II. Strategic

Urgent Appeal from Pope Leo XIV: 'Stop! Repent! Before It's Too Late!' The New Name for Peace Is Development!

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

June 17—Of all the important and urgent speeches delivered recently by politicians and experts from many countries with the aim of preventing the strategic situation from escalating into a catastrophe that would wipe out the human race, Pope Leo XIV's intervention—with his encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* and the addresses he delivered during his recent trip to Spain—is, in my best judgment, by far the most important. When historians later examine the question of what—hopefully—proved to be the decisive factor in bringing Western civilization, in the midst of a deep spiritual and cultural crisis, to change course, they will come upon the role played by the Pope, and the willingness of a sufficiently large number of believers and people of good will to take his words to heart and bring about a change in policy.

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Pope Leo XIV

Without ever having to name the guilty parties, Pope Leo XIV defines with absolute clarity the structures of sin that today pose existential threats to humanity—structures whose concrete relevance everyone can recognize, and which must be urgently eliminated. At the same time, he indicates the way out of the crisis, which is within reach—namely, that people summon up the highest ideal of the Christian view of humanity, and put it into practice. Precisely because the mainstream media largely suppress these texts by the Pope, Christians and peace-loving people need to create a political climate in which no politician seeking reelection can afford to admit his or her ignorance of his writings and speeches. For that, of course, as many people as possible must first not only read, but also study, this encyclical and these addresses.

At the very moment when the first multi-billionaire on the basis of an AI fiction declares himself the first trillionaire, this encyclical warns against a new Tower of Babel, in which a new form of idolatry pays homage to profit at the expense of the weak, a dehumanization that uses others as means, an age-old yet ever-renewed temptation that today comes cloaked in technology. And coinciding with the entry into force of the EU Migration Pact—which, as of June 12, will accelerate procedures for deporting refugees at the EU's external borders and thus massively restrict the right to asylum—Pope Leo XIV counters with the Christian principles as to how the migration issue should be addressed.

When one considers the encyclical and the Pope's speeches in Spain together, they represent a complete reckoning with the entire political agenda of the liberal

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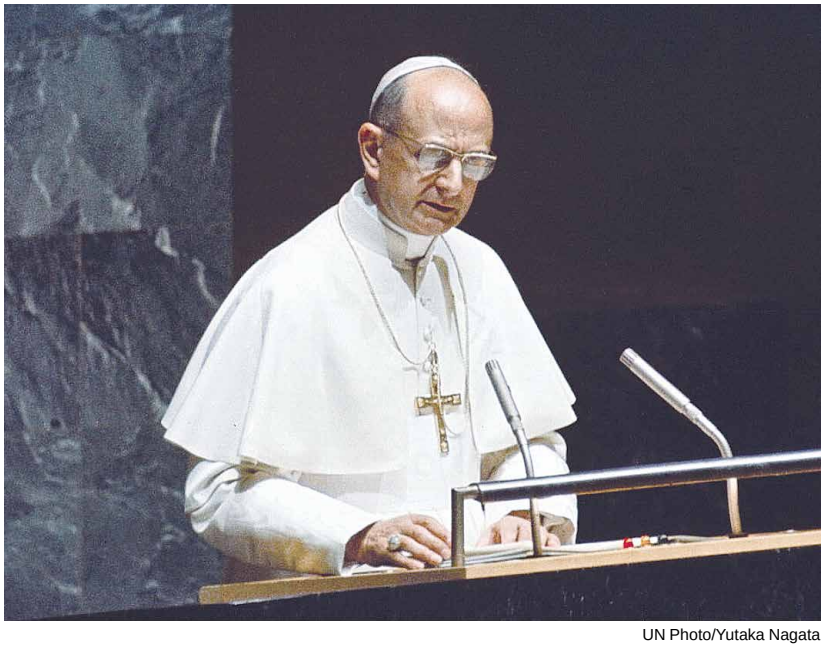
West, and do so with a clarity that should compel all politicians who have sworn an oath of office to serve the common good (above all, those whose parties bear the word "Christian" in their names) to completely reverse their policies.

