

fended against population policies inspired by the same philosophies and plans which pushed our Fatherland into its current economic difficulties, endangering the sovereign independence which we are fully entitled to as our right to freedom of personal and collective conscience.

What makes men and peoples great, are the moral and ethical values that dignify them. The philosophies of population policies that subtly have been imposed upon us, destroy those values and are a serious matter of conscience for the Church on our continent and especially for us in Peru.

The Church, those of us entrusted by the Lord to be pastors in this portion of His Kingdom, is conscious of the hard reality in which many of our people's families live. The

economic crisis expresses itself in situations of extreme poverty, misery, malnutrition, disease, and death, above all in the least favored sectors. We are also conscious of the anguish that it means for so many couples, to have more children than they can care for and educate properly. But we cannot be silent when the substantial worth of the person, through matrimony or the family, is at stake. Progress cannot come from sacrificing the spiritual dimension of the human being. We will not have advanced at all by *having* more, if we *are* less as persons. A society cannot measure itself in terms of gross national product, nor in material well-being. It is necessary to maintain its human and spiritual values. . . .

Interview: Monsignor Augusto Vargas Alzamora

'Peru's greatest wealth is its people'

Monsignor Vargas is a bishop and secretary general of the Peruvian Bishops' Conference.

EIR: Can you comment on the rather suspicious "charitable" attitude of the United Nations, with the announcement of the executive director of the fund for population activities, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, of a \$2.2 million donation to Peru, to help the population policy?

Monsignor Vargas: It honestly seems to me that this attitude is hardly charitable, because Peru is in much greater need of help to make its impoverished population more productive. To try to reduce the number of Peruvians born in the future, is to impoverish them further, because Peru's greatest wealth is its people. It seems to me that the United Nations has too malthusian a view of Peru and of the world. Unfortunately, the U.N. has the experience India lived through, and we all know how they operated there. We would not want their Indian experience to be repeated here in Peru.

EIR: In the joint press conference given here in Lima recently by Mrs. Sadik and Peru's health minister, Dr. David Tejada, the latter argued for his ministry's decision to set up a birth-control program, pointing out that it is time for Peruvians to banish three myths: It is a myth, Tejada said, that we are a rich country; it is a myth that we are an underpopulated country; and it is also a myth, he added, that "every child is born with his bread under his arm." Do you believe, Monsignor, that Minister Tejada's observations reveal a racist view

of Peruvians, because he undervalues us as creative human beings, by saying that we are poor and always will be, and that the future holds nothing but misery for us?

Monsignor Vargas: I think that there is certainly a prejudice there against our race, because calling those three statements a myth dismisses popular wisdom too hastily. Obviously, when our popular wisdom speaks of every child arriving with his bread under his arm, it means a child conceived in a home where there is love, which has—since the great majority of Peru's population is Catholic—God's blessing. The means of living will hardly be lacking if one has really acted conscientiously, no matter how many children there are in a home. That saying reflects this popular wisdom; thus, for us, it is not a myth.

As for Peru having no natural resources, it seems to me that this contradicts that great wise man Raimondi, who said precisely the opposite. [Raimondi was an Italian scientist who explored Peru in the 19th century, and said of its great wealth of natural resources, "Peru is a beggar sitting on a mound of gold."—ed.] One could say that science has advanced, that Raimondi saw too much, and that the wealth he referred to does not exist. But experience has shown us that we constantly discover new veins of wealth, whenever Peru goes to work. It is evident that Peru is a country whose wealth is difficult to make use of, but that is precisely why we need population, so that Peru's men may work, and have great goals in mind to make the country greater, and make the lives of those who live in Peru more fruitful.

To say that our country is not underpopulated, to say that this is a myth, is also undoubtedly to fall into the same error, because we see that there are many areas in Peru, such as the jungle, where population density is extremely low; there are many uninhabited places there. Peru's coast, with its recoverable deserts, and the mountains, with their terraces for cultivation which are being wasted, have great expanses which could feed many people, so that more people can live, and live from their labor, without begging for alms.

