogesima Adveniens*, 4). But John Paul regards such an attitude as defeatist and fainthearted. That is why he needs a revived CSD as a form of universal teaching on social questions. He is unwilling to relinquish this task to the local churches.<sup>21</sup>

We shall try to spell out some of the specifics of John Paul's version of CSD below. Here however, we may note its main implication, which is an obligation on the part of the Pope to be more than a prop to capitalist regimes. For John Paul II, such an obligation would also appeal to the libertarian side of his nature. Indeed such a conviction as Wojtyla's permits a Pope to take a deep breath and reflect upon the fact that Catholicism is a lot older than capitalism and really owes very little to it. In short, Wojtyla's theocracy permits him to play an active role as a third force, in the expectation that capitalism will pass. And since communism need no longer be regarded as the necessary heir, the Pope has before him a dazzling prospect of a new order, under the spiritual hegemony of Roman Catholicism.

As we have also observed, the Pope's activism has greatly compounded his troubles. However Wojtyla's policy may strengthen the hand of the Vatican, his enhanced power is not so simple to translate into lasting and solid institutional bases. This is especially so in the light of the post-nuclear climate of collegiality, in which a considerable degree of authority has been decentralised and vested in the national churches. But irrespective of what the rest of the Church may do, John Paul's own doctrine generates at least three kinds of serious difficulties:

- The new range of church activity sets into motion centrifugal forces, making it more problematic to assert the centralised control essential to the Vatican.
- The critical function played by the Vatican as a third force risks under-

mining its essential traditional bases of support. Lacking its own material base, the Church always remains dependent upon the secular state, no matter how much it may criticise that state. More, the Church retains very deep roots in political reaction, which does not tolerate all well any serious critique of the established order, to say the least.

- The fresh air of the Church's new role may bring with it a heightened independence of mind. This can either open the door to modernity again; or—the gravest danger of all—could raise the possibility of a return to Christianity's pre-Constantinian origins, i.e., a church without a Pope.

These three threats are, in one form or another, the paramount obsessions of Wojtyła's papacy, for the simple reason that they are created by his own activism and fuelled by his megalomania. Thus the specific character of John Paul's pontificate is a combination of activism to create a theocratic third force, on the one hand, and on the other an equally resolute attempt to ward off the threats associated with this activism. We can therefore expect John Paul to stress the unity of the Church through active disciplining of anyone who steps out of line; to resist fiercely any expression of ecclesial independence that threatens the Constantinian model of the Catholic church; and to resume the assault of modernity with all the strength he can muster. This of course tends to create a vicious cycle: provoking more resistance and incurring yet more suppression, with a steady drift to the Right by the pontiff. All in all, reality for John Paul II is not likely to live up to his dreams of a Catholic restoration under the benign aegis of the universal church. An attitude may be consistent within the fortress of Polish Catholic ideology, but the **real** world is another matter.

To sort this out, we may say that the Pope's policies have a number of fronts. There is the outer world, divided into its three great zones, which we may call the extra-mural fronts; and there is the internal organisation of the Church itself, which may be called the intra-mural front. Neither extra-mural nor intra-mural can be given ultimate priority over the other. However, in the immediate conduct of affairs, it is the intra-mural front which must be given priority—just as an army must look after the morale and discipline of its troops before it steps onto the field of battle. In this case, the troops number more than a million-and-a-half priests, nuns, deacons, catechists and lay religious **persons**.<sup>44</sup> No consideration of the affairs of the Vatican can ignore the number and quality of these cadres, who are, after all, the interface between the Church and the world. As we shall see below, the internal crisis of the Church, especially in the West, has deeply affected the character of its cadres. Wojtyła inherited this problem; and his response to it has been perhaps the sorest point of his pontificate. For the ideal principle to which he has been led—through temperament, cultural background, the activist imperative, and the

countermeasures to be taken against the various threats to which his church is exposed—is, to use the term of George Williams, that of an ascetic and heroic priesthood. Only such a cadre can maintain the essential unity of the Church while advancing the Pope's programme without yielding to modernity or social revolution—i.e., be worthy of theocratic ambition. But whether such a goal is obtainable under the terms set by John Paul is doubtful in the extreme.

### *Cracking the Holy Whip*

A few months after he succeeded to the throne of St. Peter, Pope John Paul II addressed the bishops at Puebla, Mexico, assembled for a major convocation to reassess the status of liberation theology. Among his remarks was the following:

**This unity of bishops comes not from human calculation and strategy but from on high: from serving one Lord, from being animated by one Spirit, and from loving one and the same church. . . the laity also are subjects of that unity, whether involved individually or joined in apostolic associations for the spreading of the kingdom of God. . . in close union with and obedience to the lawful pastors.<sup>43</sup>**

So much for the spirit of collegiality enunciated at the Second Vatican Council. However, it is one thing to promote the ideal of a completely unified church ruled over by centralised and divinely inspired authority and served by a heroic cadre of celibate men and women—and another to bring that goal about in the practical situation of modern Catholicism. Here the dangers noted above as inherent to the policy of a socially activated church come home with a vengeance. For the lower levels of the Church are alive with the spirit of freedom; and this spirit does not see freedom as divisible. More exactly, it sees Wojtyla and the Vatican Curia as all-too-human, and even if it is considered very poor form to criticise the Vatican openly (in some measure because the Church provides essential protection from the state security apparatus in many Latin American countries),<sup>46</sup> it is also out of the question to submit supinely to Vatican repression.

As a result, the intra-mural affairs of Roman Catholicism have been something of a Donnybrook. A new Inquisition is underway, under the auspices of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, appointed by John Paul to head the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.<sup>47</sup> That nobody has been burnt at the stake this time round is due less to this doe-eyed Torquemada than to the lax condition of society, already far gone into modernity. But although Ratzinger disposes, it is John Paul who proposes. In the few years of Wojtyla's pontificate, serious proceedings have been brought against the following: Professors Hans Kiing and Edward Schillebeeckx, who have lost their official status as teachers of theology, Kiing for doubting papal

infallibility;<sup>48</sup> Father Leonardo Boff, the Brazilian liberation theologian who dared suggest that the Catholic church might at times not live up to its spiritual ideals,<sup>49</sup> and Father Gustavo Gutierrez, the Peruvian priest who may be said to have written the central text of liberation theology;<sup>50</sup> Father Charles Curran of the Catholic University of America who, among other things, called into question the Church's ban on artificial contraception;<sup>51</sup> the four Nicaraguan prelates who have served in the Sandinista régime, Frs. D'Escoto, Parrales and the brothers Cardenal;<sup>52</sup> numerous other Nicaraguan radical priests, including the Franciscan, Uriel Molina, who has inspired many foreign visitors to Managua with his liberation theology services, and has now been asked to leave the country;<sup>53</sup> twenty-four nuns who signed an advertisement in the *New York Times* disputing the absoluteness of the Church's ban on abortion;<sup>54</sup> and Mary Ann Sorrentino, Director of Planned Parenthood in Providence, Rhode Island, who has been excommunicated for wilfully going against papal doctrine on abortion. \*\*

Beyond these individual cases, there have been attacks on key Catholic institutions. The whole Dutch Church, perhaps the most liberal and progressive of all the national churches, has come under devastating fire from the Pope, and is now in a state of terrible demoralisation (related to this is the intensely hostile reception—including 1 effigy-burnings—received by John Paul during his trip to Holland).<sup>56</sup> Then there are the **550** Catholic colleges and universities in the world who have now been put on notice that the Vatican considers that no Catholic university can consider itself 'a purely private institution'. However, nearly all of the **235** such schools in the United States in fact are just that. The Vatican moreover proposes that teachers of theology must have 'a mandate from the competent ecclesiastical authority';<sup>57</sup> and that 'all teachers. . . are to be distinguished by. . . doctrinal integrity and uprightness of life'.<sup>58</sup>

Amongst the orders, the powerful but intellectually independent Jesuits (who also happen to be a major presence in Nicaragua supportive of the FSLN) have been embattled from the beginning of Wojtyla's pontificate.<sup>59</sup> The Society of Jesus may seem an obvious sword to be crossed, inasmuch as it has traditionally been the centre of Catholic political activism. It is important to recognise however, that the dynamic of John Paul knows no intrinsic boundaries: each and every chamber of the Church must be purged of suspicious influences and brought under centralised control. Even the Carmelites, a cloistered order of **13,000** nuns, and the least politically suspicious imaginable, have not been immune. In the *National Catholic Reporter* (an estimable periodical) of **15** March 1985, under the heading of 'Carmelite leader writes pope of "disgust" at letter on rules,' we find that the head of this order, Spanish Father Felipe Sainz de Baranda, expressed to the Pontiff his 'disgust' at the 'very hard tone and the polemical content of a Vatican letter announcing a decision

to write a new constitution for the order based on a 1581 rule of the founder, St. Teresa of Avila, despite the fact that 80 per cent of the nuns voted for constitutions based on declarations approved by Pope Paul VI.

Of course not everybody in the Catholic church complains about Wojtyla. There is, for example, Opus Dei, a much less venerable organisation (dating only from 1928), and one greatly in favour with John Paul II, who went and prayed at the tomb of its founder, the Spanish priest, Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer, shortly before his election, and for good measure, again shortly after. This ultra-secret group, with strong ties to fascism in Spain and Chile, began courting Karol Wojtyla while he was Archbishop of Cracow, printed a volume of his speeches, and did what it could to pave his path to the Throne of St. Peter. The favour has been amply repaid. John Paul II moved the headquarters of Opus Dei to Rome, and in late 1982, made it a 'Personal Prelature', and then an official Religious Order. With this move, Opus Dei took over the role traditionally played by the Jesuits, as the Pope's right-hand instrument.<sup>60</sup>

Because Opus Dei is a secret society (something which is not supposed to happen within the Church), details about its membership are unclear, although it is said to number around 70,000. Some are priests (who form the order as such), but most are wealthy lay persons; and the organisation itself is said to be enormously wealthy. More, it is archly-conservative (although not the most conservative group within Catholicism, that honour going to the Sacred Knights of Malta, an ancient international society linking the big bourgeoisie and remnants of the feudal aristocracy,<sup>61</sup> and, further yet to the right, though smaller, 'Tradition, Family, Property', or simply TFP, a rabidly anticommunist and racist group shading off into neo-nazism).<sup>62</sup> The conservatism of Opus Dei is what endears it to Pope John Paul II, inasmuch as this favours the return of the heroic and ascetic ideal for Catholicism (word has it that the membership engages in ritual flagellation). However—and this is in some ways the most interesting thing about Opus Dei—the membership and esprit of the organisation is also highly technocratic, with heavy representation among the media (52 radio and TV stations, 38 news agencies and 12 film companies, principally in Spain and Latin America—a fact which should be borne in mind when considering the Pope's high visibility and favourable image), universities and think tanks. The organisation is particularly well represented amongst the technocratic elites of Pinochet's Chile. We may also note that Opus Dei appears to have had certain ties to the infamous P2 Lodge, as well as to Calvi's Banco Ambrosiano. Its connection to the CIA is not well documented, so far as I know, but may be regarded as presumptive. We might recall here that the American security establishment (along with major elements of the right-wing press, such as William Buckley's National Review) has a heavily Catholic profile, many of these gentlemen, including CIA director William Casey, being members of the Sacred Knights of

Malta.<sup>63</sup>

Opus Dei may be a comfort to Karol Wojtyła as he contemplates the moral ruin of his beloved church, but it cannot compensate him for what is undoubtedly the gravest intra-mural problem of contemporary Catholicism—the priest shortage. Indeed, it is hard to see how the Church can succeed in the long-run unless this problem is resolved—just as it is hard to see how the policies of John Paul II can do anything but exacerbate it.