Among the various aspects of these policies, all of which are building blocks of the new Tower of Babel, are the idolatry of profit at the expense of the poorest, the financial interests that fuel tensions and conflicts to keep the war industry up and running, and support for modern forms of slavery, where child labor is routine and the health of adolescents is sacrificed for the profit of an upper class whose consumption habits would once have been considered extravagant, while the poor lack the basic necessities. This also includes a new form of colonialism that enslaves not only people's bodies, but also data and information about them—ranging from health records to epidemiological profiles, genetic charts, and demographic data.



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Paul VI's powerful 1965 address to the UN General Assembly.

In the encyclical, the Pope laments the "normalization of war" and recalls Pope Paul VI's powerful 1965 address to the UN General Assembly: "Never again war! Never again war!" Despite a deep desire for peace, Leo writes, the intervening 60 years have been marked by conflicts of astonishing brutality, claiming the lives of countless civilian and innocent victims, mass displacements, social destabilization, and long-lasting wounds. Today, he notes, we are witnessing an alarming paradigm-shift, in which rearmament and war are once again publicly promoted as instruments of international politics, while the ethical principles that would previously have opposed war are being systematically undermined. Desires for territorial expansion, which we thought had been overcome, are returning, and a disconcerting loss of historical memory is becoming apparent, as eyewitnesses to the Holocaust and World War II pass away. (No, this is not Russian President Vladimir Putin speaking, or Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, but Pope Leo XIV.) And so, the Pope argues, war is being prepared for culturally, through simplistic narratives and a "friend-or-foe" mindset, disinformation, and the instillation of fear.

Under the heading "Force without limits," the Pope addresses the growth of the military-industrial complex: "The armaments industry, and countries that supply weapons, profit from a market that thrives precisely on conflicts. In this sense, there are also financial interests that contribute to fueling tensions in various regions of the world." And further in section 194: "In the past, recognition of the threat posed by weapons capable of destroying all of humanity had promoted paths toward détente and disarmament negotiations. Unfortunately, this approach has been left behind, and the evolution of nuclear arsenals—including the prospect of its 'tactical' use—makes the use of such weapons seem less improbable."

The encyclical observes that we live in a time of significant intellectual and cultural blindness, and that a form of historical nihilism fosters the illusion "that the atrocities of the 20th century cannot be repeated, that the atrocities of the twentieth century can never happen again. Yet, in reality, the same dynamics are re-emerging under new guises…. In many countries, including those in the Global South, increased military spending is presented as the only response to an uncertain future or perceived threats. Meanwhile, the real cost falls on the poorest, who see resources for healthcare, education and social services being reduced."

Pope Leo quotes Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, which condemns the concentration of

economic power in the hands of a few, and he refers to Pope Paul VI's warning of the dangers of extraordinary scientific, technological, and economic progress if they do not go together with corresponding ethical and social progress.

This applies in particular to AI, whose assessment and critique is the main focus of the encyclical. Starting from the decades-long debate over whether computers might one day surpass human creativity, he explains the renewed discussion regarding AI:

> 99. It is not possible to provide a single, comprehensive definition of AI. What can be stated, however, is that we must avoid the misconception of equating this type of "intelligence" with that of human beings. These systems merely imitate certain functions of human intelligence. In doing so, they often surpass human intelligence in speed and computational capacity, offering tangible benefits across many fields. Yet this power remains entirely tied to data processing. So-called artificial intelligences do not undergo experiences, do not possess a body, do not feel joy or pain, do not mature through relationships and do not know from within what love, work, friendship or responsibility mean. Nor do they have a moral conscience, since they do not judge good and evil, grasp the ultimate meaning of situations, or bear responsibility for consequences. They may imitate language, behavior and analytical skills, or even simulate empathy and understanding, but they do not understand what they produce, for they lack the affective, relational and spiritual perspective through which human beings grow in wisdom. Even when these tools are described as capable of "learning," their way of doing so is different from that of a human person. It is not the experience of those who allow themselves to be shaped by life and grow over time through choices, mistakes, forgiveness and fidelity. Rather, it is a form of statistical adaptation based on data and feedback, which can be very effective, but does not imply inner growth.

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Pope Pius XI

Pope Leo XIV argues from the perspective of the Augustinian tradition, according to which there need be no contradiction between faith and knowledge, and quotes Pope Francis, who "recognizes the importance of listening to scientific research and of encouraging a serious and honest debate among experts while welcoming a diversity of opinions."

