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"A New 'Liberation Theology' for the World: Faith and the Free Market"

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Editor's Preview: *This month's Imprimis author, Ken Grubbs, presents two compelling arguments: First, that the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, Nicaragua and elsewhere around the world must be attributed to faith and the promise of the free market. Second, that these are precisely the things that lead to "moral prosperity" and true liberation for all men.*

The *New York Times Magazine* recently alerted us to a "return to religion" among intellectuals. It struck me as odd and perhaps even alarming—alarming because, if this august publication has finally gotten around to noticing a trend, then it might already be sledding on a downward slope. Then again, this trend could be at once alarming and reassuring because, if the intellectuals (at least those identified as such by the *New York Times Magazine*) have hopped onto a bandwagon, then a strong chance exists that all the toots and whistles on that particular bandwagon will have been refashioned so that the toots whistle and the whistles toot.

Look at recent intellectual fashions: it is not two years since serious analysts regarded Central and Eastern Europe as places where the communist system reflected the organic will of the people. About that time it was also fashionable to regard Nicaragua as a font of profound spiritual change; after all, the Sandinistas numbered among their comandantes a couple of priests. This was also a time when Ronald Reagan was denounced by intellectuals for his alleged clumsiness and bellicosity when he made a moving speech in Berlin urging Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Wall.

But in 1989, when those self-same intellectuals least expected it, the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, and with it began the collapse



of the worst tyranny that has ever plagued humanity and all of humanity's enterprises—a tyranny that, not coincidentally, tried to kill off every vestige of religion and spirituality that it could not twist to its own ends. As we know now, communism could not kill off either. Every faith communism has attacked—whether Jewish, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist or Muslim—has prevailed. Surely Providence works in history no matter what the intellectuals say.

Faith and the Free Market Triumph in Central and Eastern Europe

What a joy it was for me when, last June, clacking along in an old socialist rail car from Prague to Budapest with a group of American journalists, we came to the environs of the Hungarian capital, the scene of so much bravery in the face of

repression for this past half century. There, silhouetted in the distance like a mighty fortress, was a great cathedral—Cardinal Mindszenty's cathedral—outliving the great Christian leader's tormentors, an eternal reproach to the hubris that produced them.

The next day I sat with Hungary's new president, Arpad Goncz, once imprisoned for his dissident activity, now a living testament to the biblical assurance that the last will be first, that the enslaved will be free. We did not really talk, the two of us, about the temporal versus the spiritual—the latter was so overwhelmingly evident that we felt no need to remark upon it. We talked instead about Soviet and American foreign policy.

Make no mistake, President Goncz told me, Hungarians are the beneficiaries of the Gorbachev era. But, like a great sailor, a great "harnesser of wind," Gorbachev is reacting to history, not directing it. Much more than that, President Goncz added, his countrymen were the beneficiaries of the Reagan era. They, along with other "middle Europeans," as he refers to them, were liberated by two Reagan salients in the 1980s.

First, Ronald Reagan made it possible for the West to win in the marketplace; though only minimal, deregulation and tax-cutting gave such a boost to the American economy that communist nations couldn't hope to compete. Second, Reagan made it impossible for the Soviets to keep up militarily by placing Pershing II missiles in West Germany and by his singular persistence in promoting the Strategic Defense Initiative.

What? Central and Eastern Europe liberated by a combination of crass capitalism and macho militarism? When I reported back to my American companions what the Hungarian president said, they reacted in disbelief, as if I had teased or even coerced this

sort of repugnant Reaganism out of one of Hungary's national heroes. How unlike anything these journalists—themselves candidates for a *New York Times Magazine* profile—had ever advocated at home.

No Union Between Christianity and Marxism

I indeed, I reflected afterwards, how unlike anything I had heard championed by American religious leaders, many of whom for years have toiled, like alchemists of old, trying to meld Christianity with Marxism.

