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## Interview: Father Giulio Albanese

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# Exposé of Child-Soldiers Cries Out: The World Owes Justice To Africa!

Father Giulio Albanese is a Comboni Missionary and journalist. Born in Rome in 1959, he studied theology in Uganda and then joined the religious order of Msgr. Daniele Comboni, who created a missionary organization in the 19th Century which used the Gospel to fight against colonialism, slavery, and racism, particularly in Africa. Pope John Paul II initiated a procedure for the canonization of Monsignor Comboni.



Father Giulio Albanese gave this interview to Paolo Raimondi in Fiuggi, at the end of July.

**EIR:** You just published a book entitled *Tin Soldiers* devoted to the question of child-soldiers. In this book, you present a harsh and well-documented exposé of the fact that children are used in many conflicts in the world, particularly in Africa. Tell our readers more about this.

**Albanese:** The most disconcerting fact is that children are used as instruments of war. However, this does not happen only because of the existence of rebel groups; there are also regular, government armies that use minors. The continent that has suffered the most in recent years, has certainly been Africa, which is the theater of the so-called “forgotten wars.” In my book, I mention this problem in general terms, and then I analyze two situations which I would call crucial case studies: Sierra Leone and Uganda, which are two extreme cases. Fortunately, in Sierra Leone, the war ended about four years ago, thanks in particular to the contribution made by civil society, by the Inter-Religious Council. There, the situation is not as serious as it still is in northern Uganda.

The war in northern Uganda exploded at the end of the 1980s and continues today. It is a guerrilla war that was initially launched by Alice Lakwena and then continued by Joseph Kony, leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army, which has kidnapped 25,000 children in about 15 years, mostly in the Acholi territories.

What is the difference between the scenario in Sierra Leone and the one in Uganda? In Sierra Leone, we now have the problem of how to reintegrate the former soldiers into society. Through NGOs, a number of projects have been supported and financed, with the crucial involvement of missionary organizations. But the problem is that the time needed for reintegration is very, very long. In addition, until last year, Sierra Leone was the poorest country in the world, according to UN Development Program reports. There is very high unemployment, and many of these children end up on the streets: The boys survive with little jobs and petty theft, and the girls usually end up in prostitution rings. This situation should be seen as an appeal to the conscience of the international community, because children represent the hope for the future of Africa.

Father Albanese, after years of missionary work in Uganda and Sierra Leone, returned to Rome with the ambitious task to “give a voice to those who have none,” and in 1997, he created Missionary International Service News Agency (MISNA), an international press agency of the Catholic missionary congregations, which publishes a daily bulletin in English, French, and Italian. He collaborates now with several papers and magazines, including the Italian Catholic daily *Avvenire* and the weekly *Vita*.

Father Albanese has been a strong supporter of Lyndon and Helga LaRouche’s New Bretton Woods campaign, and recently signed the appeal issued by Helga Zepp-LaRouche for an Ad Hoc Committee for a New Bretton Woods.

All his life he has been a very courageous and outspoken fighter for justice for Africa. In May 2005, Father Albanese released a book-length exposé, *Tin Soldiers: The Question of Children-Soldiers* (Soldatini di Piombo: La Questione dei Bambini-Soldato) (Milan: Giacomini Feltrinelli Editore), in which he names the names of the local and international persons responsible for the neo-colonialist “forgotten wars” of Africa, in which 300,000 children-soldiers are forced to fight and die for the “warlords,” and the raw materials multinationals. In the book, Father Giulio presents in detail the cases of Uganda and Sierra Leone, where he has had personal experience, and he exposes, for example, the criminal role played in Sierra Leone by international mercenary organizations, such as the Britain’s Executive Outcomes and Sandline International, in a war fought for control of the diamond mines.

