

*EIR's* findings are that in the year 1990 Brazil will actually require 558,000 gigawatt-hours of electrical energy—fully two-thirds more than the 335,000 gigawatt-hours proposed in the 1978 NEB plan. Comparing this required output to potential hydroelectric sources, it becomes evident that, somewhere in the 1990-93 period, Brazil will have nearly exhausted this source of energy growth, and that all new expansion will have to come from nuclear energy plants. Even taking into consideration the “elbow room” that can be created by using natural gas and other complementary energy sources, this means that approximately five one-gigawatt nuclear plants will have to be coming on stream in 1990, rising to about 10 plants per annum by the mid-1990s. Considering that actual plant construction time can in all likelihood be reduced to six years (today’s delays are due in large measure to wasteful harassment by “environmentalist” forces), it is clear that *Brazil has no choice but to immediately embark on a major nuclear energy development program*, of far more ambitious proportions than the original West German deal for eight plants by 1990. Brazil in fact needs two nuclear starts *this year*, three in 1983, and so on, and needs to have well over 100 functional nuclear plants in existence by the year 2000.

This is not a luxury or an option: it is a necessity of development. Without it, Brazil simply will not be able to grow, nor its population pull itself out of the misery of underdevelopment that it now endures.

It is from this standpoint that we recommend the reader evaluate the thinking of the two individuals interviewed below by *EIR*, Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns, and Dr. José Goldemberg (a nuclear physicist who doubles as Delfim Netto’s energy adviser). They are two of the most vocal opponents of Brazil’s nuclear development.

### Brazil’s potential energy growth

Year	Gross National Product (billions of 1980 \$)		Electrical energy (thousands gigawatt hours)	
	NEB	EIR	NEB	EIR
1980 . . . .	238	238	138	138
1981 . . . .	254	261	155	156
1982 . . . .	272	287	172	176
1983 . . . .	291	316	187	201
1984 . . . .	311	348	203	229
1985 . . . .	333	383	221	263
1986 . . . .	356	421	241	303
1987 . . . .	381	463	263	351
1988 . . . .	408	509	287	408
1989 . . . .	437	560	310	477
1990 . . . .	467	616	335	558

**Notes:**  
**NEB** is the National Energy Balance plan, prepared by the Brazilian Ministry of Mines and Energy in 1978.  
**EIR** is the *EIR's* draft energy plan for Brazil, described in text.  
**Electrical energy** is thousands of gigawatt hours (millions of kilowatt hours) consumed during the year.

## Interview: Msgr. Paulo Evaristo Arns

# Cardinal of São Paulo: the earth are limited,

*EIR Ibero-American Editor Dennis Small had the opportunity to talk recently with one of that continent’s leading advocates of the radical, anti-development “Theology of Liberation” current in the Catholic Church, the Cardinal of São Paulo, Brazil, Msgr. Paulo Evaristo Arns.*

*Arns has earned a name for himself organizing Brazil’s impoverished rural and urban masses into what are known as Ecclesiastic Base Communities—associations of parishioners organized as a battering ram against the attempts to modernize Brazil through the application of advanced technology to industrial development. Arns is also a godfather to the dissident labor movement in the country, and a number of sources told EIR that Arns has a similar connection to elements behind the pro-terrorist and pro-homosexual movements in Brazil, insofar as they are “social expressions” of anti-capitalist sentiment.*

*As he made clear in his April 28, 1982 conversation with EIR in his offices in Sao Paulo, Arns retains a special hostility toward Brazil’s nuclear-energy program. In his answers to our questions, the radical Cardinal also: 1) opposed accelerated industrial development; 2) attacked modern technology; 3) called for the preservation of backward cultures; 4) defended Malthusian zero-growth policies; and (5) endorsed population control, arguing that “human reproduction is not inevitable.”*

*Cardinal Arns also gave his unqualified backing to the fascist British theory that “small is beautiful,” which calls for eliminating all traces of modern society and returning to a “simpler” medieval world. Arns in fact told EIR that he thought that large segments of today’s urban society in Brazil should be encouraged to “return to the countryside;” 4*

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## 'The resources of we shouldn't grow'

*million of São Paulo's 11 million residents, he claimed, would return to the land "if offered the opportunity."*

**Small:** How do you see the role of the Church in terms of the necessity for accelerated economic development to meet the basic needs of humanity?