These American churchmen, so pathetically eager to deconstruct their own heritage that now even Christopher Columbus is regarded as an imperialist serpent in a native American Paradise, little resemble the Protestant clergy I had encountered several days before in Berlin, men who now filled the cabinet of the interim East German government.

Some of these officials, whose churches only months before were used as channels of anti-communist revolution, may have participated in the anti-Pershing peace movement of the 1980s, which was partially orchestrated by the Kremlin and the Honecker regime, but this merely demonstrates how the anti-authoritarianism of that movement backfired on the communists. (The best discussion of the peace movements, East and West, is Czechoslovakian President Vaclav Havel's essay, "Anatomy of a Reticence," in which he explains to Western peaceniks that they were not exactly helpful.) In truth, most of the real anti-war activists in the Soviet bloc were just as opposed to Russian warheads, and, significantly, they were more determined to exorcise Karl Marx than to embrace him.

Anti-Marxism is even more pronounced in the Polish Church, which, with its allegiance to Rome, enjoys the faithfulness of some 98 percent of the people. I spent the day of the Feast of Corpus Christi, a national holiday, in the village of Lowice, where the anti-communist graffiti ("Red Army, go home!") was surpassed only by traditional religious trappings. In such

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a climate—a climate in which for over forty years priests and ordinary communicants were willing to suffer severe torture and execution—communism could not hope to endure.

Now, if you're one of those who still imagine that Christianity and Marxism might be united, you could contend that the Red Army by no means represents Marxist philosophy at its purest. If you wish to belabor that point, I urge you to do it with a Polish priest, a Polish villager, a Polish intellectual. Indeed, go to the town square of Lowice blindfolded, spin around, and buttonhole the first Pole you meet. Tell him that Marx was just updating the Gospels; I dare you.

"...buttonhole the first Pole you meet. Tell him that Marx was just updating the Gospels; I dare you."

At best, you might find one or two who will speak charitably of Marx, granting him, despite the evidence, the good intentions of a radical reformer. That is because the universities in which even the Polish clergy were schooled structured their pedagogy around Marx; you can still hear the faint echoes of the dialectic, though he has transcended all the folderol about class warfare, in the pronouncements of Karol Wojtyla, better known as Pope John Paul II.

Despite this, the Solidarity government, largely made up of Catholic intellectuals, has dedicated itself to applying the free market economics of Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich von Hayek, Milton Friedman and Michael Novak with an enthusiasm I also witnessed in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Nowhere, to the apparent dismay of some of my American companions, was anyone interested in a union between Christianity and Marxism or in some sort of "Third Way," or halfway house between Marxism and capitalism constructed in equal parts by Karl Marx and Adam Smith.

"The God That Failed": The Old Liberation Theology in Latin America

So here is a theology that has liberated millions, a perfectly traditional theology that recognizes God, not the state, as the prepolitical source of rights and freedoms. It is, in effect a new kind of "liberation theology" for the world, based on faith and the free market.

But in pre-1989 Central and Eastern Europe, the regimes of Earl Honecker, Janos Kadar and Gustav Husak were actually funding

and supplying weapons to Central American guerillas whose dictatorial aims were furthered by believers in the old socialist "liberation theology."

This brand of theology was very much the intellectual fashion in North as well as Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s. In Nicaragua, the communist regime even tried to appropriate Christian symbols, like the crucifix, which in its "new" form became a Sandinista soldier with a gun. It also organized a flimsy movement called the "Iglesia Popular," a liberationist clique that fortunately never proved as popular as the traditional church of Cardinal Obando y Bravo.

Sandinista Interior Minister Tomas Borge, surely one of the most diabolical thugs in this hemisphere, even tried to link Jesus of Nazareth with his guerilla politics in a book of tortured meditations that admiring Maryknollers in upstate New York rushed into print. The Barabbas temptation, 20th-century style!