Plain numbers tell the story. In the United States, for example, the Roman Catholic Population grew from **45** to **52** million between **1970** and **1983—a 15 per cent** increase. In the same period, the number of ordained religious priests dropped by **22 per cent**. The average American diocesan priest now serves **33 per cent** more Catholics than in **1967**, and many parishes have had to turn to deacons and incomplete services to get by. If current trends continue, the number of priests will decline by another **50 per cent** by the year **2000**. Figures are even starker for graduates. In the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, **32** priests were ordained in **1960**. The figure for **1984** was **4**—and it is said widely in the Church that the quality of novitiates has declined. In any event, the median age of priests has gone up—to **54** for the Brooklyn diocese; while in France, two-thirds of the priests are now over **fifty**.<sup>64</sup>

It is hard to see how the Church can survive at its traditional centre the way things are going. In desperation, some parishes have taken to advertising in the mass media to try and drum up candidates for the priesthood. What rarely gets faced, however, is the obvious cause for the decline of the priesthood: the sexually archaic ethos of the Church. By denying women entry into the priesthood, and by insisting on priestly celibacy, Catholicism gains a male-bonded *cadre*, fixated on patriarchal authority and, being undistracted by personal life, able to give their full-time to the work of the Church. The problem is, however, that young people in the epoch of late capitalism no longer go for this—and the Pope's insistent repressiveness can only make matters worse.

The situation in the vital Third World is drastically different, but no less problematic for the Vatican. In Latin America the seminaries are bursting with candidates for the priesthood. From **1970** to **1982**, the number of senior seminarians in Latin America rose from **9,283** to **17,279**. In the United States, meanwhile, the number declined from **13,000** to **7,000**, while the figures for Western Europe went from **33,000** to **25,000**. These numbers have to be interpreted against a backdrop of an absolute shortage of priests in the entire Third World. Thus even now Latin America only has about one priest for every **9,000** Catholics; while the figures for the developed world have hovered around one per **1,000**.<sup>65</sup>

The significance of these statistics for Catholicism cannot be over-emphasised. For the reason which draws young men from Latin America

(most of them poor, by the way) into the Church is liberation theology, with its hope of alleviating the historical misery of the continent's masses. While Catholicism withers in the industrial societies, the dynamism belongs to radical Christianity's thrust for social transformation. This is ultimately why the Pope can neither live with or without liberation theology—and why he must bend every effort towards co-opting it and stealing its thunder. It is important to recognise too, that a necessary (though not, of course, the only) condition for the emergence of liberation theology was the shortage of priests in Latin America. Lacking officially trained and indoctrinated priests to channel their spirituality within traditional limits, the masses acted for themselves and took to forming the base communities within which they could reflect on Christianity in light of their material oppression. Such reflection has to lead to the implication of the Church hierarchy in that oppression, and hence toward a critique of the Church itself. At the far end, a radically different conception of faith emerges—counter-hegemonic and unshadowed by hierarchy. As the number of priests in the industrialised nations dwindles—ultimately because of that self-same oppression (manifest in the sexual sphere and as a general sclerosis of doctrine and praxis)—the conditions for a similar renewal of the Church in the First World are being created as well. This is a prospect which Wojtyla must view with horror.

### *Laborem Exercens*

One might say that just as the Church functions to some degree autonomously with respect to the world, so is the Pope autonomous to some degree from the Church. This is a function of the extreme centralisation of power within Catholicism and the Pope's virtually complete authority. In Wojtyla's case, this tendency is maximised, for three reasons: because of his inveterate activism and skill at public relations; because of his considerable skill at manipulating the Curia and exerting dominance over it; and because, to a greater extent than any other modern Pope, John Paul II is the author of more or less comprehensively developed philosophy, embodied in a series of writings.

Among the factors which make for John Paul's powerful role, his writings are certainly not the most important. But they do provide a window onto his conception of the world, and they have made him, at one time or another, a figure of interest and appeal to progressive intellectuals of varying persuasion. Such appeal was substantially greater in the first several years of John Paul's pontificate, before the fruits of his reactionary character became fully evident, and it peaked with the promulgation, in 1981, of the Encyclical, *Laborem Exercens*, or, 'On Human Work'. This remarkable document, written with great care and completed in the hospital while John Paul was recovering from the wounds inflicted by Agca, is meant to provide the doctrinal and ideological basis for the

Pope's 'Third Way' between capitalism and marxism. It has attracted a great deal of attention, and contributed substantially to the climate of good feeling that for a time prevailed between Wojtyla and the Left. A whole book on the subject, Gregory Baum's *The Priority of Labor*, praises the encyclical from a social democratic perspective, viz: '*Laborem Exercens* has lifted Catholic social teaching to a new height.'<sup>66</sup> In the context of *Laborem* and other progressive signs emanating from the Holy See, Carl Marzani (who has since developed a much more antipathetic attitude toward the Pope)<sup>67</sup> observed that Wojtyla was 'talking the prose of Eurocommunism', and was a 'sturdy and reliable ally'. This latter remark was then picked up by the progressive Jesuit, Arthur McGovern, as evidence for the potentially transformative power of John Paul's Third Way (McGovern also reported that in Peru, the Encyclical was being printed in a comic-book version for teaching to the poor).<sup>68</sup> Meanwhile John Hellman was writing that 'this new kind of Pope has become an important advocate for progressive social transformations throughout the world'.<sup>69</sup> However questionable such enthusiasms may seem today, they are understandable when one turns to Wojtyla's writings. It is not that these are of such high intrinsic order. Were not the man who wrote them one of the most powerful figures of contemporary life, they would have little claim on anyone's interest. Some, especially the philosophical works, are mediocre and excruciating to read. But the fact remains that Wojtyla has tapped into an abiding desire for an authentic emancipatory practice; and that in so doing, he has challenged once more the adequacy of marxism to meet that desire.

*Laborem Exercens*, which we shall consider shortly, is undoubtedly the most influential and, in many respects, fully realised of Karol Wojtyla's social and philosophical writings. It has not, however, sprung full-grown from the Pope's head, but reflects instead many years of philosophical and practical development. This began with his experience as a worker in the Solvay plant and deepened when, as a newly ordained priest in 1947, he was sent on a mission to France to observe the worker-priest movement which had sprung up there.\* There is no evidence that Karol Wojtyla ever studied marxism systematically. But he imbibed a lot of marxism secondarily, through his association with the worker-priests, and with the philosophy which underlay the movement, the personalism of Maurice Blondel and especially, Emmanuel Mounier.<sup>71</sup> It might be said that Wojtyla's philosophical development is an extended effort to synthesise personalism with the core of Catholic thought, Thomism. It is in this light that one may regard his phenomenological work on Max Scheler (who could also be called a personalist, even if it was not a term he used himself),<sup>72</sup> the major philosophical study known as *The Acting Person*,<sup>73</sup> and finally, his papal encyclicals, with their conscious challenge to marxism.

Mounier<sup>74</sup> set out to attack capitalism without falling into the trap into

which marxism has so often fallen—the subordination of human beings to impersonal historical forces, ultimately, the party-state. In other words, his theme was the abiding preoccupation of western marxism *generally*<sup>75</sup>—how to rescue the humanistic element within historical materialism. Mounier's attempted solution involved a valorisation of the individual human being combined with a critique of capitalism's subordination of the individual to profit. Wojtyla has developed this notion in two major ways: first, by grounding it phenomenologically and ontologically within Thomistic categories; and second, by extending the account into the realm of praxis and work. As elsewhere, we see this effort marked by a reflexive, even spasmodic, move toward emancipation, which is then incorporated into a larger hierarchical and theocratic whole.

The first part of this project was largely carried out in his dissertation on Scheler. Here the young Wojtyla reveals the authoritarian reading he is to give to human action in general. At the risk of oversimplification, it may be held that the relations between the human and the divine in Christianity can either be mediated in terms of love or authority—and the mixture of these qualities chosen by any given thinker tells us much about the essential drift of his/her ideology. For Karol Wojtyla the emphasis has ever been on the latter, authoritarian mediation. Williams, in commenting on his reading of Scheler, states that for Wojtyla:

**Catholic teaching about love [Scheler's highest value] cannot deviate from the objective received norms revealed in the person of Christ, an embodied ideal Person, who is not only, however, a model but also a figure of commanding authority.**<sup>76</sup>

The same essential idea holds throughout Wojtyla's ontological work: yes, the human essence lies in the unique value of each, responsibly acting individual; and this must be safeguarded at all costs against the twin evils of collectivism and capitalism. But this selfsame divine individual only becomes free and morally responsible if he/she acts according to the rules laid down from on high—which rules are, needless to add, interpreted by God's pontifical agent on earth. Theocratic authority consistently triumphs over grace. As Archbishop Wojtyla put it in a speech before Vatican II:

**It is necessary that the human person appear in the real sublimity of his rational nature, religion however as the summit of his nature. For religion consists in the free adherence of the human mind to God, which is in all respects personal and conscientious; it arises from the desire for truth. . . And this relation to the secular arm may not interfere, because religion itself by its nature transcends all things secular (*sic*).<sup>77</sup>**

As Williams sums up Wojtyla's ethical doctrine. . . 'when the person uses his self determination to move transcendentally toward a goal according to the truth, the person fulfills himself and becomes good. When the

person does not act according to the truth, he does not fulfill himself and thus becomes bad'. The problem with this excessively neat scheme is, as Williams comments, that

**Wojtyla's understanding of the experience of truth is never really disclosed, to the bafflement of the general reader and perhaps especially the well-intentioned phenomenologist. Wojtyla fails to provide the reader with what the conditions are for coming to this truth. One must assume that behind this hesitancy is the presumption of perennial wisdom.'**

Indeed this is so—which is to say that despite the philosophical pretension, Wojtyla's works are bereft of critical and epistemological content. They fail to achieve the synthesis between Thomism and the contemporary *weltanschauung* which must be the precondition for Catholic philosophy. In the place of insight into the opacity of being, the problematic role of language and the radical nature of freedom, we get a slap on the back from external authority. You can be free—so long as you obey orders from on high. This should not be confused with the conception of freedom as the recognition of necessity—or rather, it should be seen that John Paul II cannot conceive of necessity outside of the revealed power of the Vatican hierarchy. Wojtyla may be a personalist, but the person remains infantile.