**Arns:** Meeting the basic needs of humanity is one of the great challenges in today's world, where the misery of the vast masses of people coexists with concentrated wealth in the rich countries or in the privileged social layers of the poor countries. The Catholic Church cannot avoid involving itself in this problem, nor in any other situation in which justice and oppression do violence to the dignity of the human being. It cannot rest until everyone is doing everything possible to enable fraternity to reign in the world.

But I am not so sure that the path for solving these problems is one of accelerated industrial development, as your question suggests. It is true that it is through industrial development that one achieves the most rapid accumulation of capital necessary for large-scale production of material goods sorely needed by humanity. But it is also through the logic of industrial development—or at least capitalist industrial development—that certain perverted economic mechanisms are reinforced, such as the concentration of wealth and rampant consumerism.

Nor do I think it will be possible, even with a rapid rate of industrial development, to recover lost ground. This is especially so because in the capitalist world in which we live, industrialization is not oriented toward tending to the needs of the most poor. To be economically viable, capitalism depends on markets capable of absorbing its production, and

it will be more profitable the more it directs itself to the needs of those who have wealth, or in other words, to those whose basic needs have long since been attended to.

It should not be necessary for us to recall another problem that accompanies industrialization in today's world: the tendency toward the formation of increasingly gigantic units of production, in which the human being is seen as an extremely small part—oppressed—in a productive system whose ends are completely beyond his reach and comprehension. There is still another problem: the tendency toward the implacable destruction of all forms of life and culture of pre-industrialized societies, which accompanies the arrival and domination of these societies by modern technology from the advanced countries.

I believe that the Church has much to do in confronting all the anomalies of industrial development. We in Brazil are happily discovering that the power of the people can be re-awakened to reconstitute from the bottom up—starting from the small and modest, in a communal way—the system of providing for the basic needs of the vast, mistreated majorities. I am sure that we could solve many more problems if we believed more strongly in this power, instead of limiting ourselves solely to retreading the paths followed by the presently developed countries. And I believe that the Catholic Church should stimulate as much thought and reflection as possible so that development can become a path of fraternity, and not just one of individualistically satisfying material needs.

**Small:** Would you agree that the policy of zero growth promoted by the Club of Rome, as well as the resulting economic depression and birth control, are fundamentally anti-Christian?

**Arns:** The physical space of the earth and its resources, fertile soil, potable water, and so forth, are limited, whereas the reproductive capacity of the human species is inexhaustible and growing. It is evident, therefore, that there will come a day when humanity will have to grow at a zero rate. This simple argument alone should suffice to conclude that zero growth is not in itself anti-Christian. Human reproduction is not inevitable, but is subject to reason. It is in this sense that today one can speak of responsible parenthood, a responsibility that is not limited to the couple but is extended to society as a whole.

Responsible parenthood is not limited only to the number of children, but also includes the objective reasons by which one wishes to have a reduced number of children, plus the methods to be used to reach this objective. The position of the Catholic Church is well known in this area, as well as the reasoning behind this position.

**Small:** In your view, what are the priorities for effectively fighting the misery of the underdeveloped nations?

**Arns:** My answer to the previous questions covers a little of the answer I would give to this one. The great priority, in my view, is the reawakening of the power of the people, organized on a community basis, to confront from the bottom up

in the most independent manner possible the misery in which they live. The people must also be made aware of their rights proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man, so that they can demand of those who direct the economy and society an acceptable use of the resources they control, an acceptable choice of priorities, so that the rights of all are respected.

