

CAFTA: Last Nail in the Coffin?

With U.S. prisons filling up with aliens, 10 million illegals here and counting, Californians fleeing east, savage Salvadorian gangs battling with machetes inside the

Beltway, and Minutemen headed for the Arizona border, Rip Van Republican has awakened to the threat of open borders. Meanwhile, the White House dozes on.

But just as the chickens are coming home to roost on the Bush failure to defend America's frontier, so they will soon be coming home on Bush's embrace of free-trade fanaticism.

As I write, the Department of Commerce has just released the trade deficit numbers for February. Again, the monthly trade deficit set a record, \$61 billion. In January-February 2005, the annual U.S. trade deficit was running \$100 billion above the all-time record of \$617 billion in 2004.

In the mail this week came the annual graphs and tables from Charles McMillion of MBG Information Services, who has patiently chronicled the decline and fall of the once-awesome U.S. industrial machine. Since 1992, when some of us urged the president's father not to grant MFN to China, the returns are these:

- Between 1993 and 2004, the U.S. trade deficit with Beijing grew 700 percent to \$162 billion.
- In the last decade, China's total trade surplus at U.S. expense was \$805 billion.
- China's leading exports to us, which account for almost half her \$162 billion trade surplus, came from shipments of computers, electrical machinery, and parts.
- Leading U.S. exports to China (Boeing alone excepted) were, in

ascending order: meat, meat offal, fibers, ore, slag, ash, organic chemicals, fertilizers, copper, cereals, raw hides, skins, pulp of wood, cotton, and the big seller—oil seeds and oleaginous fruits (soybeans). All very, very high-tech stuff.

China's surplus, the largest one nation has ever run against another, provides her with the hoard of cash to buy Russian and Western weaponry to menace Taiwan and the 7th Fleet and pile up the T-bills that give Beijing the leverage it enjoys today over the sinking U.S. dollar and shaky U.S. prosperity.

In the 1993 battle of NAFTA, the Clinton-Gore-Dole-Gingrich globalists predicted our trade surplus with Mexico would grow, Mexico would prosper, and illegal immigration would be easier to control. Either they deceived us, or they deceived themselves. For since NAFTA passed:

- The U.S. trade surplus with Mexico has vanished and the annual trade deficit is now running above \$50 billion a year.
- The cumulative trade deficit with Mexico is now over \$300 billion.
- 1.5 million illegal aliens are caught each year crossing our border and 500,000 make it in to take up residence and enjoy all the social programs a generous but over-taxed America can provide.

With Chrysler now a German company, GM and Ford down to less than half the U.S. auto market, and GM paper

looking like Argentine bonds, Americans now import \$188 billion worth of autos, trucks, and parts, three times what we export. Motown is no more king of the road.

With three million manufacturing jobs lost under Bush, the U.S. dollar looking like Monopoly money, trade deficits exploding, and our dependence on foreigners for oil, the critical components of our weapons, and the cash to finance our insatiable appetite for consumer goods all growing, one would think even Bush Republicans might pause before taking another great leap forward into a future of global free trade. One would be wrong.

For CAFTA, son of NAFTA, is at hand: the Central American Free Trade Agreement. The White House will bring it up, but only if enough Republicans can be bamboozled into going along. In return for access to our market, we get access to five Central American markets and the Dominican Republic—with a total economy the size of New Haven's—47 million consumers, half of whom are living in poverty by *their* standards.

The highest per capita income in Central America is \$9,000 a year in Costa Rica, which is less than the U.S. minimum wage. But CAFTA will enable agribusiness and transnational companies to set up shop in Central America to dump into the U.S. and drive our last family farmers out of business and kill our last manufacturing jobs in textile and apparel.

If there are any Reagan Democrats left still loyal to the GOP, CAFTA may see them off. For if the GOP passes CAFTA over Democratic opposition, Hillary's party may just be able to take back North Carolina, Ohio, and a couple of bright red farm states as well. ■

[Pope John Paul II, 1920-2005]

Upon This Rock

Defender of an unfashionable morality

By Thomas E. Woods Jr.

ALTHOUGH Pope John Paul II's health had been visibly declining for years, his death in April still came as a shock to a great many Catholics and non-Catholics alike. In an age of mass media he became the most visible and widely traveled pope in history, and Vatican observers agreed that he would be an immensely difficult act to follow.

It will be interesting to see how historians assess his pontificate. The mainstream media's routine characterization of Karol Wojtyla as a conservative obscures the many ways in which this son of Poland was a truly enigmatic figure. For Wojtyla, and later John Paul II, cannot be so easily pigeonholed. To be sure, he upheld traditional Catholic teaching on abortion, artificial contraception, homosexuality, and a great many other issues. But (to take one example among many) he gave a peccatorial cross, a symbol of authority, to the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury—whose moral views are quite scandalous to Catholic sensibilities—in spite of Pope Leo XIII's statement on the invalidity of Anglican orders. Accused of insensitivity to women, John Paul, a fervent opponent of women priests, in 1994 permitted female altar servers—a capitulation that stunned and demoralized even many of his staunchest supporters.

But that is by no means the whole story of John Paul II. When he issued

Veritatis Splendor (1993), a lengthy encyclical on moral theology, even the traditionalist Society of Saint Pius X cheered. The late Michael Davies, the most prolific traditionalist writer in the English-speaking world, had nothing but praise for John Paul's Holy Office—known since Vatican II as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)—for what he called its consistently orthodox statements, particularly in the area of medical ethics, where Catholic moral principles frequently needed to be applied to previously unheard-of situations.

Among the bishops today, again contrary to media portrayals, there are next to no conservatives or traditionalists of the mold, say, of Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, one of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger's predecessors at the Holy Office. John Paul himself was a fervent believer in the program of Vatican II, properly understood, and belonged to the center-right of a Vatican spectrum well to the left of where it had been in the days of Pius XII. Thus while he was certainly no traditionalist, as the many innovations of his pontificate reveal, John Paul was a consistent disappointment to self-described progressives, who sought more radical revolution in the church. He would have no truck with the ordination of women to the priesthood, which he insisted was beyond the church's

authority, and he would not relax the rule of priestly celibacy despite growing pressure to do so.

To hear the Left tell it, John Paul was a merciless disciplinarian and a pontiff who concentrated all power in his hands. On his way to Rome for the pope's funeral, Bill Clinton claimed that John Paul "centralized authority in the papacy again." Nothing could be further from the truth: John Paul's governing style was in fact relatively *laissez faire*, and in the spirit of collegiality he generally deferred to the judgment of local bishops. James Hitchcock, a conservative Catholic professor at Saint Louis University, describes John Paul as "a relatively permissive pope. He has an image of a hardheaded conservative, which is probably based mostly on his words, but he has not been a disciplinarian."

To be sure, then, this was a man who defied simple categorization. These nuances notwithstanding, the image Pope John Paul II projected to the world was that of a defender of immortal wisdom and moral precept. And it was that to which so many people responded.

Karol Wojtyla was not especially well known before his elevation to the papacy in 1978, and in fact when his name was announced from the balcony of St. Peter's that October, at least one