

COMMENTARY

‘We Declare the Jubilee!’

In a speech May 17 to an audience in Washington, D.C., Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. emphasized that “we’re living in a world where we’re fighting for the rights of humanity, we’re fighting to avoid a plunge into a Dark Age, not just a Depression, but a Dark Age. . . . The system is bankrupt. . . . We cannot liquidate and destroy entire nations because they are bankrupt. That is immoral. Therefore, we have to save the nation and the economy of the nation, no matter what we have to do in writing off financial obligations in order to do so. We declare the Jubilee!”

LaRouche elaborated on this theme, in response to an editorial in the Argentine daily newspaper *La Nacion* titled, “We Must Pay The Foreign Debt,” as follows: “Historically, since April 1975, I have been the principal author of leading proposals for use of debt moratoria as a part of general monetary reform, within the Non-Aligned Nations organization [1975, 1976, New Delhi 1983] and the Western Hemisphere [‘Operation Juárez,’ August 1982].

“In each case I have proposed debt moratoria, this proposal has been made as an integral feature of proposals creating a new international monetary system, to replace the self-doomed, I.M.F.-dominated, global system which is now in the process of an early and unstoppable general collapse into a state of official bankruptcy. In all instances, my proposals for such general monetary reform have been premised upon the successful precedent of the system of national banking established by U.S. Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton under President George Washington. . . .

“I also argue that if the principles of the insurance actuary would show that any imposed condition of indebtedness must tend to increase the rates of sickness and death among affected populations, then the attempt to enforce those conditions of indebtedness is a crime which falls under the prohibition of ‘crimes against humanity.’ In such

circumstance, the offending portion of the debt claims must be declared null and void, abolished as if they had never existed.

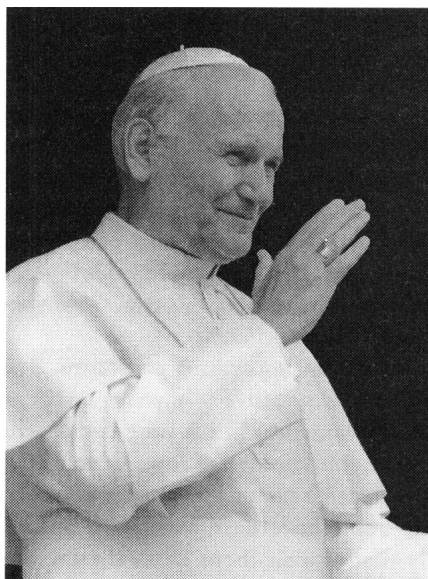
“In Christian nations, there is no acceptable objection to my views on debt moratoria. Similar law on the subject of usury is found in Hebrew Law, as in the doctrine of the Jubilee, and in Islamic law. Even among the rational heathen, similar views are found.”

Towards the Year 2000

The immediate source of the current calls for debt moratoria in Argentina and elsewhere, is a renewed offensive by Pope John Paul II on behalf of Third World debt relief.

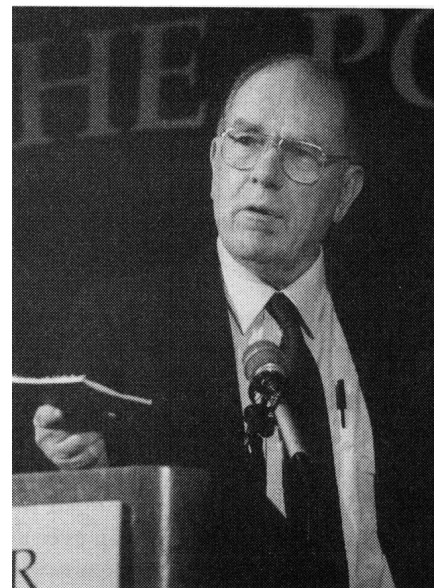
On Nov. 14, 1994, the Pope released an Encyclical entitled, “As The Third Millennium Draws Near,” in which he calls for an actual Jubilee, in the tradition of Moses, in preparation for the Jubilee celebration of the 2000th anniversary of Jesus’ birth. As the Pope writes, “The words and deeds of Jesus thus represent the fulfillment of the whole tradition of Jubilees in the Old Testament.”

Just what is the Jubilee? In the words



Vatican Photo

Pope John Paul II



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

of the Encyclical, “It fell every seventh year, according to the Law of Moses: This was the ‘sabbatical year,’ during which the Earth was left fallow and slaves were set free. The duty to free slaves was regulated by detailed prescriptions contained in the *Books of Exodus* (23:10-11), *Leviticus* (25:1-28), and *Deuteronomy* (15:1-6). . . . In the sabbatical year, in addition to the freeing of slaves, the Law also provided for the cancellation of all debts in accordance with precise regulations.”