The Right To Not Have To Migrate

Less honest, however, according to the Italian newspaper *La Veritá* and the French *Le Figaro*, were the liberal media, which reportedly provided a rather incomplete account of the Pope's speeches in Spain by only covering his calls to accept and integrate refugees, while omitting the parts where the Pope defended people's right not to have to emigrate and emphasized the need to address the root causes of their fleeing.

In fact, Pope Leo XIV's six-day trip to Spain, which took him to Madrid, Barcelona, Gran Canaria, and Tenerife, was an intervention of extraordinary historical significance. For even today, 87 years after the end of the Civil War, the political debate in Spain remains extremely polarized, and issues such as the role of the Church and migration are emotionally charged. In this context, the way in which Pope Leo elevated the migration issue to such a high level was very important in respect to Spain's internal situation and also set a precedent for all of Europe. There could hardly be a greater contrast between the EU Migration Pact—which came into force on the very last day of the Pope's trip—and the migration policy advocated by Pope Leo XIV. While the EU wants to get rid of people as quickly as possible

and lock them up in so-called "reception camps"—which Pope Francis used to describe as "concentration camps" and which certainly resemble prisons—the Pope has a completely different, humane perspective on the problem. In his address to the Spanish Parliament, he emphasized:

> The affirmation of human dignity cannot remain abstract when so many people are forced to leave everything behind in search of peace, security, and a future. The tragic drama of migration also challenges the conscience of nations and the ethical foundation of the international order today. Numerous men, women, and children are forced, by often dramatic circumstances, to leave their communities and leave behind loved ones, histories, and ties. This reality goes beyond any purely demographic or economic analysis: it constitutes an eminently moral and legal issue. Wherever people are discriminated against because of their national, ethnic, religious or linguistic origin, or because of their economic or social status, the universal principle of the equal dignity of all human beings is seriously violated.

He then went on to quote from his encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*:

> [81.] A litmus test for social justice today is the treatment of migrants, refugees and those forced to move due to poverty, violence, climate change and environmental disasters. The way a society treats them reveals whether its sense of justice is driven by fear or by the spirit of fraternity. Pope Francis urged us to see migrants not simply as a problem to be managed, but as a living image of the People of God on the move. They are people with dignity, resources and dreams, who have the right to be treated with respect and to ask to become active members of the societies that welcome them. Social justice in this area entails at least two complementary commitments. On the one hand, this means protecting the rightful hopes of those forced to leave by ensuring safe and legal routes, dignified conditions for receiving them, and genuine pathways to integration. On the other hand, it means promoting the right to remain in one's homeland in peace and security by addressing the root causes that force people to migrate, including those linked to economic injustices and the climate crisis. When these rights are respected, migration can become an opportunity for encounter and mutual enrichment among peoples.

A Call to Action

Western governments are hereby called upon to take Pope Leo XIV's urgent appeal as an opportunity to immediately undo the inhumane and, from an economic standpoint, utterly incompetent migration policy as formulated in the EU Migration Pact. Instead, cooperation on an equal footing with the nations of the Global South must be placed on the agenda, with a serious commitment to eliminating the root causes of migration.

The right "to remain in one's own homeland in peace and security by addressing the root causes that force people to migrate" is relatively easy to implement if the political will is mustered to do so. What the nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America need is a genuine industrial and agricultural development policy aimed at realizing their full potential for the benefit of their own populations. The Global South, which in reality represents the Global Majority of approximately 85 percent of humanity, is in the process of leaving behind 500 years of colonialism and implementing, above all in cooperation with China, infrastructure projects and investments in key technologies that will enable these nations to fully establish value chains within their own borders. Instead of clinging to an inhuman neocolonialist mindset, the governments of Europe and the United States are called upon to immediately commit to international cooperation aimed at completely eradicating poverty and underdevelopment in all nations on this planet.

For example, by the year 2050, Africa will have a population of approximately 2.5 billion people—one billion more than today. This means that it is in the very best interest of both Africa and Europe to create one billion productive jobs on the African continent over the next 25 years. Even though most other regions of the world face negative demographic projections, effective programs to overcome poverty are necessary every-

where if social explosions between the billionaire class and the impoverished billions are to be prevented.

