

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

A 20-year fight for development

Helga Zepp-LaRouche addresses the Bonn press corps on the heritage of Populorum Progressio and the IDB.

At a press conference here April 28, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, chairman of the Patriots for Germany and wife of U.S. presidential contender Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., declared that if the Western industrial countries had adopted the 1967 papal encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, or LaRouche's 1975 proposal for an International Development Bank, the current economic and banking crisis could have been avoided.

She spoke in the same room, at the Tulpenfeld Restaurant in Bonn, in which her husband, almost exactly 12 years ago, had presented his plan for an International Development Bank, to an audience of about 40 representatives of the press and political institutions. The IDB would have provided credits for priority projects to industrialize the Third World.

The occasion of the press conference was the release of *EIR's* new German-language report, on the history of the past 20 years of fight for Third World development, with special reference to Pope Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*.

The press conference, which lasted for two-and-a-half hours, occurred at an important juncture in world history. It was held two days before the arrival of Pope John Paul II for a five-day tour of Germany; it also took place just a few days after the illegal action of the U.S. Department of Justice against the offices of several publications associated with LaRouche.

Mrs. LaRouche reported on the past 20 years of struggle for the right

of the Third World to industrial and political development. The Vatican's contributions to this struggle included Pope Paul VI's encyclical of 1967, *Populorum Progressio*, and Pope John Paul II's encyclical of 1981, *Laborem Exercens*. She also described the history of LaRouche's political contributions to the development debate, from the IDB to the *Operation Juárez* document of 1982, which charted a strategy for Ibero-American integration and a solution to the debt crisis.

"You were told already 12 years ago about the solution to the crisis," she said. "If the LaRouche proposals had been listened to then, the world would not face a devastating banking crash now."

She called on the audience to imagine what the world would look like, if *Populorum Progressio* had been translated into political action immediately after its publication in 1967: "With utmost certainty, most of the problems the world is facing now, could have been avoided, already years ago."

She emphasized that without Pope John Paul II's recent travels in Ibero-America, the moral resistance of that continent's governments, like Alan García's Peru, against the brutal regime of the creditors, would likely not have emerged.

"It is either a world monetary collapse, or the New World Economic Order, that we will have," stated Helga Zepp-LaRouche. "Reaganomics" has collapsed, and unless the power of the United States economy is restored

along the lines of LaRouche's proposals, there is little hope for the Western hemisphere to escape the new crash.

Mrs. LaRouche answered questions, coming mainly from representatives of the Catholic Church, on details of the LaRouche proposals. (The reporters from UPI and AP left, when she began to discuss the idea of development.) The audience was quite impressed, and partly shocked, to learn that by decisive action, the world crisis could be solved within 24 hours. A world conference of heads of state would cancel the debt of the poorest nations, turn the other Third World debts from short-term, high-interest loans into loans with low interest over a longer term. New credits would be issued for productive purposes, for infrastructure-building and technological innovation. The 50 million people currently unemployed in the OECD countries could be re-employed rapidly.

Responding to questions on military budgets in the Third World, Helga Zepp-LaRouche referred to Peruvian President García's policy as "the best approximation to what *Populorum Progressio* and my husband's proposals mean." She reported on García's move to scrap unnecessary arms purchases, dating from the period of the military junta, in favor of purchasing helicopters that can be used against the dope mafia and the terrorists of the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) group.

Mrs. LaRouche also proposed that the military aircraft capacities of the industrial nations could be employed for a peaceful purpose, namely transporting components for infrastructure-building into Third World countries. "If army engineers can build a pontoon bridge over a river in less than 24 hours, why can't they do the same anyplace else in the Third World?"