EIR: The *Global 2000 Report*, published by the Carter government in 1980, used the same malthusian arguments as the Club of Rome, to assert that there are "limits to growth" and support the statement that the world is overpopulated, and that we must not have a population of 6 billion human beings by the year 2000, as there would be at the natural rate of growth. Therefore, it recommends eliminating 2 billion people so that the total population by that date does not exceed 4 billion. Monsignor, do you think that the sudden "charity" of the U.N. toward our country follows more from their desire to make sure Peru sacrifices its quota of human lives to the sinister plans of "Global 2000"?

Monsignor Vargas: I think that there is a genocidal basis for those theses. It is genocide, moreover, against the unborn, against the most innocent, against the defenseless. Such theses are unnecessary; they are theses in which, as a consequence of Original Sin, man makes himself the arbiter of God's works. To admit this, would be to admit that God has made a mistake, because when God created man, and said "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth," he knew perfectly well that the world's population at the moment of Creation, would have to continue growing. To say that growth will be such that people may no longer live, that the land is too sterile to support and feed the people who will exist according to the geometric projection of population growth, is to say that God made a mistake, that he did things wrong. And even though these men may not put it this way, fundamentally, in practice, they are saying: "Let's go ahead, because God didn't take our calculations into account; we must make up for this miscalculation of the Creation." That is why they propose these totally genocidal plans, and fundamentally contradict God, and keep the world from receiving God's protection, which it so needs.

EIR: Let's talk about the document recently issued by the Plenary Assembly of Peruvian Bishops, regarding the concern they have shown over the so-called population policy. The document says that just as Peru has sought uncharted paths in dealing with its foreign debt without surrendering national sovereignty, so it must also seek uncharted paths to address these population matters. The reference is clear, in that when Peru rejected the IMF's conditions, and adopted the sovereign and patriotic position of limiting foreign debt payments to 10% of its earnings, it did so from the ethical

standpoint that the hunger of the Peruvian people comes first, and the debt comes later. Do you not think, Monsignor, that a population-control policy at this point rather contradicts this ethical principle, since it would imply that hunger is fought not only through development, but by eliminating the possibility of more eaters being born?

Monsignor Vargas: At least one gets that impression, because formulating this population policy in the terms it is being formulated, that a limit must be put on growth, that a ceiling be set which cannot be surpassed, suggests that human life is of less interest than the economy. To fight such an idea is precisely why untried solutions to the foreign debt problem have been sought. Thus, we say in our document that we wish not to be dragged into the same philosophy which threw the country into the oppressive debt which it suffers from today, and that instead we endeavor boldly to seek new paths, solutions for dealing with the demands of our future population—which really will not be excessive—instead of thinking that so many of us will no longer be able to live in the country. We would like to have a much more honest formulation, much more open to life's possibilities, and also much more open to the improvement of living conditions in Peru.

EIR: Monsignor, with respect to the philosophies which threw our country into the shameful misery which IMF conditions cornered us into, would you allow me to read a paragraph from a book by one of the leading theoreticians of these philosophies, Bertrand Russell? On page 273 of his book *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization*, written around 1923, he said:

"Socialism, especially international socialism, is only possible as a stable system if the population is stationary or nearly so. A slow increase might be coped with by improvements in agricultural methods, but a rapid increase must in the end reduce the whole population to penury . . . the white population of the world will soon cease to increase. The Asiatic races will be longer, and the negroes still longer, before their birth rate falls sufficiently to make their numbers stable without help of war and pestilence. . . . Until that happens, the benefits aimed at by socialism can only be partially realized, and the less prolific races will have to defend themselves against the more prolific by methods which are disgusting even if they are necessary."

Russell also specifies the goal sought by applying those methods. In his 1951 *Science and Society* he says:

"If a Black Death could spread throughout the world once in every generation, survivors could procreate freely without making the world too full. . . . The state of affairs might be somewhat unpleasant, but what of it? . . . The present urban and industrial centers will have become derelict, and their inhabitants, if still alive, will have reverted to the peasant hardships of their medieval ancestors."

Let's see what one of Russell's modern followers, former U.S. Undersecretary of State George Ball, says in an inter-

view from June 30, 1981:

Ball: We must "halt the unrestricted growth of industry in the Third World. It is more than many of those countries are able to administer. It creates political instability."