*Laborem Exercens* represents the second thrust of John Paul's development of personalism—into the sphere of production. It is a bold document, which goes further than any other papal writing in defining social reality as a sphere for ecclesial intervention. According to Baum, *Laborem* 'introduced new ideas, derived from a critical and creative dialogue with Marxism. . . [and is] a social philosophy that transcends Marxism from within'.<sup>79</sup>

*Laborem* should be regarded in the context of Wojtyla's abiding hostility to marxism, and his need to find a credible alternative to it. A Pope who barnstorms everywhere announcing the need to overcome the unequal distribution of wealth, and at the same time can tell the workers of St. Denis (a communist stronghold on the outskirts of Paris) that 'the workers of the world should not be beguiled into imagining that there are only two classes and that only through class hatred can social justice be realized. . .'<sup>80</sup> is a Pope with a conceptual problem on his hands. *Laborem Exercens* is John Paul II's answer to that problem.<sup>81</sup>

The encyclical contains a number of remarkable and salutary features, reflecting Wojtyla's personalism and deriving from Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts*. John Paul is particularly concerned to stress the inherent dignity of work, and the transhistorical need of human beings to achieve an unalienated self-expression through their productive activity. From this standpoint, any social practice which treats the human being as an object is a denial of dignity and a form of evil. Such a verdict can be passed on both capitalism and statist forms of 'actually existing socialism', insofar as each system

subordinates human activity to an externally determined production process. John Paul does not pass up the opportunity to criticise both forms of production—though it must be said, too, that he makes no effort to distinguish between the systems in any seriously analytic way, but simply lumps them together as common works of the devil. Indeed, the various socialisms appear as mere shadows—a remarkable fact inasmuch as the immediate political reference of *Laborem* was Poland's Solidarity movement, which was flourishing at the time of its writing. We shall return to this point below.

The track of *Laborem's* argument moves instead across the terrain of capitalist society. Here he makes the statement—which is oddly presented as 'a principle that has always been taught by the Church'—that 'an evident truth that emerges from the whole of man's historical experience' is '*the principle of the priority of labour over capital*'. And the reason for this is that labour is the active process which produces capital, and capital a 'mere. . . instrumental cause'. Therefore 'capital cannot be separated from labour', i.e., there is no inherent opposition within production between capital and labour. And if this is so, then private ownership of the means of production is not an absolute right: '*the right to provide property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone*'. Specifically, there should be '*joint ownership of the means of work*', profit-sharing, active worker-participation in the production process, strong unions to redress economic grievances, and so forth. In addition, the Pope stresses that mere elimination of private ownership is not enough, since such ownership could just as easily be replaced with a bureaucratic-managerial elite.

We can speak of socialising only when the subject character of society is ensured, that is to say, when on the basis of his work each person is fully entitled to consider himself as part-owner of the great workbench at which he is working with everyone else. A way toward that goal could be found by associating labour with the ownership of capital, *as far as possible*, and by producing a wide range of intermediate bodies with economic, social and cultural purposes; they would be bodies enjoying real autonomy with regard to the public powers, pursuing their specific aims in honest collaboration with each other and in subordination to the demands of the common good, and they would be living communities both in form and in substance, in the sense that the members of each body would be looked upon and treated as persons and encouraged to take an active part in the life of the body. [italics added]

Now these are fine sentiments, and the world would undoubtedly be a far better place if they were realised. Yet as everyone knows, they are not about to be realised, except on a very small, localised and marginal way, at least in the major capitalist powers. The Pope then, is just preaching, although it is a very sophisticated and ideologically potent form of preaching. In other words, the 'as far as possible' in the above passage turns out

to be an insignificant distance.

The reason for this is not too difficult to see, once John Paul's language is unravelled. It goes back to what he told the workers at St. Denis: forget the reality of class antagonism. *Laborem* is constructed so as to ignore, minimise, or simply disprove the existence of class as a dynamic force. As a corollary, John Paul II fails to go beyond vague descriptions of the relation between capital and labour into any analytic statement about the nature of the accumulation process and the appropriation of surplus value. Needless to add, all this leaves the Pope somewhat high and dry when it comes to confronting social reality. It offers a benign and sentimental view of capitalist society, in which the Pope's moralising and similar voluntaristic appeals will suffice for social transformation. This is a good way to build papal prestige, but it bears little relation otherwise to reality. Or perhaps I have missed the historical precedents for capitalists voluntarily yielding their power.

The same may be said for John Paul's description of the political nature of capitalist society. This functions to sever political from economic action and keep them both ineffectual. We learn, for instance, that there are 'direct' and 'indirect' employers. The former is the boss himself, the latter, everything social that shapes and conditions the employer, especially the state. He goes on to talk of the great network of 'dependencies' which enter into this relationship, and concludes that 'the attainment of worker's rights cannot however be doomed to be merely the result of economic systems. . . guided chiefly by the criterion of maximum profit', but must involve all levels of the world system working together for 'respect of the objective rights of the worker'. Another excellent sentiment. Never once however, in these fine phrases do we encounter any awareness that there is a class, identified with the 'direct employers', that controls the main operations of state and society, i.e., that the 'indirect employer', or state is, in the words of a less idealistic commentator on capitalist society, 'a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie'.

The absence of any serious concept of class offers an image of society in which pious exhortation can bring about structural change. There being no real problem with the structure of society, there is no need for workers to do anything other than organise along their narrow economic needs: 'Union demands cannot be turned into a kind of *group or class "egoism"*. . . the role of unions is not to "play politics".' Everything, in short, will be taken care of by the appropriate paternal authorities, who will heed the Pope's moral authority and share their power and wealth for the good of all.

How does John Paul manage to abolish such a mammoth formation as the class antagonism between workers and capitalists? The answer lies in his personalism, and the reading of history that emerges from it. In Wojtyla's personalism, everything in the last analysis is voluntary. Thus

we learn that capitalist society arose because 'the workers put their powers at the disposal of the entrepreneurs, and these, following the principle of maximum profit, tried to establish the lowest possible wages for the work done by their employees'. In other words, the workers brought capitalism on themselves. It was a mistake, an honest one no doubt, but a mistake for all that. Nothing here about primitive accumulation, that blood-bathed process by means of which a proletariat was coerced into existence. Of course this is an understandable omission, since to put the origins of capitalism on anything but a voluntary basis would mean taking into account the role played by precapitalist society in the domination and coercion of its masses. And that would entail a good hard, look at the Roman Catholic church. So long as social action is reduced to the voluntaristic behaviour of 'persons', the Catholic church is on high and dry ground. Admit the notion of class, however, and the Church—or perhaps we should say, its hierarchy—is in trouble.

In sum, though there is much good in *Laborem Exercens*, there is really **little** that is new in it, nor is it in any sense a 'transcendence' of **marxism**. Instead it avoids the reality which Marx—going beyond his philosophical insights—tried to comprehend. In doing so the Pope is merely following in a deeply rutted path of sentimentalising about class society, cheapening and betraying his humanism in the process.

A few more observations about *Laborem Exercens* may be in order. There are also passages in it about the family and the role of the sexes, topics of great interest to the Catholic church. Here the Pope is concerned that a '**family wage**' be given to the 'head of the family for his [*sic*] work, sufficient for the needs of the family without the other spouse having to take up gainful employment outside the home. . . Having to abandon [child-rearing] in order to take up paid work outside of the home is wrong from the point of view of the good of society and of the family when it contradicts or hinders these primary goals of the mission of a mother'. And, 'the **true advancement of women** requires that labour be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them and at the expense of the family, in which women as mothers have an irreplaceable role'.

It may be argued that this is less an appeal to 'Kinder, Kiiche, Kirche' than the demand that society relieve the economic burden which deprives women—or men, for that matter—of the choice of whether to stay home and raise children. Such a line of reasoning would be consistent with a number of sensible welfare-state proposals espoused by John Paul—e.g., cheap or free medical care, adequate rest, pensions, etc. This however, would be too simple a view to take of the Pope, a man unalterably dedicated to patriarchal relations, a man who could write that the 'knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's **obedience**'.<sup>83</sup> That women should keep their place is perhaps the highest social priority for John

Paul. Everything must be made to serve this goal, without which the entire edifice of Catholicism, as he sees it, would crumble. And so it is 'Kinder, Kiiche, Kirche', indeed, for the Pope. That, and a relentless assault on anything which would make for the sexual, and hence, the general emancipation of women. As with any genuinely patriarchal authoritarian, behind 'Mary's obedience' lies the everpresent threat of 'Eve's disobedience', which can be sprung loose at any moment, should the burden of childbearing and domestic subjugation be lifted. For Wojtyla, in the words of George Williams, 'the curse laid upon man after the Fall was work. That upon woman was the travail of childbirth, another kind of labour'.<sup>83</sup> John Paul is not really too interested in lifting those curses, whence the ferocious assault on the right to abortion during his pontificate. The customary sanctimony which characterises the Church's opposition to abortion usually masks other motives. At least once, however, John Paul let himself reveal a deeper motivation behind the 'right to life': 'The freedom sought after by the campaigners in favor of abortion is a freedom in the service of pleasure unrestrained by norms of any kind.'\*

A truly repressive hostility to pleasure cannot confine itself to any given sphere. It sees threats to itself, i.e., temptations, everywhere, and must reach everywhere in a vain attempt to squelch the life force. For Wojtyla, who has a particularly bad case of this syndrome, this has extended to lecturing the working class youth of Paris on the evils of premarital sex ('No Pope has ever been that specific', writes Williams),<sup>85</sup> and claiming that 'adultery in the heart could be committed by a man who looked at his own wife with desire'.<sup>86</sup>