When in last year's elections the Sandinistas proved themselves as popular as their rump church, their norteamericano allies flew into paroxysms of hysteria. Yet the humiliated and defeated Marxist president of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega, is still welcomed to New York's Riverside Church as a venerated speaker. Does anyone ask him about the mass graves of Sandinista opponents now reportedly being unearthed in his hapless country? No, these leftover "liberationists" flock to touch the hem of his bloody garment.

Am I too hard on the old liberationists? Of course, there are those attracted to the movement who eschew violence and truly minister to the poor and oppressed in Latin America. But it is difficult to imagine a more perfect test case for the old liberation theology than Nicaragua, where the regime imposed what was hailed as a purer form of socialism than had been tried in the Soviet bloc. Never mind that at least two priests sat on the ruling council, or that the Soviets provided a tremendous amount of support, for this was still the "grand experiment."

Even before it became evident that the experiment had failed miserably, the liberationists found ways to evade the truth. They did so primarily by buying into the socialist critique that holds the developed world, particularly the United States, accountable for the misery of the undeveloped world. They also glided over the vast empirical evidence that socialism invariably requires coercion in order to achieve its redistributionist objectives. The history of socialism has amply demonstrated that, when milder forms of coercion fail, then more violent forms follow.

Some of the better liberationists turned their gaze from Sandinista violence and marched off to Central America to set up their

“base camps” where they fed and doctored the poor, but they still flagellated themselves for being North Americans and preached a communalism that didn’t work in Jamestown or Plymouth Colony.

How Marxism Widens the Gap Between the Rich and the Poor

What would have happened, I wonder, if one of the recipients of all this attention discovered a God-given talent for weaving an especially warm and colorful blanket, or a better way of growing corn, and practised stewardship over that talent? Through voluntary trade that person might have built up some capital and likely would have accumulated more wealth than the other citizens of his “base camp.”

Would he, like his American counterparts, be accused of materialism? I don’t think it is unlikely to suppose so. An enormous weight of social pressure would befall this steward, a pressure the founders of the Christian faith called covetousness, which would soon rob him of his dignity and the incentive to develop his talent.

The tragedy of the old liberation theology is not only that it penalizes individual enterprise, but that it requires sweeping away all traditional religious structures in Latin America. True, these structures were once guilty of allowing repressive, fascist regimes to enjoy the blessings of the church hierarchs, yet they ought not be destroyed. The old liberationists, by calling the privileged mercantilism that these regimes once promoted by the erroneous name of free market capitalism, simultaneously condemn the established Church and promote economics that further the despair of the poor and widen the gap between classes. The inevitable result is an agonizing clash between rich and poor that leads to a lazy temptation: to explain its causes as Karl Marx would have, and even to endorse violent Marxist solutions.

This temptation holds special appeal for certain middle and upper class church activists in the United States, true to Schumpeter’s prophecy that capitalism would create many idle critics of the very system that enriched them. Many of them are the legatees of the Social Gospel tradition that held salvation to be external to the person and the state to be the proper instrument of God’s will. Many of them revel in radical critiques of a society that has granted them more freedoms than they know how to handle. “I revolt, therefore I am” supplants the traditional leap of faith. The exercise is often accompanied by an aesthetic condemnation of commercial activity.

Funny enough, when all those poor Latinos stream into our country seeking economic opportunity, the best these church activists can

offer are a few blankets and soup bowls (amen to that!), perhaps some offers of menial work and legal assistance (amen again), along with some stern lectures on why they shouldn’t aspire to be like the enterprising Americans. By no means should they adopt our shopping mall culture, not when we’d rather have them preserve their quaint ways of life.

It used to be that right-thinking people condemned those Christian capitalists who misinterpreted Jesus’s words about the poor always being with us so as to shrug off their duty to the least among us. Now these right-thinking people want to permanentize the conditions of the poverty-stricken so that they might forever expiate their guilt and so that the poor might serve as kept objects of their solicitude.