In Uganda, the war continues, even though many children have recently decided to abandon their weapons and turn themselves in to the authorities, hoping to benefit from the privileges offered by the amnesty laws. There are some significant differences between Sierra Leone and Uganda: In the former, the children were forced to fight under the influence of drugs, while in northern Uganda, which I confirmed from personal testimony collected among the rebels, the children find the strength to fight under conditions of collective hypnosis. This is shocking, because it is real brainwashing.

People may ask why these wars are fought and why the children are used? For three reasons, essentially. First, because the adults do not want to fight the war. These guerrilla groups are created above all, in relation to certain interests linked to the exploitation of raw materials, often in strip mines. These warlords do not find support among the people, and thus they kidnap the children to recruit them: They enter the villages, kill the adults, and take the children with them. The second reason is because the children do not cost anything, you don't have to pay them. And third, there is a logistical reason: The children are obedient, and can be easily managed.

The truth is that the problem of child-soldiers cannot be seen as an independent issue. Often, when we talk about the problems of Africa, we deal with these hot issues like AIDS, child-soldiers, hunger, and famine, as individual problems, and we forget that they are the result of lack of justice, which is the common denominator in most African countries: Lack of justice. And I'm not only referring to the lack of justice internally, but also externally. When I intervene in meetings and conferences, I always repeat that Africa does not demand charity, or alms; Africa demands justice. Because these forgotten wars, which are not newsworthy, are very, very brutal. In northern Uganda, 25,000 children have been kidnapped; in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 3.5 or 4 million people have been killed since 1998. But nobody reports this because there are many interests linked to high finance involved—which is important to emphasize—interests which use these warlords as errand-boys for their interests.

I always find it shocking that when peace agreements are reached, the moment is always considered an opportunity to divvy up power among warlords, bandits, criminals, and assassins, who deserve to be brought in front of some international court. But suddenly they become Presidents, Vice-Presidents, or ministers of some government. This is what happened in Sudan, where a peace agreement was signed in Nairobi between the North and the South. The Sudan treaty is just a division of power between two warlords: one more or less regular, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who became President of Sudan by a coup d'état and remains in his position; and the second is John Garang, who as the leader of the rebel formation SPLA was responsible for crimes, including persecution and other things. Let us not forget how many of his collaborators Garang physically eliminated.



United Nations

*This boy "soldier" was captured in the fighting that took place in Sierra Leone. The phenomenon of children-soldiers is widespread in multinational finance-fomented "raw materials wars," because they are more inexpensive and docile than adult fighters, pointed out Father Giulio Albanese, a Comboni Missionary, who has served in both Sierra Leone and Uganda, as well as other African nations.*

We always tend to divide these situations between the good and the bad, with a Manichean logic—the winners on one side, and the losers on the other side. But when there is a peace agreement, since the reasoning is always the same, we simply see power being divided up. The people are the real losers, being totally excluded.

If there have been peace agreements in Sierra Leone and Sudan, or in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is also thanks to the role of civil society in these countries, and how civil society promoted awareness of the situation.

Unfortunately, at the moment peace agreements are signed, civil society is always ignored and set aside. I am referring to associations, groups, and churches, that are the only groups really on the side of the people. Looking at the

future of Africa, I always repeat that the only hope is represented by civil society, which is an area in which new African leaders should be molded, because African leaders are demanding better training and education. These are the African leaders who are not concerned about their piggy banks, but about the *res publica*, the common good, and the well-being of their people.

This is already difficult in Europe; one can imagine how difficult it is in Africa, where states represent something relatively new. These states are quite new compared to European states. Africa is very young, and we have to respect the time needed for growth and maturation. We, in the West, reason based on the teachings of the god Chronos, the god of the hands on the clock. Space and time in Africa are different from what they are for us. At the same time, we cannot forget that Africa is part of a global chain, in globalization, and also has to deal with other continents and powers.

The question of child-soldiers is symptomatic of the malady in which Africa lives. So we should ask ourselves: How can we deal with it? There are clearly a number of urgent initiatives, like relaunching international cooperation, including projects for the reintegration of these former fighters. We should invest more energy in the formation of civil society organizations that have the task of helping these children. In addition to child-soldiers, we have to remember that many other minors are living in the same conditions, such as street children in large African cities.