The intense, all-embracing repressiveness extends also to the sphere of production. Commentators on *Laborem Exercens* have generally either praised the Pope for his humanistic socialism or attacked him for the inadequacy of his conception of marxism. Little notice has been taken of a deeper issue, what might be called John Paul's *ontology* of labour, his fundamental conception of what it is. Here Wojtyla shares with Marx a very fundamental conception that labour, as the mode of transforming material reality, is the essential expression of human nature and the means whereby humans create themselves and project their being into the world. However, Wojtyla goes far beyond Marx in ascribing inherent qualities of toil and domination to the labour process. In other words, he has no theory of alienation. What for Marx is the product of a historical estrangement is for the Pope an essential consequence of original sin. Work is indeed the 'curse' laid upon an Adam who disobeys God and listens to women—'the curse that sin brought with it'.<sup>87</sup> The following passages from Genesis, quoted in *Laborem*, sum up Wojtyla's attitude: 'Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.' [Gen 3:17] Nature itself is damned; and all thoughts of a reconciliation with nature are illusory, for the fundamental relation of work is to 'subdue'

nature and establish 'dominion' over it. As a result, the 'toil connected with work marks the way of human life on earth and constitutes *an announcement of death*: "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken." [Gen 3:19]'

John Paul here reveals himself to be essentially guided less by the New Testament than by the Old, with its avenging and punitive God and social relationships more congenial to the theocratic world-view. He has said elsewhere that: 'Today one cannot understand either Sartre or Marx without having first read and pondered very deeply the first three chapters of Genesis. These are the key to understanding the world of today, both its roots and its extremely radical. . . affirmations and denials.'<sup>88</sup> *Laborem Exercens* shows just how seriously he means this. True, the figure of Christ is introduced as the redeemer who lifts the human race out of sin. But this does not include any sense of the liberation from toil. Quite to the contrary: 'by enduring the toil of work in union with Christ crucified for us, man in a way collaborates with the Son of God for the redemption of humanity. He shows himself a true disciple of Christ by carrying the cross in his turn every day in the activity that he is called upon to perform'.

This is consistent with the mentality of the flagellants of *Opus Dei*. Indeed, it resembles the theory of labour of a Stalin, who called his people to perform heroic toil every day for the redemption of Russia. But though I am no theologian, it does strike me as missing something of the message of Jesus Christ, who was noted as having said, 'consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin/And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these/Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?' [Matt 6:28-30]

Wojtyla does not choose to quote this passage, with its notion of grace, its intimation of a God of love, instead of the jack-booted 'figure of commanding authority'. He does refer to it though, as being 'on one occasion a prohibition against too much anxiety about work and life. . .' So much for *The Sermon on the Mount*, from the spiritual leader of the world.

## THE POPE IN THE WORLD

### *The First World*

Contemporary Catholicism is in the midst of a crisis so turbulent as to raise the prospect of another Reformation—or barring that, an unravelling and deterioration of its present dynamism. Many ascribe the tension to changes ensuing from the second Vatican Council, which attempted to redefine the balance of power between Pope and the episcopal hierarchy in favour of the latter. As a result, church conservatives and progressives

tend to align themselves according to whether they are against or for Vatican II. But Vatican II merely formalised those changes at the Church's base which have swept it so tumultuously into the late twentieth century. Rewriting the Council cannot alter those forces. To the contrary: the forces prevent any rewriting of the Council. This was shown clearly in the Synod of Bishops called by John Paul for December of 1985, the purpose of which was a re-examination of Vatican II. The synod received a degree of publicity customarily reserved for summit meetings between the US and USSR; and it was widely regarded as a mortal clash between centralised papal power and the newfound authority of the dispersed national episcopates. But the mountain gave birth to a mouse. Nothing substantial was resolved at the synod; and the tons of newsprint about the event tell us essentially nothing except that the Church is in a crisis, and that no side can impose its will upon the other.<sup>89</sup>

This is not through any lack of trying on the part of the Pope, but because what he does only aggravates matters. The rationale for John Paul's theocratic strategy was the co-optative potential in its liberatory moment: the freeing of 'man' from temporal bondage prior to his submission to the 'commanding figure' of divine authority was supposed to absorb the ferment of modern Catholicism. The problem is that this satisfies no-one. Conservatives are not interested in liberation in the first place; while progressives, once liberated, are not about to submit once more, especially in light of the deeply spiritual—and emancipatory—path open to them by virtue of liberation theology. John Paul may please crowds and the media, or score an occasional coup such as the visiting of the Rome Synagogue,<sup>90</sup> but where his policies will be finally tested, namely in the gathering together of his church, he gets nowhere. Worse for him, John Paul's excesses create an atmosphere of tyranny and suffering from which the forces of rebellion only take inspiration; and the more obstreperous the voices of dissent—the women pressing for ordination and an end to the age-old patriarchy of Catholicism,<sup>91</sup> people pressing for the rights of homosexuals, for choice in abortion, for contraception, the radical priests who take the side of the FSLN or the refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador, and the great if understated, belief that what has to be overhauled most of all is the hierarchical foundation of the Church itself—the more this resistance builds, the harsher, more controlling. . . and of course, more provoking the Pope becomes. The relation between John Paul and his Church is now something like that between Reagan and the Sandinistas: each drives the other on.

Of course, there is a major difference with respect to Catholicism. The deep and severe conflicts which wrack the Church co-exist with an equally profound feeling which most Catholics will freely evince, namely, a need for unity and a devotion to the Church as such. There is no question but that Roman Catholicism gets into the bones of the believer. Undoubtedly,

the Church's profound reliance on sacramental mediation, the concrete and sensuous wealth of experience offered to its believers, helps account this. This love of the Church and respect for its ways and traditions is one of the most powerful weapons at the Pope's disposal, and it explains the fact that overt criticism of his pontificate has not gone further than it has, or why he can get away to such an extent with matters such as the cover-up of the Vatican finances and the outrageously unexplained demise of his predecessor. When one considers that Richard Nixon was forced out of the Presidency for covering up shenanigans that were utterly trivial by comparison with what John Paul II has chosen to keep quiet about, one realises how effectively the Vatican remains autonomous from even its own religion, and how shrouded by mystery (a favourite expression of Vatican conservatives), submissiveness and pious awe the truth can be.<sup>92</sup>

All these things are only relative, however. What is remarkable about Wojtyla is how much trouble he has created, for all the enormous star appeal and autonomy, and how widely disliked he is within his own Church throughout the western world. *The Economist*, in its issue of November 30, 1985, for instance states that 'some Catholics in Italy already look forward to the next papacy, another Italian one of course, under "*un Papa migliore dopo questa miseria*" (a better Pope after this awfulness).' Thirty-two per cent of French priests are said to disapprove of the way John Paul conducts his papacy. Then there is the editorial of the *National Catholic Reporter* for March 21, 1986, in which the editor, Tom Fox, writes that

**I spoke candidly with a prominent US archbishop on the condition that I not use his name. We talked about the state of the Church, especially in the light of the current pontificate. He indicated that he did not like the course we were on and was especially upset by heavy-handed Vatican actions. . . The archbishop told me he viewed the Church as entering a dark period of unknown duration.**

That such remarks can appear at all indicates how far gone into schism the Church has been plunged. As for its various cover-ups, the Vatican seems to be faring equally badly. Though nobody seems willing to look further into the death of John Paul I, the case of the Vatican finances refuses to go away—no doubt because, unlike the question of Albino Luciani, this one has many ongoing ramifications in the international financial community and was in fact a direct threat to the Italian state bank. In any case, the Holy See's defence has been that Archbishop Paul Marcinkus and the directorship of the Vatican Bank were completely deceived by Roberto Calvi, the director of Milan's Banco Ambrosiano, found mysteriously hanging from London's Blackfriars Bridge in June, 1982. After almost four years of deliberation on this delicate matter, a joint commission of the Vatican and the Italian government has been unable to report its findings. The reason for this, according to Peter

Hebblethwaite, has been that 'the Vatican and Italy are at loggerheads over interpretation of the evidence'.<sup>93</sup> In other words, the Italian commissioners do not accept the naive defence. According to leaks in the Italian press, the commissioners have concluded that the Vatican Bank and Banco Ambrosiano were working hand in glove in their various elaborate schemes. Meanwhile the Holy See has paid Italy \$250 million to settle out of court claims that in their entirety amounted to the impressive sum of \$18 billion.

All this has, needless to add, taken its toll. The following brief article, from the New York *Times* of March 18, 1986, gives some hint.

**The head of the Vatican's economic affairs department said today that the Vatican's involvement with the scandal surrounding the Banco Ambrosiano had led to a reduction in donations by Catholics.**

**The official, Guisepppe Cardinal Caprio, also said at a news conference that the Vatican was considering publishing detailed and audited budget statements.**

**Up to now, only small portions of the finances have been revealed. Cardinal Caprio said the scandal surrounding the Vatican bank's involvement in the Ambrosiano (sic) affair had have 'grave consequences'.**

**It led, he said, to a reduction in the amount collected in 'Peter's Pence', the annual collection taken up in Catholic churches.**

Now that Michele Sindona has, like Calvi, gone to his reward (just after having been put away for life, hence with nothing more to hide), we may expect somewhat less pressure toward the disclosure of unpleasant facts. On the other hand, it is doubtful that the Church, like Lady Macbeth, can ever remove the stain of its descent into crime. And even if it were able, one would still expect a decline in contributions, owing to the unrealistic and increasingly unpopular sexual policies pursued by the Pope, and the wretched climate created by his mini-inquisition. For it is not just in terms of money that the Church declines in the First World. The *Catholic Almanac* of 1986 reveals, for instance, that the total number of Catholics in the United States declined from 52,392,934 in 1984 to 52,286,000 in 1985, while the number of priests diminished as well, from 57,891 to 57,317 (the figures for 1975 were 48,701,835 and 58,909, respectively, indicating that Wojtyla has worsened matters considerably). In the same year the Catholic elementary school population declined by 58,009, while that of the high schools dropped by 7,412 and the universities by 10,895. In any case, there seems to be no answer to the ferocious fiscal crisis of the Vatican. It's going to be harder and harder to send the Pope wheeling around the world.