In other words, I believe that the great priority for combating misery is to trust in the capacity and the dignity of the poor. To recognize the poor as human beings, to respect them, to give them means to grow and fully assume their social responsibilities is already a start toward conquering misery. A human being who stands upright is one who can take his destiny into his own hands, as well as the destiny of all those who share his fate. And there is nothing more effective to overcome misery than recognizing the vital necessity of overcoming it.

**Small:** Do you believe that nuclear energy can and should be used to accelerate human progress?

**Arns:** What is our concept of progress? Growing material opulence for everyone, or increasing fraternity among all human beings? It is certain that growing material opulence will demand increasing energy, and that nuclear energy is an incredible advance in man's knowledge, giving him an almost infinite capacity for the production of energy. But there are many problems along this road: can it be that we already possess all the knowledge necessary so that the byproducts of nuclear energy can be effectively controlled, so that they do not create insoluble problems for future generations? Is the present solution to the question of nuclear waste really a responsible solution?

[Are there not] other possibilities for energy generation—even cheaper than atomic energy—whose use would give us time to solve the problems and risks that still accompany nuclear energy? In Brazil, many questions are raised around the way in which the generation of nuclear energy is being installed in our country. Are these questions merely the result of questionable government policy, or do they stem from insufficient scientific advance in the nuclear field? By the same token, we might ask ourselves if the generation of nuclear energy has not itself become a prisoner of the laws of the profitability of capital, beyond the control of man?

If we look at human progress in terms of increasing fraternity, how would we situate the question of nuclear energy?

**Small:** Could the Catholic Church, through its educational network, contribute toward educating youth on the role of economic development as the means for improving the quality of life of all peoples?

**Arns:** Undoubtedly, as long as one does not limit consideration of the educational network to the colleges, schools, and so forth that depend directly on the Church. The Church is a whole, and therefore the social encyclicals, the pronouncements of the bishops' conferences, the evangelical work, and

the catechism as a whole should all be included in the Church's educational network.

That economic development plays a significant part in improving the quality of life, there is not the slightest doubt. But that the quality of life depends exclusively on economic development does not cohere with the thinking of the Church nor of Christianity. Other factors, such as fraternity and justice, play an indispensable role. What is most lacking today are not material resources for the well-being of peoples, but justice and fraternity.

**Small:** How would you characterize the role of the "mission" in the Catholic Church today?

**Arns:** Traditionally, the "missionary" goes wherever the Gospel has yet to be preached. But converts are not made in a day, or in a single moment. It is a continuous process of progressive discoveries, of increasing engagement, of advances and retreats lived by all those to whom Christ is announced—and that includes the missionary himself. From this point of view, the Church is permanently on a "mission," outside and within itself.

I once again speak of fraternity: how far are we in today's world, in Christian and non-Christian nations, from real fraternity among men? There is that much further to go, there is that much "missionary" responsibility for the Church. And I once again speak of the poor: often we think that the objective of the mission is the land of the poor, when it is among the poor that there more naturally occurs solidarity in the face of so many vital common problems.

The "community" is built more easily among the poor than among the rich. On the other hand, it is possible that in the world of the wealthy—and here I would include the majority of the populations of the developed countries—there is much terrain for missions. Here missionary activity must have another dimension: to help those who have already seen and discovered Christ to find answers to the challenges presented to them by the Gospel in a world so violently unjust and inhuman.

**Small:** What contribution have the Catholic Church's Base Communities made in improving living standards?

**Arns:** The Ecclesiastical Base Communities are of an eminently religious character and seek the fulfillment of the Christian lives of their members. Since Christianity encompasses the totality of the life of the human individual, the Ecclesiastical Base Community, like the Church itself, tends to transform the life of the entire community in accordance with the light of Gospel, promoting justice, solidarity, and fraternity. Day-to-day problems are absorbed and assumed by the community.

In this sense, the Ecclesiastical Base Communities are confronting—and resolving in a satisfactory manner—serious problems, such as public-health assistance, land, housing, and transportation. They are creating a consciousness of a united, fraternal, and just people.