Small wonder that evangelical Protestantism, which understands the need for personal transformation and encourages economic growth, has caught fire, not only in Latin America, but in Latino communities on this side of the border. And small wonder that in recent years the leading liberationist, Gustavo Gutierrez, no doubt surveying the failure of dependency theory and socialism, has tentatively allowed that capitalism might just have some answers after all.

The Politicization of Faith

Those who would politicize faith and religion should stop and consider what they’re doing. I remember when, not long ago, I worked in Washington, D.C., where every aspect of one’s daily life is shot through with politics. One Sunday, in need of a little spiritual bucking up, I sought refuge in nearby Alexandria’s Christ Church, where you can still see the pews of Robert E. Lee and George Washington. It was a special day for this historic church; Virginia’s suffragan bishop was visiting. Can you imagine the desolation I felt when he launched into a sermon on why we need gun control laws?

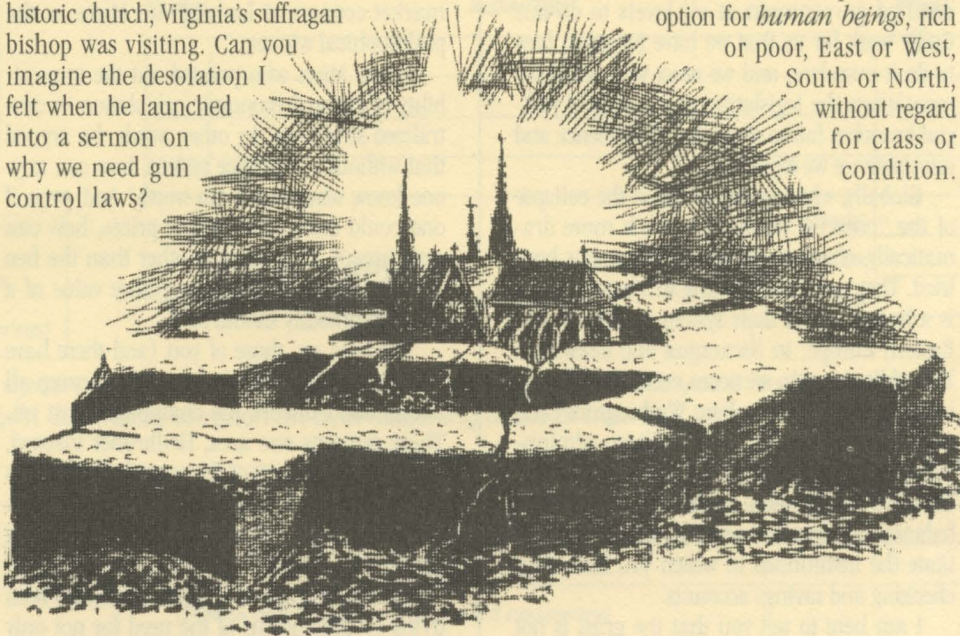
The sinking feeling must have been akin to that felt by Latino immigrants who, seeking sanctuary and economic opportunity in this land of the free, fall prey to the pious American-haters.

The politicization of faith really does get dizzying. As a journalist—a cynical, unchurched journalist like, alas, so many in my profession—I am tempted to throw up my hands sometimes. But I have been to Central and Eastern Europe, to Russia and the Baltic states—I have seen a faith that liberates as opposed to a bogus one that enslaves.

One Sunday last June I found myself in a dingy Warsaw hotel room, trying to make sense of the keys on an old Polish typewriter, and attempting to write about the deep apprehension so many Poles, habituated to the incentiveless society, feel as they step determinedly into the “cold bath” of a free market economy. I switched on the television, and there to my surprise, brought to the Poles by that splendid capitalist Rupert Murdoch on Skychannel, was my old friend, the Rev. Robert Schuller, preaching possibility thinking. Just the prescription for poor Poland!

As I remember, he was quoting John Wesley: “Make as much money as you can. Save as much money as you can. Give away as much money as you can.” How foreign these words sound to us in our contemporary culture. All the pundits tell us that we have been living through an era of arrant greed, never mind that in the past few years we were allowed only a marginal drop in our tax rates. But because of the very hegemony of those pundits, ridiculously well-paid pundits at that, Schuller’s Wesleyan message continues to sound foreign.