The deep schism within the Western church does not foreclose all progressive action on the part of the Vatican. There are instances when John Paul will make a progressive appointment, for example, by choosing Cardinal Daneels of Belgium as Relator of the Bishop's Synod in December, 1985. And there are other occasions when his own activist tendencies

converge with those of the bishops to the Left of him. After all, Vatican II established the principle of collegiality, whereby the bishops and the Pope share authority. As much as Wotyła would like to jettison this, he must honour it up to a point. When an issue arises for which a collegial approach is possible, we might expect the Pope to embrace it eagerly as a way, so to speak, of fulfilling his quota of co-operation with the bishops. This has occurred in two broad areas: economic policy and the critique of the nuclear arms race. In each of these, pastoral letters and other major initiatives of the Conferences of Canadian and US bishops, respectively, ran parallel with Wotyła's inclinations.\*\* In the former instance, the social democratic elements of *Laborem Exercens* converged with the bishops' own progressivism. As for the critique of the nuclear arms race, it is a ready-made issue for the Vatican which can be safely pursued at little cost. The nuclear crisis is to the nation-state what the crisis of modernity and sexuality is to the Vatican: an utterly intractable dilemma inherent in the very means through which power is projected. What the Catholic church has done through the repression of sexuality, the nuclear state has accomplished through technocratic domination.† Without state power, John Paul is limited in many ways (he cannot, for example, raise taxes or field an army). But he also does not have to take the blame for the spectre of nuclear holocaust; while he can readily pick up moral authority, and so widen the sphere of Vatican autonomy, by criticising those responsible for the nightmare. As with all of Wotyła's social critique, however, we should not expect this attack to go too far, i.e., to the point where the Church itself could come under scrutiny. Specifically, we need not look for any notion of imperialism in John Paul's pronouncements against the nuclear arms race, nor indeed, any overly pointed criticism of any society towards whom the Vatican holds dependent relations.

### *The Second World*

One would have been hard-pressed to predict, forty years ago, that of all the nations of the globe in which it holds influence, those under the aegis of Soviet-oriented socialism would pose the least problem for the Vatican in the 1980s. Yet such has been the case. Despite all the indubitable conflict and intense ideological antipathy each side holds for the other, it is apparent that a *modus vivendi* has been worked out between church and state in Eastern Europe. In the 1970s this was expressed as the *Ostpolitik* of Paul VI, following the opening created by his predecessor, John XXIII. The Vatican's pragmatism was matched by that of the state authorities, who realised first, that nothing they were doing was able to diminish the religious craving of the population, and second, that a judiciously worked out arrangement with the Church could reinforce domestic harmony and deflect to the heavenly spheres energy that might otherwise be turned against itself. In short, the same dynamic as Marx

applied to the bourgeois state was now incorporated by socialist powers: unable to deliver transcendence, they tolerated the institution which at least comes closer to doing so—provided only that said institution behaved itself and kept to its place. The fact that this place is more distant from the centre of secular power than under capitalism (and, needless to add, vastly more distant than under feudalism), in no way negates its functional value.

Catholicism's *Ostpolitik* of the 1970s has been well-summarised by Hansjakob Stehle:

- Keep clear lines of distinction between spheres occupied by Church and state. Harmonious separation is the goal, not any kind of Concordat such as was worked out between Mussolini and Pius XI in 1929. In other words, accept one's distance.
- Try for partial solutions, not universal agreements. Do not seek formal diplomatic solutions as a first step; on the other hand, once diplomatic negotiations begin, do not break them off.
- Do not seek prestige versus the state, nor engage in any overt form either of resistance or collaboration. The function of the Church is the peaceful ministry of souls. Freedom of worship, of confession, and of religious instruction—these are the goals to be sought. They can only be pursued in an atmosphere of world peace. Hence the Vatican must promote *détente* between East and West, in contrast to its earlier policy of crusading anti-communism. It is only in the context of relaxation between blocs that Soviet-type societies can permit religious freedom.
- Particular attention must be paid to the attitude of the Soviet Union. No matter how difficult this may be, Moscow must be made to feel that the Church does not disturb domestic **peace**.<sup>96</sup>

Karol Wojtyła must have played a role in formulating this policy, and at any rate, grasped it quite clearly. In 1977 he said,

**However, since according to Marx, 'freedom is insight into necessity', the Communists have enough insight to take into account the necessity that arises from religious realities, and concede the Church a *minimum* of freedom from which a clever pastor can build a *maximum*.**<sup>97</sup>

As if to underscore the continuity with Paul's policy, John Paul II moved early in his pontificate to appoint Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, the principal architect of Vatican *Ostpolitik*, as his Secretary of State—essentially, the leading position in the Curia. On the other hand, the peace won through Vatican *Ostpolitik* is only a relative condition. It presupposes a dynamic, and potentially unstable, equilibrium between antagonistic forces, and has to be continually negotiated. The maximum of freedom gained by a 'clever pastor' is also, therefore, a maximum opportunity for

destabilisation—especially when the Pope himself comes from a Soviet bloc nation undergoing severe crisis. Given John Paul's activism and the deep seated identity between church and nation in Polish tradition—it would have been surprising if he could have restrained himself within the boundaries set in the 1970s. And indeed, scarcely having settled himself into the throne of St. Peter, Pope John Paul II headed to his homeland for a tumultuous reception. One can only imagine the feelings of the Polish leadership at having the new pontiff address crowds of as many as three million on the inherent dignity of labour and related topics, meanwhile dropping subtle hints right and left of the timelessness of the Church, the transience of temporal orders, and the historical domination of Poland by Russia.<sup>98</sup> Thus on June 2, 1979, he spoke in the presence of Edward Gierek, congratulating him on rebuilding the Royal Castle 'as a symbol of Polish sovereignty', and denounced 'all forms of political, economic or cultural colonialism. . . .' As Peter Hebblethwaite comments, 'few Poles watching this on television did not think of the Soviet Union at this point. The ground for Solidarity was being prepared'.<sup>99</sup>

I cannot say with any exactitude just what John Paul's role in fostering Solidarity may have been, although it appears as if in the early years of his pontificate, he was highly supportive of the union. Yallop reports that no less than \$100 million was funnelled clandestinely to Solidarity through Marcinkus and Calvi.<sup>100</sup> This may be apocryphal; but it seems incontestable that the Pope, given his temperament and background, would have been excited about the possibilities afforded by a movement for the dignity of Polish labour carried on outside of the auspices of Communism—and even presaging the emancipation of Poland from under the yoke of Russia. However, we must here also bear in mind one of the ruling principles of Wojtyla's pontificate: support a liberation movement when it is well removed from state power; but back off from that support if it gets close to state power and is in a position to endanger the autonomy of the Church and its status quo within the existing power. Moreover, Solidarity was not exactly a movement which could be safely kept under the control of the Church any more than of the state. Undoubtedly, other strategic considerations, obscure to me, were involved as well. In any case, at some point Wojtyla began to cool towards the union.

Interestingly enough, the writing of *Laborem Exercens* provided one occasion of the shift. The extensive passages in that putatively emancipatory document about the force of organised labour, and its need to stay out of politics and class struggle may have had a number of referents, but one of them, and very likely the primary one, must have been Solidarity, which was being warned, in effect, not to go too far. As Peter Hebblethwaite, one of the best-informed of Vatican-watchers, has written, 'this interpretation is confirmed by the fact that within two days of the encyclical, the Polish bishops published a statement quoting [*Laborem*]

and urging Solidarity 'to return to the negotiating table'. There can be no doubt that John Paul's view of the purpose and role of unions is relevant to the Polish situation'.<sup>101</sup>

A realistic interpretation of John Paul's motivations *vis à vis* Solidarity would also hold that the Pope wished to eliminate the union as his main competitor amongst the oppositional forces in Poland. As David Ost has written, John Paul's goal has been 'to expropriate Solidarity's promise and energy, and attach them to the Church'.<sup>102</sup> Whatever, following the *putsch* of December, 1981 (one element in the preparation of which could be considered the restraint urged by the Polish bishops), the Vatican's relations with Solidarity could be summed up by the title of the Bessie Smith blues song, 'Nobody knows you when you're down and out'. Two years later, following the Pope's next visit to Poland, a story appeared in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, under the byline of its managing editor, Fr. Virgilio Levi, that John Paul had informed Lech Walesa that his political services were no longer necessary. This was denied angrily, and the offending journalist was sacked summarily, but the story refused to die—in part because Walesa partly confirmed it; and in part because it was obvious that a deal had been cut between the Vatican and the Jaruzelski regime. One of its terms was to allow the Church to funnel several billion dollars in agricultural aid to Poland's private farmers, (an unprecedented event in Soviet-type societies) while the concluding message of Wojtyła's visit was that accommodation should be sought by both sides. It is scarcely unreasonable to venture that another term would have been the mutual effort to rid Poland of its upstart union and the radicalism it brought in its wake.<sup>103</sup> The understanding between John Paul and Jaruzelski was a *de facto* Concordat of massively cynical proportions, breaking with both the limits of Paul VI's *Ostpolitik* and the democratic aspirations of the Polish people.

Two years later, the *New York Times* reported that on 'May Day, after thousands marched with forbidden Solidarity insignia in Warsaw and angry young men hurled stones at the police in Gdansk, Joseph Cardinal Glemp, the Primate of Poland, preached at a mass for workers at a church near a Warsaw tractor factory. Few people bothered to come.' The story, by Michael Kaufman, was headlined, 'The Church Tries to Keep Solidarity at a Distance' (5/5/85), and it indicates clearly the contours of church intervention in the pontificate of Karol Wojtyła. For while Glemp was carrying forth John Paul's version of *Ostpolitik*, Polish workers, and younger, radicalised priests were looking to the martyrdom of Father Jerzy Popieluszko, the activist priest slain by state security forces in 1984. Popieluszko, and others close to the base of the Church, had continued identifying themselves with the outlawed union, in defiance of both church and state. He was about to be transferred in response to police complaints shortly before his murder. Thus, though John Paul's

Concordat with the Polish regime may have weakened Solidarity, it also weakened the Church, by fostering internal splits and distancing it from the masses. Once these splits set in, they take on a dynamic of their own, threatening as they do, papally imposed 'unity'. In the meantime, the long-awaited agricultural aid project had yet to materialise as of mid-1985.

### *The Third World*

Here two rather distinct problems confront the Pope, according to whether the area in question has been established or not under Catholic control. In the latter instance, we have regions such as Africa, where the Church is rapidly increasing its influence under conditions that present many doctrinal challenges. And in the former case, we have places such as the Philippines and Latin America, where Catholicism has long been ensconced, has sunk deep roots into the life of the people and entwined itself densely around the secular powers. Here the problems are profoundly political, although they are played out in theological terms. This should not be taken to mean that the theological debate is merely a mask for a political one. Not in the least: it rather means that, in a sense which goes well beyond the scope of this article, the theological is political—and the political, theological. Surely Wojtyla and Ratzinger do not overlook this point, however much they may mystify it and twist it around.