Much more should be done, not with a paternalistic logic, but in response to the demand for justice present throughout the African continent. There is a more general argument which represents the *conditio sine qua non*: Africa is really in a situation of great suffering, above all at the economic level. I was looking at the GDP data for Sub-Saharan Africa: When somebody says that there was 5% growth this year in Africa, I can only laugh, because if you look at the actual amounts involved, this gigantic region only reaches \$350 billion, of which \$116 billion comes from South Africa alone. So that means that Sub-Saharan Africa has a GDP equal to half of Spain's, and without South Africa, equal to the GDP of Portugal.

Here you can understand the major contradictions, because Africa is very rich in resources, like niobium, rutile, diamonds, gold, tin, silver, and whatnot. Then we must ask: Why, with all these resources existing on the surface of the land, does the continent live in such a state of decay and poverty? Because, contrary to the stories many people tell, I believe that neo-colonial policies have dominated in recent years. The President-owners have been put there, not for the interests of the people, but rather to serve foreign interests, that have no stake in the life and future of those countries. I am speaking of the fact that many of these Presidents have been champions and servants of foreign interests, linked above all to the interests of major international finance. People should know this, as it should be clear that the war in Sierra

Leone was fought for the control of the diamond mines and trade.

When people realized that business could not be managed that way any more, there was a peace treaty. Both the rebels and the government were responsible for the situation. The same is true in other situations. Recently, much has been said about the so-called Blair Plan for Africa: Certainly, there are some interesting things in the report, prepared by some experts, including some significant ideas and data, but the fundamental problem is related to its realization.

[British Prime Minister Tony] Blair spoke of the problem of debt, saying the debt should be cancelled. Okay, but the question is how? And how practicable is Gordon Brown's plan? For example, many people forget that Africa has debt not only with international organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, or the African Development Bank, but also in large part with private banks and institutions. This is the real problem, because these institutions dictate conditions and usurious interest.

Blair says we should relaunch governance, but we want governance with solidarity, not a simple business agreement among African governments, multinationals, and banks. This governance must be based on solidarity, not simply as corporate governance; civil society has a special role to play in protecting the interests of the people.

Blair also said that Africa needs investments: In the past, many investments have been made in Africa, but in Africa the word "investment" is a synonym for selling-off. We are looking at a fire sale of this continent's immense resources. Everything is sold so cheaply, that soon Africans will not own their air and water.

We definitely need to relaunch international cooperation. In the past there was a commitment to contribute 0.7% of GDP for cooperation and development, a commitment which so far has only been respected by the Scandinavian states. We have also to change the "rules of the game," the mechanism of globalization. For example, as long as there are restrictions and tariffs against African products, European markets will be totally closed to them. For example, Jacques Chirac's boycott against African products—this is very curious, because we know how significant French interests in Africa are.

Often people look for scapegoats, and say the guilt lies with the French, Americans, or English. I believe that there is a complex mix of factors and responsibility. Since 1993, since the killing of the first democratically elected President of Burundi, Melchior Ndadaye, the Great Lakes region has been in turmoil. In 1994, we had the famous genocide, then the power of Laurent Desiré Kabila, later killed and replaced by his son (or probably his adopted son), Joseph Kabila. Here, French influence has certainly been undermined, and now this region is in what the malicious, anti-Clinton people call a "Pax Americana."

Africa is a battleground between different powers for the control of immense raw materials. Currently, there is also a

new element of this clash, which is the control over African oil reserves. Take Sudan: The peace agreement was not signed because the people were demanding it, but because of the interests related to the oil industry, which has always represented the long-standing issue. The reason for the war was always oil. No matter what people say, the peace agreement is really a corporate agreement.

**EIR:** You are very familiar with the war in the Great Lakes region, and I would like you to develop in detail the strategy certain Western interests have carried forward in this area. Tell us more about the role played by Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, for example. We should explain this more for our readers, and also those who follow events in Africa, because these events are usually presented as ethnic clashes.