Moreover, the Encyclical continues, “What was true for the sabbatical year was also true for the *jubilee* year, which fell every fifty years. In the jubilee year, however, the customs of the sabbatical year were broadened and celebrated with even greater solemnity. As we read in *Leviticus*: ‘You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family’ (25:10).”

Although the prescriptions of the jubilee year have remained in large part unfulfilled, as we approach the new millennium in the throes of the worst finan-

cial crisis in human history, it is time for a Jubilee to restore equality and social justice, as both Pope John Paul II and Lyndon LaRouche have stressed.

In the Encyclical, the Pope makes clear that the Jubilee is not something extraneous to the social doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, and to the Church's necessary new evangelization. He writes: "The social doctrine of the Church, which has always been a part of Church teaching and which has developed greatly in the last century, particularly after the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, is rooted in the tradition of the jubilee year."

Theological Basis

The theological basis of this doctrine and of the Jubilee is the notion that "to God alone, as Creator, belonged the *dominium altum*—the lordship over all creation and over the Earth in particular (cf. *Lev. 25:23*). If in his Providence God had given the Earth to humanity, that meant that he had given it to everyone. Therefore the riches of Creation were to be considered as a common good of the whole of humanity."

Concretely, in terms of economic policy, the Pope calls upon all Christians to prepare for the Jubilee celebration of the year 2000 by "reducing substantially" or "cancelling outright, the international debt."

"How can we fail to lay greater emphasis on the Church's preferential option for the poor and the outcast? Indeed, it has to be said that a commitment to justice and peace in a world like ours, marked by so many conflicts and intolerable social and economic inequalities, is a necessary condition for the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee. Thus, in the spirit of the *Book of Leviticus* (25:8-12), Christians will have to raise their voice on behalf of all the poor of the world, proposing the Jubilee as an appropriate time to give thought, among other things, to reducing substantially, if not cancelling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations."

As the Pope says, religious conversion "includes both a 'negative' aspect, that of



Friedrich Schiller

liberation from sin, and a 'positive' aspect, that of choosing good, accepting the ethical values expressed in the natural law, which is confirmed and deepened by the Gospel." This reference to Natural Law is critical. One does not have to be a Christian, a Jew, or a Muslim, to be bound by the moral obligation to declare a Jubilee. The idea of the Jubilee is a reflection of Natural Law. It stands to reason, as LaRouche has written, that "it is unlawful to impose or to attempt to enforce terms of indebtedness in the case of debt-collection, which might be, in effect, an act of mass-murder."

Solon and Lycurgus

That this is the case, is demonstrated by Friedrich Schiller in his study of the "Legislation of Lycurgus and Solon," written in 1789. In contrast to Lycurgus of Sparta, and Solon's own predecessor in Athens, Draco, Solon based his notion of government upon his concern for the welfare of the citizens.

As Schiller writes of Solon: "His heart was sensitive to joy and love; certain weaknesses in his youth made him the more considerate toward mankind, and lent his laws the character of gentleness and tenderness, which so beautifully distinguish them from the laws of Draco and Lycurgus."

Thus, based upon the Natural Law

infused in his mind as created *in the image of God*, Solon, a "rational heathen" (to use LaRouche's term), declared a cancellation of the debt as his first act in office. As Schiller writes: "The first act, with which he began his work, was the famous edict, called *seisachtheia*, or the *release*, whereby all debts were annulled, and it was forbidden at the same time, that in the future anyone be permitted to borrow on his own person. . . . By this beneficent edict, he did away at once with the heavy burdens which had pressed down the poor class for centuries, but the rich did not become poor as a consequence, for he left them everything they had, and only took from them the means to be unjust."

The Dividing Line

Pope John Paul II stresses, however, that the social doctrine of the Church is either not known among Christians, or not acted upon: "It must be asked how many Christians really know and put into practice the principles of the Church's social doctrine." One of the contributing factors to this problem is that people like Michael Novak and Richard Neuhaus, who profess to be Roman Catholics, have attempted unconscionably to misrepresent the Church's teachings on social and economic policy.

The question must be asked of such self-proclaimed Christians: Where do you stand in respect to the Jubilee? Because, if you are a Christian, or Jew, or Muslim, or even a rational heathen, then you will join Pope John Paul II in implementing an actual Jubilee, and join with Lyndon LaRouche and his associates in fighting to dismantle the global, I.M.F.-dominated "structures of sin," by placing them in Chapter 11 bankruptcy and immediately creating a new monetary system, designed to achieve the true purpose of political economy—the development of mankind—which is the new name for peace.

The year 1995 is the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the I.M.F.-Bretton Woods system. Let us commence the Jubilee!

—William F. Wertz, Jr.