But first, a brief consideration of Catholicism in Africa. Africa was never neglected by the Church—no place where humans dwell ever has been—yet it is striking to compare how miniscule the inroads made by Catholicism in Africa have been compared to, say, Latin America. The reasons for this do not concern us, but the end result should be noted. Africa does not simply emerge as a continent with little in the way of an established Roman Catholic church. Rather has African society evolved incongruently with the traditional needs of Catholicism. It is not ready, in short, to take the Church in the latter's traditional mode. And yet Catholicism—and Protestantism as well—is flourishing in Africa. Observers have predicted that at the present rate, Africa will have more Christians than any other continent by the year **2000**, with a growth rate expected to reach **10 million per year**.<sup>104</sup> In other words, if Catholicism is to go with the future, then the future is Africa. Yet there is one intractable difficulty in the way of the expansion of the African church: the priest shortage. Each year, according to Father Aylward Shorter, Africa gains **2 million Catholics** and loses **300 priests**.<sup>105</sup> The reason for this is simple: traditional African society is more than uninterested in celibacy; for it, a celibate man commits a sin against nature. (By the same token, the African church has little problem with the Church's ban on artificial contraception and abortion.) Thus scarcely any native men become priests. Until now, the slack has been taken up with European priests. But with the base in the West slipping and the demand in Africa **burgeon-**

ing, this rapidly becomes no solution at all. Something has to give. John Paul has been holding his nose during his trips to Africa and smiling gamely at the various syncretisms Africans bring to their Christianity. Yet the conclusion cannot be avoided that if he wants to build his church in the one place it seems to want to grow, he will have to give in to the greatest syncretism of all, and permit priests to marry—or to allow the ordination of women, not an issue in Africa but probably the only way out of the priest shortage in the First World. And these measures will transform Catholicism irrevocably, undoubtedly for the better.

It is among the more developed regions of Third World Catholicism, however, that John Paul has met his greatest challenge. One suspects that Wojtyla regards liberation theology—and in particular, its working out in places like Nicaragua—as his own special cross to bear. For liberation theology represents the logic of Catholicism's dynamic carried to the point of an autocritique against the Catholic hierarchy itself.<sup>106</sup> As we have already observed, Wojtyla cannot bypass it, because it expresses both the soul of the gospel and the spirit of Catholic renewal through its appeal to the young who will be the Church's future. There is no other way to build the Church except by moving with the emancipatory moment of the gospels. But emancipation seriously pursued turns against the unfreedom embodied in the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and finds its way in the end to the Pope himself. Far from promising a theocracy, liberation theology bids to deconstruct the Church back to its pre-Constantine origins. John Paul finds it necessary, then, to espouse the language of liberation theology—just as he found it necessary to help foster Solidarity, and then to try and co-opt its dynamism. But just as he can never bypass the image, so can he never endure the reality of emancipation.

We cannot take up here the intense doctrinal disputes over the theology of liberation, or many of the skirmishes in the never ending struggle between the Vatican and the periphery. Concretely, these depend on an intricate interplay of forces which develop on a separate basis in each nation, and wax or wane on a global scale according to the many interactions between episcopates and their relation to central Vatican politics. As the power of the Church on the periphery grows, so does it become more able to determine what goes on at the centre—but so, too, does it have to make repressive concessions to power. At this moment, for example, it appears as if the Pope has been forced to make concessions to the Brazilian church, the largest single national entity under Catholicism and a seedbed of radicalism. Father Boff—the priest who has most directly criticised the hierarchy—has been allowed to speak again, after a year of Vatican-imposed silence (during the course of which sales of his works and others having to do with liberation theology increased **manyfold**<sup>107</sup>). At the same time, Alois Cardinal Lorscheider, a strong supporter of Boff (and of the first John Paul) has cautioned that the rebellious friar 'should

now change his ecclesiological theses and emphasise that the church is a hierarchical community in which Jesus established who should orientate and guide in His name: the Pope, bishops and priests in collaboration with **bishops**.<sup>108</sup> Whether this statement is merely *pro forma* or will turn the tide of rebellion remains to be seen.

As this is being written, the Pope has released the long-awaited new version of the Vatican's position on liberation theology, to replace the infamous 'Ratzinger Report' of **1984**. Whereas that document was a crude and inept hatchet-job carried out by the inquisitorial **cardinal**,<sup>109</sup> this latest version appears to have been much more directly produced by the Pope himself. According to Peter Hebblethwaite, it should be given the status of an **encyclical**.<sup>110</sup> The work is remarkable for having very little to do directly with liberation theology as such, except for vaguely reiterating the same claims against it and not taking stock of the many criticisms of the Vatican position which have appeared since **1984**. On the other hand, it appears to be a systematic attempt on the part of John Paul to outflank the radical theologians by presenting yet another version of Catholic Social Doctrine which incorporates and transcends them. It is striking how far to the Left John Paul has had to move in trying to absorb the progressive motion of the Church and head off the dread association with marxism. The Instruction condones armed struggle 'as a last resort to put an end to an obvious and prolonged tyranny which is gravely damaging the fundamental rights of individuals and the common good' (Pinochet? Chun?); and recognises that the social doctrine of the Church 'remains constantly open to the new questions which continually arise; it requires the contribution of all charisms, experiences and skills'; i.e., the Pope has now committed himself to modifying the extreme centralisation of Catholic policy, and has knocked all but the last pins out from under the doctrine of infallibility.

At the same time, the document is redolent with mystification and non **sequitur**. Insofar as it hints at the liberation theologians it distorts their message so badly and is so abstract as to be useless as a critique. As Hebblethwaite **observes**, "it works on such a lofty level of generality that no one need feel hit or even grazed". In fact, the latest Instruction settles nothing except that Wojtyla is in an impossible position and that he would sooner die than accept the notion that class struggle is a cardinal feature of history and politics. Once more the Pope resorts to the enduring but occlusive core of Catholic Social Doctrine, that eternal bulwark against historical materialism: 'The special option for the poor, far from being a sign of particularism or sectarianism, manifests the universality of the Church's being and mission. This option excludes no one.' (In other words, the rich are poor, too. What kind of an option is that?) Or, 'the fight [of the "poor of Yahweh"] against injustice finds its deepest meaning and its effectiveness in their desire to be freed from the slavery of sin'. (That is,

it's all right to be poor, so long as one's heart is pure.)

However progressive the rhetoric, we can be certain of one thing: the Vatican will never tolerate any serious appropriation of marxism by liberation theology. A glance at Nicaragua will tell us why this is not simply a theoretical point.

The Sandinista era in Nicaragua will undoubtedly go down as a 'worst case' example in the Vatican archives. If anything were needed to give the lie to John Paul's pretensions of representing the cause of human dignity and emancipation, it is his behaviour toward Nicaragua, which has put him objectively in the camp of Ronald Reagan, even if the Vatican cannot bring itself to endorse openly US imperial policies. The reason for this is quite lucid: Nicaragua represents an instance in which a strategic alliance between radical Christians and a marxist-oriented liberation movement succeeded in breaking the historical union of imperialism and the Catholic church, and the logic of its domination. By achieving state power, the FSLN also achieved something entirely new: a Christian-Marxist association—not in the sense of any kind of formal structure, nor without internal tension, but nonetheless a viable and concrete alliance, in which both parties seem able and willing to live—and grow—with the other.

No one who has travelled in revolutionary Nicaragua with open eyes can avoid encountering this alliance—which began years before the triumph and now enters into both state and civil society.<sup>111</sup> It was with the formation in the sixties of a programme to train rural lay leadership—in other words, a consciously planned 'base community'—that the radical church took hold in the form of a programme the acronym of which is CEPA. CEPA was the brain-child of a group of well-to-do Nicaraguan Catholics, including among them, the current Cardinal, Obando y Bravo, who sought to turn some of the development money in which the country was then awash into good works for the Church. The Jesuits were given the task of administering CEPA, and they did so in such a way that the organisation soon turned to sponsoring radical rural change. At this point the hierarchy tried to stifle the project, and cut its ties with the Jesuits. CEPA responded by going underground and providing essential support for FSLN cadres in the countryside. Since 1979, it has functioned as an independent institute, largely staffed by radical clergy, and again training peasant leadership, this time for revolutionary roles. Many similar stories could be told, including that of the base community of Solentiname, known for its art and Ernesto Cardenal; and the radical church of Barrio Riguero, in Managua and under the direction of Uriel Molina, which served as a safe house and training ground for a number of the FSLN leadership.<sup>112</sup> That these traditions are alive—can be confirmed by a walk in Managua or a look at a newspaper. Especially to be recommended is the weekly, *Tayacan*, a marvellous expression of the popular revolutionary Church. Then of course there is the situation of priests holding high

governmental office, including the Foreign Ministry (Miguel D'Escoto) and the Ministries of Education (Fernando Cardenal) and Culture (Ernesto Cardenal). Never to my knowledge have there been so many individuals of intense spirituality who have held high office in a government, revolutionary or otherwise. When one considers that this is a pattern that could very well be repeated in at least the Philippines and El Salvador, and that it serves as a powerful example to secular and religious radicals alike, the desperate hostility of the Vatican becomes as comprehensible as that of Reagan.

The Vatican in Nicaragua is represented by Miguel Obando y Bravo, a man who compresses into one being many if not all of the repulsive features of the Catholic hierarchy. A dubious adversary of Somoza, a frank ally of the US ultraright (Obando is known for his ties to J. Peter Grace, Nazi-sympathiser, Sacred Knights of Malta official, and president of the corporation that bears his name<sup>H3</sup>)—the Cardinal is John Paul's (and Reagan's) perfect foil for spearheading the internal counterrevolution in Nicaragua—a process that began almost immediately upon the heels of the triumph of the FSLN.<sup>114</sup> That he is Cardinal at all is due to the Pope's largesse, perhaps as a favour to the Reagan administration for recognising the Vatican in 1983, but sufficiently accounted for by John Paul's own agenda to bring down the FSLN. Thanks in part to the ardent support of the US state security apparatus, who delight in portraying him as the 'democratic' advocate of religious liberty in the face of totalitarian repression, but due in the greatest measure to the deeprootedness of traditional Catholicism in Nicaraguan life, Obando y Bravo has managed to become the most visible internal opponent of the regime. Should the holocaust of American invasion ever come to pass, we may expect an instantaneous *Te Deum* from the Cardinal of Managua.