We live at a time when all respectable churchmen are supposed to be exercising a “preferential option for the poor” and hostility towards the rich. But I submit that the proper Christian attitude is to show a preferential option for *human beings*, rich or poor, East or West, South or North, without regard for class or condition.



And, like Wesley and Schuller, we need to encourage all people to discover the possibilities within them, to become everything God means for them to be. They must start where they find themselves, or where God finds them.

The Last Refuge of the "Coercive Utopians"

Somewhere along the line, corresponding to the rise of secular faith in the almighty state, politicized churchmen latched onto the notion that people cannot discover and realize the possibilities within them unless coerced by the state. As a result, we have a school system that graduates people who do not know the half century in which the Civil War was fought, or where Mexico is; a school system that is so inadequate that former Education Secretary William Bennett suggested that parents should get their money back; a school system that, according to National Endowment for the Humanities chair Lynne Cheney, may be described as a "tyrannical machine."

As a result, we have also seen a War on Poverty, fought unsuccessfully along socialist lines, which has produced a permanent underclass and done incalculable damage to the black family. We have mobilized for a War on Drugs, already showing even more perverse results on our inner city streets. . . . We have so

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deputed government at all levels to do our Godly work for us that we have forgotten how to do it ourselves, and we react with astonishment when the legislative, executive and judicial branches fail to show the omniscience and omnipotence we expected.

Globally, what we are seeing is the collapse of the "coercive utopians," much more dramatically, of course, where socialism has been tried. They seem to be getting this heresy, and it is a heresy, out of their system in Central and Eastern Europe, in Nicaragua and elsewhere. Yet, oddly enough, we seem even more keenly interested in it here, where Washington, D.C., undeterred by the current Republican administration, has rediscovered the joy of regulating. This is a Washington, mind you, that cannot balance a budget, but wants desperately to regulate the institutions in which you have your checking and savings accounts.

I am here to tell you that the grass is not

greener across the socialist fence. Look at the socialist state's record on the environment, for example. Parting the Iron Curtain has brought the ghastly revelation of an ecological catastrophe whose proportions we have only begun to comprehend. In Prague and Bucharest, the air pollution is so acute that a southern Californian like me wants to get home to draw a breath. In Czechoslovakia, the Green Party talks of nuclear power as a desirable alternative to brown coal. In Estonia, President Arnold Ruutel insists that his country needs to recover a respect for property rights so that owners might be held accountable for their misuse of the land and find profit in proper stewardship.

Four decades ago the wonderful libertarian writer Frank Chodorov wrote a political fantasy set in the year 2040 (he was off by maybe a generation) in which the Soviet bloc discovered freedom and free markets. Simultaneously, the West slid into despotism and economic stagnation. Today, Chodorov's fears do not seem unreasonable. The prospects seem especially grim when one considers how popular the last refuge of the coercive utopians has become, and here I refer again to environmentalism. In a landmark essay in the *New Yorker*, the old socialist Robert Heilbroner dramatically confessed that, in the ideological war of the century, those who favored command economies lost decisively to those who favored free markets. He specifically cited the great classical liberal, free

market economist Ludwig von Mises as the philosophical winner.

It was Mises who pointed out the impossibility of rational economic calculation in centralized structures. In other words, he argued that without a free price system, how can anyone know what goods are worth? And, even if one could determine present prices, how can government, or any entity other than the free market, determine what the future value of a given commodity should be?

But hold on, those of you (and there have been many) who have been in Mises' camp all along; don't uncork the champagne just yet. There remains one area, Heilbroner insisted, where all the conceit of the centralized decision makers absolutely has to be brought into play: the global environment. Trafficking in highly dubious apocalyptic scenarios, a good many politicians, journalists and scientists have been trying to convince us of the need for not only

local, state and federal but international controls on our enterprises. It is also a new venue for those militants who would keep the undeveloped world undeveloped.