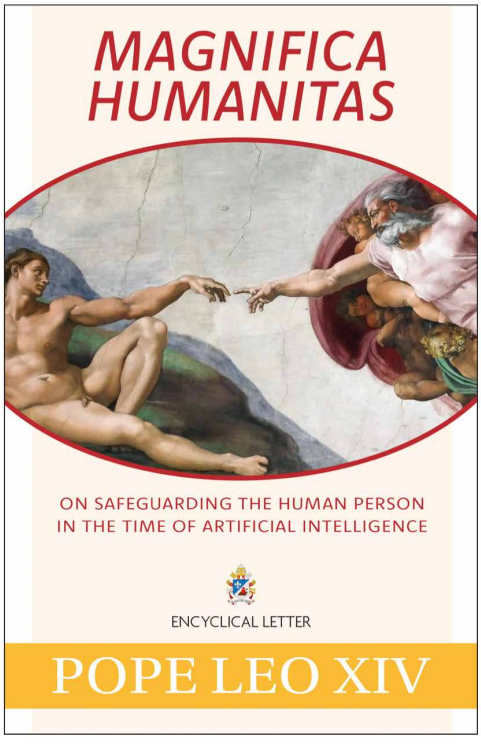
To this end, the Schiller Institute has worked out concrete development plans with clearly defined investment programs in basic infrastructure, energy production and distribution, and communications, which can create the conditions necessary to industrialize the nations of the Global South. These plans also demonstrate how cooperation between the BRICS countries, the industrialized nations of the North, and developing countries, with joint ventures, can achieve the goal of addressing the root causes of migration.

This would fulfill the call of the encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, that true peace can only be achieved through social justice and the overcoming of global inequality, "whose injustice cries out to heaven." The call by Pope Paul VI in his encyclical, that "Development is the new name for peace," is the urgent imperative of the hour!

In his address to the Spanish Parliament, Pope Leo XIV called for precisely this form of international cooperation:

> No nation can face a challenge of this magnitude on its own. Therefore, a coordinated, supportive, and effective response is indispensable, one capable of guaranteeing protection, welcome, and real opportunities for integration to those who migrate. When the institutional response is accessible, just and coordinated, borders cease to be places of abandonment and can become spaces for the responsible protection of human dignity.

In his encyclical, which bears the title *Magnifica Humanitas—Magnificent Humanity*—a title that can certainly be regarded as programmatic, the Pope refers quite specifically to the highest ideal of Classical Greek thought, thereby following the Augustinian idea that the harmony between that school of thought and Christian revelation means there need be no contradiction between faith and knowledge. "23. The Church regards all who sincerely seek 'truth, goodness and beauty' as companions on the journey, and considers them as 'precious allies' in defending the dignity of every person and in caring for creation," he writes. In accordance with this ideal of "the True, the Good, and the Beautiful," the encyclical defines art and culture—when they are authentic—as a protective wall against the "normalization of evil." And how necessary this is for contemporary human society, in which phenomena that can ultimately only be described as satanic seem to dominate nearly the entire so-called entertainment world. Pope Leo attributes an "almost prophetic value" to certain works of art, such as Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, describing them as a "desire for unity."



Perhaps the most important idea is that Pope Leo, in memory of Pope Paul VI, calls for the creation of a "civilization of love":

> 186. … Today, we must resolutely recover this vision, for the civilization of love is no naïve utopia, but a demanding project, which consists in translating charity into structures of justice, giving institutional form to fraternity and regarding others—whether individuals or peoples—as allies necessary for building the common good. As the Encyclical Letter *Fratelli tutti* reminded us, only this social love is capable of becoming a culture and a norm, and thereby of bringing about a stable international order, transforming mere armed coexistence into a community with a shared future.

It should give pause to all people in the nations of the so-called Collective West—that is, people living in a system dominated by liberal values, which has produced both the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the EU Migration Pact as responses to

the refugee crisis—that both the head of the Catholic Church and the Chinese government have reached essentially the same conclusion: that only a conception of the One Humanity as a community of shared destiny can be the basis for peace.

The encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* is Pope Leo XIV's urgent call for change. The Schiller Institute's development programs show a concrete path to overcoming the refugee crisis. What humanity needs now is a movement to promote the idea: "Development is the new name for peace"!

EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

The Great Falls Symphony Orchestra performs Beethoven's magnificent 9th Symphony in Reston, Virginia on May 9, 2026.