Meanwhile the Vatican keeps up an incessant drumfire of opposition to the Sandinistas in its official newspaper. The offending priests have been properly defrocked, after failing to yield to warnings that a vicar shouldn't engage in secular politics—surely, one of the more amusing utterances of the saviour of Poland. The high (or low) point of John Paul's vendetta against the Sandinistas was the pontiff's trip to Managua, in March, 1983. The government of this poor and intensely religious nation spared no expense to make John Paul's welcome a lavish one—and the Pope responded by lecturing the crowd, which comprised approximately one-quarter of the whole country, on the evils of dividing the Church. When a group of mothers whose sons had just been slaughtered in a Contra ambush asked for the papal blessing and got nothing save more admonishment, the crowd, which had been respectful, began chanting 'Queremos la paz. . .' whereupon John Paul flew into what can only be described as a rage (the event was recorded, and can be seen, among other places, in the film, *No Pasaran*). Needless to add, the bourgeois media made much of this

event, as they have of others allegedly demonstrating the godless and totalitarian nature of the Sandinistas.<sup>115</sup>

As observed, the case of Nicaragua is highly exemplary. Wherever in the Christianised Third World corrupt and repressive regimes run afoul of forces of popular liberation, we may expect the Church to play a critical role. This will be manifest through a tripartite division: from one side, the popular base church, embodying the spirit of radical transformation; from the other, John Paul, standing for 'unity', i.e., theocratic reaction with a social democratic veneer; and in the middle, an internally divided priesthood and episcopate, supportive of the base at its lower levels and of Wojtyla at its upper ones, and now criticising the authorities (this is happening, for example, in South Korea),<sup>116</sup> now counselling moderation. In general, we may expect the hierarchy to endorse the recent turn of the Reagan administration, away from the 'Jeane Kirkpatrick' doctrine of going all out for fascist-style dictatorships in the Third World, and toward a more co-optative model, in which the Duartes and Aquinos are to be advanced as alternatives to the Left and Right. This is precisely the course now adopted in the Philippines, a nation where the Church has played a role both in weakening Marcos (though the papal nuncio was frankly supportive of the dictator), and, FSLN-style, in the armed insurgency. The game-plan for now is to back Aquino in the hopes that this will bring disaffected clergy back into the fold.''' As is scarcely necessary to add, this policy, whether wielded by the Vatican or Washington, does nothing to alleviate the causes of the misery which engenders both liberation theology and socialist revolution. All the Pope's charisma and wiles, and the fantastic ideological apparatus at his command, cannot erase this association, which was expressed by Father Wilfredo Degillia of the Suay parish, Negros Island, in the Philippines:

Village people see no basic difference between Communists and Christians. Many NPA [the armed resistance] members continue to attend church when they can. They are not godless people; for they are sacrificing themselves for the people. I know two or three priests in Negros who have taken to the bush. As a priest, I condemn violence, but when there is no other solution and it is the people who decide to react, we have a duty to accept it.<sup>118</sup>

## NOTES

1. On the first round of voting, only 451 out of 1,000 bishops voted to ratify the infallibility of Pope Pius IX. A final vote, taken after the dissenters had gone home, went 533 to 2 in favour of the Pope. David Yallop, *In God's Name: An Investigation into the Murder of Pope John Paul I* (New York, 1984), p. 10.
2. For an account of how this affected the United States Catholic Church, see John Cooney, *The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman* (New York, 1984).
3. Yallop, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

4. Cooney, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
5. Paul Johnson, *Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Restoration* (New York, 1981), p. 170.
6. Yallop, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
7. Nino LoBello, *Vatican Empire* (New York, 1970). James Gollin, *Worldly Goods The Wealth and Power of the American Catholic Church, the Vatican and the Men Who Control the Money* (New York, 1971).
8. Saul Friedlander, *Pius XII and the Third Reich: A Documentation* (New York, 1966).
9. Cooney, *op. cit.*
10. Otto Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts* (Maryknoll, 1982).
11. Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Reality* (Austin, Texas, 1971), pp. 124-152. Paul Buhle and Thomas Fiehrer, 'Liberation Theology in Latin America: Dispensations Old and New', in *The Year Left* (London, 1985), pp. 203-237.
12. Peter Nichols, *The Pope's Divisions* (New York, 1981), p. 35.
13. *Newsweek*, 12/9/85.
14. John Derek Nolmes and Bernard W. Bickens, *A Short History of the Catholic Church* (New York, 1984), p. 292.
15. For an account of this development, see George Huntston Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II* (New York, 1981), pp. 95-103.
16. Joseph Amato, *Mounier and Maritain* (Alabama, 1975).
17. Wilfried Daim, *The Vatican and Eastern Europe* (New York, 1970). Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican: 1917-1979* (Athens, Ohio, 1981).
18. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
19. Roland Flamini, *Pope, Premier, President: The Cold War Summit That Never Was* (New York, 1980).
20. Carl Marzani, *The Promise of Eurocommunism* (Westport, 1980), p. 72. Togliatti's remarks, quoted by Marzani, are worth reproducing: 'We must understand that deep desire for a socialist society not only can exist in those of a religious faith, but may be stimulated by a tormented religious conscience confronting the stark problems of the modern world.' And: 'Concerning religious conscience, we can no longer accept the naive and erroneous belief that changes in social structures are sufficient to bring about social-change. This idea, derived from the enlightenment of the eighteenth century, and the materialism of the nineteenth, has not passed the test of history. Reality is more complex: the roots of change are deeper; transformations take place in different ways. It is becoming clear that we must have a profound mutual understanding—hence, collaboration.' These latter remarks were made twenty days before Pope John XXIII issued *Pacem in Terris*. They deserve as much praise as that magnificent document, but remain by and large buried.
21. Yallop, *op. cit.*, contains an extensive discussion of this issue, pp. 22-31. He points out also that during this very controversy, the Vatican profited from sales of an oral contraceptive manufactured by one of the corporations it owned.
22. Flamini, *op. cit.*
23. Cooney, *op. cit.*
24. Holmes and Bickens, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
25. Yallop, *op. cit.*, contains an extensive account, although his references cannot be checked. See also, Larry Gurwin, *The Calvi Affair* (London, 1983); and Luigi DiFonzo, *St. Peter's Banker* (New York, 1983).
26. In 1969, Pope Paul appointed Cardinal Vagnozzi as a kind of special accountant to report to him the state of Vatican finances. After a year of encountering the resistance of the various bureaucracies, Vagnozzi gave up, claiming that 'it

would take a combination of the KGB, the CIA, and Interpol to obtain just an inkling of how much and where the monies are'. Yallop, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

27. Nichols, *op. cit.*, discusses this problem in some detail. See especially, pages 118 and 120. A headline in the *National Catholic Reporter* during the recent Synod, (December 20, 1985) sums up the Vatican's predicament: 'Increased Third World representation contrasts with mounting Vatican debt. According to the author, Arthur Jones, 'The Vatican is drowning in red ink. . . the 1986 budget will be at least \$56 million in the red (30 per cent up over 1985).' The US contribution now comprises 40 per cent of the total. Jones concludes: 'no amount of internal chopping will stem the red ink. The answer is more funds from the Western churches, in reality either from Germany or North America'. This is exactly what the Pope's reactionary policies forecloses.
28. Yallop, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
29. Much of this is drawn from Yallop, *op. cit.*, a work of many problems, to say the least. Some things in *In God's Name* are just silly, *viz.*, the smearing of Marcinkus with the fact that he grew up in the Chicago of Al Capone; and its most sensitive points cannot be validated, since Yallop claims that he has to protect the anonymity of his sources lest they pay with their lives for their candour. On the other hand, the preface acknowledges interviews with no less than 78 insiders, including three cardinals and many people in the late Pope's entourage—and claims there are many others whose names cannot even be mentioned for fear of retribution. That several of the principals of *In God's Name* are capable of murder to silence investigation is not only plausible—it has been proven in the case of Sindona, who himself died mysteriously in an Italian prison where he had been sentenced to life for contracting the killing of one of his investigators. Once this is recognised, then Yallop's method becomes reasonable, as does his main hypothesis as well. *In God's Name* may be unfalsifiable, but after reading it, it would seem that the burden of proof would be on those who deny that John Paul I was murdered to stave off his efforts to clean up the Vatican.
30. *New York Times*, April 10, 1984. The Pope does not give up. In the *National Catholic Reporter* of January 24, 1986, we learn that the progressive 'Cardinal Basil Hume, archbishop of Westminster, asked whether it was true that Archbishop Paul Casimir Marcinkus was coming to London as pro-nuncio, is said to have replied: 'Yes, it is true, given the choice between an Opus Dei Spaniard and Marcinkus, I chose Marcinkus.' See note 61.
31. Martin A. Lee and Kevin Coogan, 'Papal Shooting Probe Moves Into US', *National Catholic Reporter*, January 24, 1986, pp. 7-10.
32. Otto Maduro, *op. cit.*; Pierre Bourdieu, 'Genèse et structure du champ religieux', *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 12 (1971), pp. 295-334.
33. Andrew Greeley, *The Making of the Popes—1978* (Kansas City, 1980); Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Williams, *op. cit.*, Mieczyslaw Malinski, *Pope John Paul II: The Life of Karol Wojtyła* (Garden City, 1982). The latter is by a boyhood friend; Williams is dense, ponderous but useful; Johnson, sober and respectful; Greeley, a breathless account of the tumultuous election. There are many others, none worth bothering with, so far as I can tell, unless one enjoys hagiography.
34. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-49. Daim, *op. cit.*
35. Williams, p. 234.
36. An interesting contrast is with John XXIII. The latter's *Journal of a Soul* (New York, 1965) presents us with a real opening onto Roncalli's inner life. On the other hand, Wojtyła, for all his omnipresence, is always wearing a mask. This does not mean that an inquiry into the deep subjectivity of Pope John XXIII would not be a doubtful undertaking. But at least it is conceivable.