Not long ago, two California professors, one a political scientist and one a "social ecologist," submitted an article to the *Orange County Register* that actually argued that planet Earth could no longer afford to allow development in the poorest regions. What with the hole in the ozone and all that, claimed these professors, we simply cannot allow people facing imminent starvation to benefit from refrigeration.

As editorial and commentary director of the *Register*, I could not in good conscience accept such an article, but I was tempted to do so in order to publicize a stark confession of an attitude that has commonly been concealed by anti-development intellectuals. Again: it is the attitude that the least among us, the marginalized, the poor, should remain in their desperate condition so that they might be permanent objects of our solicitude; they should be denied any entrepreneurial hopes, because if they succeed they will be too much like us.

It ought to be pointed out that these intellectuals might have a point if their apocalyptic scenarios were realistic. But, although my fellow journalists are eager to assure us that "no respectable scientist" disagrees that the sky is falling, or that the earth is warming, or that the ozone is depleting, it just isn't true. Many respectable scientists do disagree and are eager to debunk such theories.

But more and more Christians, Jews and other religious believers are jumping uncritically on the environmentalist bandwagon. One individual, a professed Christian, recently wrote me with the admonition that neither Godless environmentalism nor Godless economics could save our world. It happens that I agree with that formulation. But my admonisher betrayed a willingness to suspend the natural, God-created laws of economics in order to save creation. His temptation may well turn out to be to join with Heilbroner and other would-be regulators to exercise what Mises' pupil, Nobel economist Friedrich von Hayek, has called "the fatal conceit." So much for Christian humility, which is reflected by the millions of volitional decisions and voluntary transactions that ordinary, talented people engage in every day in hopes of improving their own and their families' lives.

A Capitalist Revolution

Religious anti-capitalists like the old liberationists and politicized American church leaders have for years been telling us that salvation lies in the impoverished, undeveloped world, populated by the millions of objects of our exploitation. They

were wrong in their economic analysis, and wrong in their political hopes. Ironically, they were probably right about where we in the developed world, which at least retains the vestiges of Judeo-Christian values, which still keeps at least the moral framework of the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, can look for a refresher course in economic salvation. That is to the once-undeveloped world.

Just before the collapse of socialism in the

that most have moved backward. In Central and Eastern Europe last spring, I heard East Asia described everywhere as a model for post-communist aspirations. Similarly, in Latin America, free market economist Hernando de Soto, now an adviser to Peru's President Fujimori, has discovered the Promethean energy of a vast "informal sector," a kind of underground economy. Who comprises this informal sector? Why, all the poor—Indians, handymen,

the tremendous energy of the informal sector. Already the Berger/de Soto view of this newly enterprising world bids fair to change world history more than Marx ever did. And what is the animating spirit behind this development? Doubtless, it is at least an inchoate understanding of a few fundamentals central to our religious traditions.

These newly enterprising people, from Bangkok to Bogota, take the commandment to be "fruitful and multiply" to mean more than merely to procreate, but to engage in profitable business. They take the lovely metaphorical language of "throwing bread upon the water" to mean that they should become entrepreneurs, by testing new products and services in their proximate marketplaces. They understand the reference to "lilies of the field" to embolden them to take risks, never trading freedom for security. They comprehend that if they are truly "created in the image of God," then they are to create, not redistribute.

This capitalist revolution, now rapidly causing borders to vanish around the world, can be nothing less than Providential. Let us hope that we have enough wisdom not to replace Providence with theology, nor faith with ideology, and that the *New York Times Magazine* will have the grace to notice. ▲

"Christian humility...is reflected by the millions of volitional decisions and voluntary transactions that ordinary, talented people engage in every day in hopes of improving their own and their families' lives."