**Albanese:** This is the tragedy: Unfortunately, the ethnic question is exploited. For example, the war and genocide in Rwanda was presented as an ethnic war between Hutus and Tutsis, but in reality the whole thing was completely planned out ahead of time. Concerning Rwanda, there were specific party orders which included shooting down the Presidential airplane and killing of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana [and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira—ed.], because the French interests in that region had to be undermined. Rwanda and Burundi were and remain a crossroads of everything.

Look back at the question of oil, because the business of "black gold" is shaping all events in Africa. Recently, a large quantity of oil was found in the Gulf of Guinea, from Guinea Bissau to Angola. This oil is not only abundant, but also of precious quality; technically, it is called light oil, with low sulfur content, used by the big oil multinationals to produce the so-called ecological, or "green" gasoline. Last July, a committee of the U.S. Congress produced a study which says that by 2015-20, about 20-25% of the American oil imports will come from this African region. For a number of reasons: It is closer to the United States, and it doesn't have the sort of tensions the Middle East region has, at least for the moment. The big risk is that the Middle East will be transplanted into Africa, and the problems of the Middle East tomorrow will be on the front pages—but in black, as an African "Middle East."

Unfortunately the rivalries in Africa are as clear as the light of day: On one side, there are the interests of American, French, and British oil companies, and on the other side there are the Chinese interests. We know that China is looking quite



SLENA

*One of the poorest countries in the world, Sierra Leone, in western Africa, is one of two extreme cases analyzed by Father Albanese in his book. This picture, taken in 1999, is one of many scenes of devastation in Freetown, the capital.*

eagerly at African wealth. We saw it in the case of Sudan, where at the end of the 1990s, the Chinese sent about 100,000 soldiers and former prisoners to control certain oil fields. We know that most of them returned home after they served their sentence. China plays a key role in Sudan, above all in the state-controlled oil consortium, because they are the de facto majority shareholder. China is doing business everywhere and has significant interests in African oil resources. China is, after the United States, the second largest importer of oil in the world, with the only difference being that its population is five times as large.

The big threat is that this conflict, this dualism between Western and Chinese interests, will be paid for by the poor people, as usual. I am worried, because many scenarios can be exploited to create this type of conflict: Nigeria, with the Muslim North and the Christian-animist South. Or the Ivory Coast: Here we know that there is a very unstable political situation and the country is split into two parts, despite the Marcoussis agreement—the Christian-animist South is controlled by the government, while the Muslim North is in the hands of the rebels. It is usually said that the Ivory Coast is the world's leading producer of cacao. This is true, but right off its coast, there is a lot of oil, and the first oil platform was recently built there.

There is a threat that this contrast between Western and Chinese interests will produce political instability. To tell the truth, this is already happening in the Middle East region: I see what is going on in Iraq and Palestine as a "Maginot Line." There are Chinese interests on one side, and Western ones on the other. We should also remember that if anybody has been

on the side of the Iranian government, it has been China, as it was China that supported the fundamentalist policy of the Sudanese government. I say that we should be careful: In certain aspects of Islamic fundamentalism and other strange deals and combinations, China is also a factor. I fear that this scenario will end up playing out in Africa—or that this is already happening. And I fear the dramatic consequences.

**EIR:** You spent many years in Uganda and you are very familiar with the situation there. In this strategy of war, the Great Lakes war, and others, Museveni has played a key role.

**Albanese:** When Museveni took power, we were in the middle of the Cold War. It is no secret that he took power with the support of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, then leader of the non-aligned countries, who, ironically, died a few months after Museveni took power in Uganda, in 1986. I was in Kampala in January 1986. Palme was assassinated in February.