37. Williams, p. 322.
38. Cathy Sunshine, 'A radicalized church undermined Duvalier's state', *Guardian* (New York), March 5, 1986.
39. Williams, p. 161.
40. Maduro, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
41. *New York Times*, March 20, 1986.
42. Karol Wojtyla, *A Sign of Contradiction* (London/New York, 1979), p. 91. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 245.
43. Peter Hebblethwaite, 'The Popes and Politics: Shifting Patterns in "Catholic Social Doctrine"', in Mary Douglas and Steven M. Tipton (eds.), *Religion and America* (Boston, 1983), p. 203.
44. Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
45. John Paul II, *Puebla: A Pilgrimage of Faith* (St. Paul Editions, 1979), p. 111.
46. Otto Maduro, personal communication. See also, Jose Casanova, 'Conversation with Otto Maduro', *Telos*, #58, Winter 1983-4, pp. 185-195.
47. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger with Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report* (San Francisco, 1985). E.J. Dionne Jr., 'The Pope's Guardian of Orthodoxy', *The New York Times Magazine*, November 24, 1985, p. 41.
48. Hans Kiing, *Infallible? An Inquiry* (Garden City, 1983), is the offending text. See also, 'Kiing blasts pontificate after six years of silence', *National Catholic Reporter*, October 11, 1985, p. 1.
49. Leonardo Boff, *Church, Charism and Power* (New York, 1985). Peter Hebblethwaite, 'Gag on Boff exemplifies "abuse of power"', *National Catholic Reporter*, May 17, 1985. See also, the *New York Times* for May 8, 1985, in which Boff's silencing is announced. He states: 'I declare I am not a Marxist. As a Christian and a Franciscan, I am in favor of liberties, of rights, or religion and of the noble struggle for justice, toward a new society.'
50. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, 1973). The Vatican also tried to suppress Fr. Jon Sobrino, of El Salvador. Marlise Simons, 'Vatican reported to have sought rebukes for 2 other Latin clerics', *New York Times*, September 11, 1984.
51. *National Catholic Reporter*, March 21, 1986. Much of the issue is devoted to the controversy, which strikes at the heart of liberal Catholicism in the United States.
52. Teofilo Cabestrero, *Ministers of God, Ministers of the People* (Maryknoll, 1983). Gordon Mott, 'The church cuts off a Sandinista priest', *New York Times*, Week in Review, December 16, 1984. Stephen Kinzer, 'Sandinista priests pressed to resign', *New York Times*, January 28, 1985.
53. 'Pro-Sandinista Franciscan may be ousted', *National Catholic Reporter*, January 31, 1986.
54. Beth Maschinot, 'Vatican backlash hits nuns' independence on abortion', *In These Times*, January 8-15, 1985. The ad, which appeared in the *New York Times* of October 8, 1984 had the inflammatory title, 'A diversity of opinions regarding abortion exists among committed Catholics', and went so far as to say that 'a large number of Catholic theologians hold that even direct abortion, though tragic, can sometimes be a moral choice'. For this, the nuns were threatened with expulsion. As of this writing, the controversy drags on, stale-mated.
55. Susan Hansen, 'R.I. pro-choice Catholic kicked out of church for breaking law', *National Catholic Reporter*, January 31, 1986, p. 1.
56. Peter Hebblethwaite, 'Dutch, pope butt heads over church', *National Catholic Reporter*, May 24, 1985. For the reaction, see E.J. Dionne Jr., 'Dutch Catholics criticize the pope', *New York Times*, May 13, 1985; and 'Church teachings on

sex won't change, pope tells Dutch youth', *New York Times*, May 15, 1985. Here, 'in a speech before one of the smallest crowds ever seen on a papal trip', the pontiff informed the youth that Vatican teachings on 'marital love, abortion, sexual relations before marriage or homosexual relations remain the standard for the church for all time'.

57. *Newsweek*, November 11, 1985, p. 82.
58. *New York Times*, March 28, 1986.
59. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-182.
60. Fred Landis, 'Opus Dei: secret order view for power', *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, #18, Winter 1983, pp. 11-15. See also, Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-185; Marzani, *op. cit.*, p. 305; Yallop, *op. cit.*, pp. 265-267. Because it is a secret transnational entity (with resemblances to the P-2 Lodge), Opus Dei is a threat to the state, especially that of Italy, and is continually under investigation, to the discomfiture of the Vatican. It also remains embattled within the Catholic bureaucracy. In a recent account, Peter Hebblethwaite writes: 'Opus Dei is jumpy. It is doing well in this pontificate, but is not getting all it wants. It has the top posts in the Vatican Press Office and the Catholic University of Milan. It has set up its theology faculty in Rome against the advise of all rectors of existing pontifical universities. Yet two things are lacking. Monsignor Jose Maria Escriva de Balaguer, marquess of Peralta, has not yet been beatified, despite many claims of miracles. And Father Alvarez del Portillo, his successor, has not been ordained bishop.' *National Catholic Reporter*, March 28, 1986.
61. Françoise Hervet, 'Knights of Malta examined', *Covert Action Information Bulletin* #25, Winter 1986, pp. 27-28.
62. The Bible of this movement, *T.F.P.: Half a Century of Epic Anticommunism*, may be obtained from the Foundation for a Christian Civilization, Inc., Box 249, Mount Kisco, New York 10549.
63. Hervet, *op. cit.*
64. Ari Goldman, 'Priests gather to ponder their dwindling ranks', *New York Times*, March 8, 1985.
65. Marlise Simons, 'Activism said to swell ranks of Latin Catholic priesthood', *New York Times*, December 27, 1984. Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
66. Gregory Baum, *The Priority of Labor* (New York, 1982), p. 3.
67. Carl Marzani, 'The Vatican as a Left Ally?' *Monthly Review*, Vol. 34 #3, July/August, 1982, pp. 1-42. Quotes on p. 39 and p. 40. Marzani's revised position appears in a debate with Baum Gregory Baum, 'Doctrine sociale de l'Eglise; corporatisme ou socialisme?' *Etudes D'Economie Politique*, #11, Travail et Societe, Septembre, 1984, (Montreal), pp. 13-30; and Carl Marzani, 'La 'troisieme voie' du Vatican ou l'obscuratisme de *Laborem Exercens* 7. *ibid.*, pp. 30-56.
68. Arthur F. McGovern, 'Pope John Paul III on "Human Work"', *Telos*, #58, Winter 1983-84, pp. 215-218.
69. John Hellman, 'John Paul II', *Telos*, #58. Winter 1983-84, pp. 210-214.
70. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-113.
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 147-150.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
73. Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht/Boston/London, 1979). Williams summarises the content of this difficult text on pp. 200-218.
74. Emmanuel Mounier, *A Personalist Manifesto* (London, 1938). See also, Amato, *op. cit.*
75. Russell Jacoby, *Dialectic of Defeat* (Cambridge, 1981).
76. Williams, p. 132.
77. Quoted in Williams, p. 172.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
79. Baum, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
80. Williams, p. 287.
81. For additional comments on *Laborem*, and on John Paul's social doctrine in general, see, François Houtart, 'Religion and anticommunism: the case of the Catholic church', *Socialist Register*, 1984 (London: Merlin Press, 1984), pp. 349-363.
82. Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, p. 202.
83. Williams, p. 287.
84. Wojtyla, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
85. Williams, p. 295.
86. Nichols, *op. cit.*, p. 254.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 254.
88. Wojtyla, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
89. The *National Catholic Reporter* of January 24, 1986 has an excellent symposium on the Synod, with contributions by Kenneth Briggs, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Germain and Jeannette Grisez, Joan Chittister, Robert Drinan and Peter Hebblethwaite.
90. 'Pope pays historical visit to synagogue', *National Catholic Reporter*, April 18, 1986. In 1555, the Vatican enclosed Rome's Jewish quarter and locked it at night. The walls only came down with the loss of papal lands in 1870. John Paul's visit closes a chapter. Recognition of Israel, however, was not on the agenda.
91. See the symposium in *Sojourners*, April, 1985, pp. 12-22. There is probably no other issues which so delegitimizes the church in the industrial nations.
92. This is not to give the impression that the contemporary state does not succeed in covering up as much as the Vatican—including assassinations such as the murder of John F. Kennedy. Indeed, the state gets away with far worse crimes than the Church. But it has to contend with some modicum of an internal mechanism of popular scrutiny, i.e., it has to rationalise its criminality to a much greater degree.
93. Peter Hebblethwaite, 'Vatican banks on naive defense', *National Catholic Reporter*, January 24, 1986.
94. The Canadian bishops are somewhat to the left of the US bishops. Where the latter emphasise progressive public policy, the former go beyond this to endorse the empowerment of the underclasses—i.e., the 'preferential option for the poor', of the yet-more-radical Latin American bishops. Gregory Baum, 'A Canadian perspective on the US Pastoral', *Christianity & Crisis*, January 21, 1985, p. 517. William Tabb, 'The shoulds and the excluded whys: the US Catholic bishops look at the economy', in William Tabb (ed.), *Churches in Struggle* (New York, 1986), pp. 278-290. Though the US bishops are fairly tame compared to other episcopates, they are to the left of the population—perhaps too far. See, 'In Catholic Pawtucket, few back bishop's letter on economy', *New York Times*, December 30, 1984. A typical quote (which must be seen in light of the proclivities of the *Times*) runs: 'Look, no one likes poverty. . . but its been with us since Day One and its going to be with us a long time. They shouldn't be telling us what to do with our pay.'
95. Joel Kovel, *Against the State of Nuclear Terror* (Boston, 1984).
96. Stehle, *op. cit.*, note 17, p. 390.
97. *Ibid.*
98. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 312-317, describes this trip in some detail.
99. Hebblethwaite, 'The popes and politics. . .', *op. cit.*, p. 199.
100. Yallop, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

101. Hebblethwaite, 'The popes and politics. . .', p. 202.
102. David Ost, 'Poland: Church shoves Solidarity into the past', *In These Times*, August 10-23, 1983.
103. Henry Kamm, 'Vatican summit on Poland: hinting at new directions', *New York Times*, Week in Review, July 3, 1983. 'Has Walesa been dumped?' *Newsweek*, July 11, 1983.
104. Peter Walshe, 'There are lessons to learn from African Christianity', *National Catholic Reporter*, February 7, 1986.
105. Steve Askin, 'Celibacy prime block to African vocations', *National Catholic Reporter*, February 7, 1986.
106. Leonardo Boff, in *Church, Charism and Power, op. cit.*, did just that; and it was his incorporation of arguments such as that of Otto Maduro, *op. cit.*, which brought the Vatican down upon him. See also, Joel Kovel, 'The Vatican strikes back', in Tabb (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 172-184; and, 'Visions of the Kingdom', *NACLA Report on the Americas*, September-October, 1985.
107. Otto Maduro, personal communication.
108. *New York Times*, April 1, 1986.
109. Kovel, 'The Vatican strikes back'.
110. Peter Hebblethwaite, 'Spiritual points in liberation themes basic to Rome document', *National Catholic Reporter*, April 18, 1986.
111. Phillip Berryman, *The Religious Roots of Rebellion: Christians in Central American Revolutions* (Maryknoll, 1984).
112. Margaret Randall, *Christians in the Nicaraguan Revolution* (Vancouver, 1983).
113. François Hervert, 'J. Peter Grace and Project Paperclip', *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, #25, Winter 1986, p. 28. See also, Ellen Ray and Bill Schaap, 'Archbishop Obando y Bravo and the Institute on Religion and Democracy', *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, #18, Winter 1983, p. 6.
114. 'On July 31, 1979, a week and a half after the installation of a new Junta, the Nicaraguan Bishops Conference issued a document expressing "anguishes and fears in this transition period". [Among its points]: "We realise there are serious confusions both in the ideological aspects and in the organisation of new state structures".' Berryman, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
115. For a detailed account of the episode, see, François Houtart, 'Y Dios es mas importante que el obispo', *La revista del SUR*, n.d. (1983), pp. 31-38.
116. Clyde Haberman, 'Korean cardinal backs opposition', *New York Times*, March 10, 1986.
117. Lin Neumann, 'Church, state alliance against far left likely in Philippines', *National Catholic Reporter*, March 14, 1986.
118. Philippe Pons, ' "Christian-Communists" not ready to lay down their arms', *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, March 30, 1986.