Soviet bloc, Lutheran sociologist Peter Berger wrote a marvelous book about the newly industrializing countries of East Asia. These "little tigers," or "little dragons" as they're sometimes called, are part of a capitalist revolution and, as Berger documents, they are defeating poverty at an amazing rate. He compares them to the Third World nations that have tried socialism for the last three decades and finds that none of the latter have grown, and indeed,

street vendors, *campesinos*, who have long suffered under the ancient mercantilist system of political permits, red tape and economic regulations. They simply started ignoring the law and doing business with one another. One might say they had no choice but to develop a market based on free choices.

Throughout the southern hemisphere political leaders are finally acknowledging the truth of de Soto's studies and are working to unleash

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"Nobel Laureate Invades Lithuania"

by George Roche

A few short weeks before the invasion of Lithuania by the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, I met with the leaders of that country and learned about two important things: one, the Lithuanians' implacable resolve to win their freedom; two, Gorbachev's two-faced efforts in opposition to peace and freedom.

Their determination was evident in the first leader I met, Cardinal Sladkevicius, who serves the 85 percent of Lithuanians who are Roman Catholic. He reconfirmed to me that a mighty fortress is their faith against the tanks. He also volunteered observations about Gorbachev: "You Americans are too much impressed by Gorbachev." He repeated often that we are "deceived" by him, that he is "dangerous" —and he was rueful about efforts of the United States government to placate Gorbachev. His views, as we now see, were painfully accurate.

The Cardinal further declared that he believed that while publicly endorsing peace, privately Gorbachev was manipulating for war between the U.S. and Iraq. Such volunteered observations come at personal risk to the Cardinal and his followers: his personal assistant had been imprisoned by the KGB three times, serving five and a half years out of a total 10-year sentence. This man acknowledged to me, smiling all the while, that he might be seized to serve out his sentence anytime.

Next I met then Prime Minister Prunskiene, who told me that they were expecting more problems from Moscow. The Prime Minister's impenetrable determination for Lithuania's independence became clear on my next question: precisely nine days before our meeting, the Soviet Union had warned her that a full

embargo would be imposed if Lithuania did not fall into line within "one week." Her reaction to this threat was that of General McCauliffe's at Bastogne: "nuts." She told me that the one week had now passed, that the Soviet Union had done nothing about it, and that if it did, her answer wouldn't change.



Cardinal Sladkevicius welcomes Hillsdale College Chairman of the Board of Trustees Donald R. Mossey and President George Roche to Lithuania.

Next I met with President Landsbergis. He asked how a free market economy can become established *vis-a-vis* the strength of the Soviet Union. I recommended that he move quickly before the central planners move into the vacuum; he agreed that "now is the critical time to act." The Soviet Union, he continued, wishes to "break us" before they are themselves broken.

On the Nobel Peace Prize he noted the irony of this award in contrast, he said, to Gorbachev's "allegiance to Saddam Hussein," to Iraq and to war, echoing the Cardinal's view that Gorbachev publicly opposes but privately supports that war. Then with quiet frustration and disbelief President Landsbergis asked,

"Why did the U.S. government reject \$15 million in aid to Lithuania to privatize while giving millions to the Soviet Union?" I too am frustrated by the hypocritical behavior of American political leaders, and I emphasized to him that a great many Americans do not share the United States government's view toward Lithuania and Gorbachev.

Recently, seeing events unfold as they have, I felt compelled to write the Cardinal:

Your Eminence:

Since returning to the United States, I have often recalled the opportunity for an audience which you so graciously granted. Indeed I shall never forget your warning that the Russians were deeply involved in moving Iraq toward war with the United States and your further prediction that, under the cover of a United States-Iraq war, the Soviets would make a move to reassert totalitarian control in the Baltics. Subsequent events have completely vindicated your prophetic words.

As you face what must be the most difficult and demanding of challenges, please know that you and your people are in the thoughts and prayers of your American friends. It is my fondest hope to be able to bring increased public attention to the terrible crisis which you face.

May God continue to grant the strength and courage which you and your people need at this moment.

Yours in Christ,

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