At that time, Museveni presented himself as a Marxist-Leninist, he spoke about African socialism, and he wanted to force everyone, missionaries included, to go through training in his political school. The metamorphosis that took place with the fall of the Berlin Wall is quite curious. Museveni was a “red” leader in the true sense of the word, no less than someone like Haile Mariam Mengistu, the pro-Soviet “emperor” of Ethiopia, for example. In these years of transformation, Museveni has become Mr. Coca-Cola, becoming one of the most trustworthy leaders for American diplomacy in the Great Lakes region.

According to the information collected by civil society and the missionary world, Museveni played a strategic role in more than just the genocide in Rwanda starting in 1994, because if the Rwandan Patriotic Front was able to organize taking power in Kigali, it is because Museveni gave his full support for the operation from behind the scenes. We also know that his expansionist aims went further and beyond the areas of the Congo: First, by supporting the policy of Laurent Desiré Kabila, and later, because of disagreements, launching a war against him. We know that Ugandan forces occupied Congo militarily, as far as Kisangani and beyond. This was an element of great instability because it crushed the demands for justice of the people of Congo, who were fed up with the oligarchy of Mobutu Sese Moko.

Through a series of Constitutional reforms, Museveni is transforming his country into a sort of monarchy, because the reality is that he intends to remain President for life. It is curious: He said he took power on behalf of the people and would resign in five, and later ten, years. But he is still the President-owner of the country, transforming Uganda into a country without democracy. His referendum on the multi-party system is simply window-dressing. He controls everything with the support of an army that has been transformed into an army of a Praetorian Guard, that is, the personal guard of the President.

The West’s responsibilities for this situation are as clear as day. The United States has a role, because it has used this gentleman for the policy of a “Pax Americana,” but the [British] Foreign Office also bears a great deal of responsibility. London has always protected Museveni, as he caused disasters in the northern regions of Uganda. Museveni could have easily won the war which has been going on here since the end of the 1980s—he has the most powerful army in the entire region. How is it possible that he cannot defeat a “bunch of rebels,” like the ones led by Kony [of the Lord’s Resistance Army]? These rebels are 2,000-3,000 people at the most. Yes, they have kidnapped 25,000 children since the end of the 1980s, but many of them have died or escaped. The rebels are no more than 2,000-3,000 in number, so how is it possible that Museveni has not succeeded in defeating them? Because the situation of instability in northern Uganda plays into his interests. The populations of northern Uganda have always been hostile to Museveni’s policy. If there were peace in northern Uganda, this would not help Museveni and his Roman Empire policy of “divide and conquer.” So, the war is useful in order to keep the northern populations under control.

We also have to note that the war in northern Uganda cannot be explained only by Museveni’s interests. The government of Khartoum has supported, to this day, the Lord’s Resistance Army. This war can be seen as an extension of the conflict in Sudan. The Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) was supported by Kampala, and the Lord’s Resistance Army was supported by Khartoum. Now, that there is a peace treaty in Sudan, the war in northern Uganda also should have stopped. However, the truth is that Kony continues to spread terror, especially in the Acholi regions, and many people still live in the refugee camps. Museveni says that he has defeated the enemy, but the truth is that Kony is still there.

Museveni has an oligarchical tendency. He has been more effective than others in establishing an internal balance based on terror, and also convincing Western leaders that he is a democrat, while de facto satisfying their economic and financial requests. He has closely followed the diktats of international financial centers. Unfortunately, there are too many Musevenis in Africa. I believe that the only path we should follow is the growth and formation of civil society. Some people consider this a risk of being too utopian.

**EIR:** Yes, the future of Africa is very much linked to profound political and cultural changes that must take place in the West. If we cannot produce profound changes in the West, then the financial and economic powers you mentioned before will be always there to impose their policies everywhere, including in Africa.

**Albanese:** Absolutely.

**EIR:** I am speaking of control over raw materials, and the effects of the extension of financial globalization, which will

continue to view Africa as an area of looting and wars.