Q: "Are you saying the problem is overpopulation?"

Ball: "Yes, the overpopulation of the Third World is in itself the most important strategic issue today confronting the United States. Immediately, this is especially true in Latin America. . . ."

These statements were made a while ago, but their message is quite current. Do they not make you think that this highly publicized campaign for Third World birth control responds to these philosophical statements, which the IMF also responds to?

Monsignor Vargas: I agree completely. These quotes say precisely, in a certain sense, that there is genuine racism in these philosophic assertions. They undervalue the races of the so-called underdeveloped countries. In this regard, I have said many times that the distinction should be made, that we are materially underdeveloped, but spiritually, possibly it is the powerful who are underdeveloped, because they live off of matter, solely from the economic resources they take from others.

This has been shown in the way they are dealing with the foreign debt issue. That is why the document issued by the *Justitia et Pax* Commission of the Holy See, fell like a bombshell on these plans, since it says: Beware! Responsibility lies not only with the debtor countries, but also with the creditor countries. And when we know, as we know, that they are arbitrarily raising interest rates on a debt that came about under different interest conditions, one realizes that what they want is that we never manage to pay the debt. And when we simultaneously learn of the maneuvers of the powers of world commerce, to impose the lowest prices on the raw materials of our poor and underdeveloped countries, there is a convergence of interests determining that we never escape from the economic slavery of the developed countries.

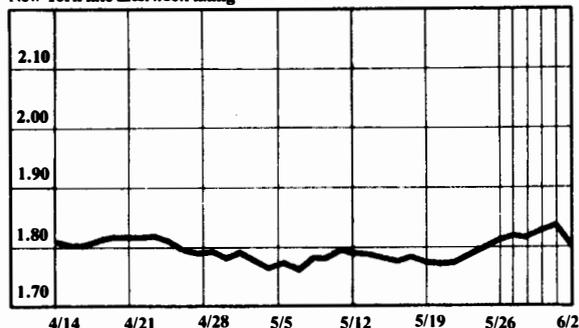
Then, recalling that quotation of Russell that you read to me, where he insists on the need for a disease comparable to the Black Plague, referring concretely to Africa and to the black race; and when the population growth of the underdeveloped countries is seen as a threat to the developed countries, then one understands that, yes, they want a plan for birth control, but birth control applied primarily to the poor countries, under the pretext that they are not going to have the means to live.

They say, as that last quotation of the former U.S. under-secretary of state said, that if we have industries, and we continue growing, we are not going to be able to manage them. This is an undervaluation of the human beings who live in the so-called underdeveloped countries, and we must therefore offer our protest. We do not accept this. This is the mistaken philosophy which we bishops have warned we cannot follow as the basis for a population plan.

Currency Rates

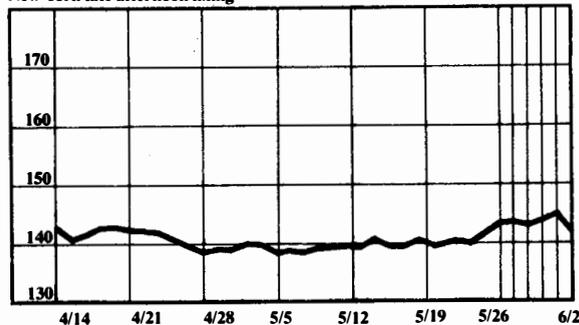
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



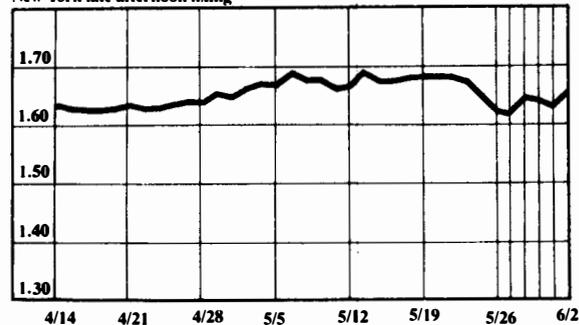
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