**Albanese:** It is sad to see that the so-called debt cancellation (for 18 countries, 14 of them in Africa) has been proposed for those countries—we shouldn't forget—that have carefully implemented the "structural adjustment policies" demanded by the IMF over the years. These policies have hit Africa dramatically, especially in the fields of education and health. These countries have not been able to pay their debt for several years, but the amount of debt cancellation is only a small part of the debt of other African nations—and again, we must remember that Africa's real debt is not the debt to international institutions such as the IMF, but the debt with private banks. This is the Damocles Sword over Africa's head. I fully agree with what you said: If significant structural changes do not take place in the North of the world, then Africa will continue to suffer.

**EIR:** As you know, Lyndon LaRouche and his movement have been waging a major campaign calling for a New Bretton Woods and a new just economic order.

**Albanese:** This is in the interest of African countries. No matter what people say, I am convinced of this: Africa has suffered the most, and continues to suffer the most, because the world economic and financial system is in a state of bankruptcy. It is in intensive care, where something is being done, somehow, to keep this big elephant breathing. But the world economy is on the verge of collapse. In this process, Africa is penalized the most. As a missionary, I believe there is an absolute need to "re-evangelize" the world economy: I fully agree with the idea of a New Bretton Woods.

I believe that globalization has produced real disasters, because it has provoked speculative mechanisms that at a certain point, boomerang. You throw them, but then they come back to hit you in the head. We see it in the economy of the North of the world as well. Many Italian companies have collapsed because of this financial globalization without any regulation. I believe that we need regulation for Africa and for the entire world economy: I am one of the people who does not believe that this evil globalization was born at Rambouillet in 1975, with Ford, Giscard and others. I believe that globalization began with Nixon and his decision to destroy the dollar-gold parity on Aug. 15, 1971. Deregulation began there.

This economy without rules produces disasters everywhere. Surely the poor people suffer the most, because every time there is an increase in oil prices, the Africans are the first to pay for it, and they pay more than everybody else. The price of bread and basic goods skyrocket. Oil means transport. All the speculative machinations on the stock exchanges are paid for by the Africans first of all, because they live in extreme conditions.

It is time to go from words to deeds; I recall an old slogan, which was fashionable during the Ethiopian famine in the 1980s: "If hunger could be fed with words, no one in the world

would still be hungry." We have pronounced many, many—too many—words, but we move like turtles. . . .

**EIR:** We have spoken of many conflicts, of the forgotten wars in Africa. Since a real campaign for a Clash of Civilizations and preventive war has been launched, not as an academic discussion among professors, the way some people prefer to treat it, but as a truly operational campaign, we are in the midst of an escalation of wars which is creating an out-of-control situation in the world, to say the least. I would like to know your thoughts on this.

**Albanese:** I am very quick to say that the Islamic world is complex, and we Westerners are often not able to decipher it. There certainly is a form of fundamentalism, a hard-line characteristic in the DNA of the Islamic world. I have spoken about this often with experts on Islam, such as Father Scatolin, who teaches at the Pontifical Institute for Islamic Studies in Rome. But I cannot help saying that the military policy of the West plays into the hands of the terrorists. The war option is simply a response to the provocations carried out by extremist Salafite movements which have been very strong in the Islamic world for some time now, thanks also to the money of the Wahhabi Saudi royal family.

I have never been able to understand how the United States can maintain excellent relations with this royal family, which is the cradle of fundamentalism. I understand that there are oil interests, but doesn't the United States also understand that these people are financing very destructive television networks? It is true that there is a great aversion towards the West in the Islamic community, even though the extremist Salafites are a minority. Why? Because this Islamic world is bombarded, day and night, by state and private television networks that foment fundamentalism. The West is responsible for having used a strategy of bombs to fight the fundamentalists, the violent extremists, and the promoters of holy war.

I recall a great Iranian thinker, Ali Shariati, who was killed by the Shah's secret police in the 1970s, who said that today Islam is between its 13th and 14th Centuries. Where was Europe at that time? The Renaissance had not started yet. We cannot expect Islam to skip over these steps that Europe went through. The solution was to allow Islamic civil society to grow, to become the driver for growth and development, to allow a non-traumatic, nonconfrontational encounter with modernity.

The truth is that the Western world has done nothing to support this process—the only thing it has done is arm the terrorist movements! Remember that if we have monsters like the Taliban or Osama bin Laden, or even Saddam Hussein, it is because we created them. At one point these gentlemen were useful for our geopolitical interests. Then, when they rebelled and became unmanageable, they were turned into enemies.

I continue to think that international leaders do not really

know what to do regarding Islam. There are also many contradictions inside the United States that I can't understand: Why, for example, was a President like Bill Clinton forced to almost go through a process of impeachment—a very harsh investigation by state authorities—because he lied about an affair, and at the same time we have President George W. Bush and his staff, who stated that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and then nothing happened when we found it was a lie?

The far-reaching consequences of the Iraqi crisis were clearly foreseen by Pope John Paul II in his appeals for peace. He said: Gentlemen, it is not a question of taking Baghdad. It is a question of respecting international law. As then Vatican Foreign Minister Msgr. Jean-Louis Tauran—today a Cardinal—said, “*Acta sunt servanda.*” Wars cannot simply be carried out because big powers decide to do so. The Iraqi question had to be resolved through international institutions. If the situation is out of control today, it is because there are specific responsibilities for what happened. The problem was not simply one of removing Saddam, but also foreseeing the consequences of such an operation. And it wasn't limited to so-called smart bombs: these were bombs that killed normal, innocent people, and not Saddam Hussein.

**EIR:** Our publication circulates among international politi-

cal circles, and the U.S. Congress in particular. Do you have a specific message, request, or appeal to make to the American Congress?

**Albanese:** I have a very deep admiration for the American people, who have given us bright examples throughout their history. Martin Luther King comes to mind, a man who championed the defense of civil and human rights and the democratic tradition. The United States must set a good example, and reason according to the logic of real, good globalization, that is, to understand that we live in a global village.

The destiny of the United States is shared by the countries of the South of the world and vice versa. There is a relation of reciprocity. I understand that sometimes as a missionary, when I say such things, there is a risk of being misunderstood. People tell me: You think in terms of the evangelical concepts of love and agapē. I tell them to also think in terms of the interests of the economy, of the market, and the fact that the policies of speculation wielded against the South have increased the numbers of the destitute. If we continue to increase the number of poor in both the South and North of the world—because a recession is hitting the North of the world—this will inevitably damage the market. I believe that we need a policy of solidarity towards the South, which is also in the interest of the market, because if the numbers of destitute increase exponentially, who will buy our products? I think that enlightened politicians in the United States and other parts of the world should provide an answer to this problem.

And we should have the courage to put aside all ideologies. In Europe, we have a scenario divided between Communist-leaning Catholics and pro-American Catholics. We do not have to split things into good and bad, but rather to take on responsibility. Many mistakes have been made in recent years, on all sides. I do not believe that the United States should be criminalized for what is happening in the world today. There are shared responsibilities—France and Britain, for example, have a lot of responsibility for the situation in Africa. China, which is moving surreptitiously, is also responsible. We should supersede the Manichean logic of the Good Empire versus the Evil Empire.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that the wheat and the weeds grow together, mixed with one another in the same field. It is the same in the heart of every man. We should go beyond the logic of the Old Testament, which is reductive compared with the message of the New Testament. The New Testament integrates the Old Testament as the history of salvation in light of the Gospel's teaching of love. I am surprised to see how this thinking is promoted by certain Christian sects in the United States. These people are not Christians, but Old Testamentarians who have nothing to do with Christianity. The message of the Old Testament has to be revised from a Christian standpoint, with the concept of love, which is not the law of retaliation. It is also a question of common sense.

#### EIR SPECIAL REPORTS

## Peace through Development in Africa's Great Lakes Region: Proceedings of A Seminar in Walluf, Germany

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