

Benedict und der Bundestag

Carissimi,

Last weekend the Holy Father made an historic state visit to his native land of Germany, which means that he receive a formal invitation from the government and was accorded the corresponding honors and security. This in itself is a remarkable thing to consider, since most of the Pope's visits to foreign nations are pastoral (they are at the invitation of the bishop's of that country).

Last year Pope Benedict travelled to England on a State visit, and on that occasion he even addressed the English Parliament. Imagine the significance of the Bishop of Rome teaching in the very place where, 500 years earlier, the predecessors of the selfsame legislators voted to tear England away from the bosom of the Catholic Church!

This time the Vicar of Christ addressed the German Parliament or Bundestag, another first. Germany is the "land of the Reformation" (better termed, "Revolt"). As such, it has for 500 years been a hotbed of anti-Catholic sentiment. In 2011 Berlin represents a special instance of that hostility, although less from Protestants than from atheists. To add outrage to the nauseating cauldron, there was the spectacle of hordes of Teutonic homosexuals disgracing the capital's elegant avenues (why do they feel so compelled to advertize to the world what they are into anyway?). And so, the sage, gentle and grandfatherly Pope Benedict XVI was walking into a lion's den.

Yet in God's Providence the German government could not help but invite the Bishop of Rome, the very Successor of St Peter, into its most important deliberative chamber, where it sat respectfully and quietly to hear his words of wisdom.

For some of the parliamentarians on the political left (Greens and Socialists for the most part), this was too much to endure, and so one in six of them refused to attend. A defeat on the surface, it was in reality an ideological victory for the Church, since it highlighted the myopia and narrow-mindedness of the Left. So-called "liberals" are supposed to be open to other's viewpoints, yet the world was witness to the spectacle of nearly one hundred of Germany's purportedly tolerant representatives arrayed, as it were, like little children with their hands over their ears because they can't handle what daddy has to say. The embarrassment for the German nation was palpable.

The president of the Bundestag, Norbert Lammert, in his introductory remarks before the Pope's address, was measured but ungracious. He could not resist making an oblique reference to modern Germany's embrace of, let's say it, sodomy. He should have had his mouth washed out with soap and sent to his room. Alas! Pope Benedict didn't bite & rose above the sordid occasion, like a wise father who knows that his adolescent children will at times say awkward things, even in polite company.

And then came the Address of the Vicar of Christ to the Bundestag. It was such a manifestation of the intellectual and moral excellence of the Pope that the Catholic world can be quite proud. At its heart it was a challenge to the modern political leaders of Deutschland to abandon a doomed philosophy called "legal positivism" in favor of a return to the perennial collective wisdom of Europe called the "natural law."

The Pope warned that modern Europe is at risk of cutting itself off from the rest of the world, i.e., from the rest of humanity, because for the last half-century it has drunk deeply at the fountain of laws detached from the natural reality of things. In other words, rather than see the plan of the Creator written in nature, an attempt has been made to concoct a closed system of laws based upon what the majority wills. But democracy in this sense reaches its limits when the people want something objectively disordered.

He provocatively declared that a legislative body that goes down that route is seeking not wisdom (like King Solomon of old) but power. They then become, in the Pope's words, nothing better than a "band of robbers."

In the Address Pope Benedict noted and gave qualified endorsement to the modern day concern for ecology. Yet, he said, man too has an "ecology." Consequently, we must base our conduct upon what is "natural" to man (in part this was a veiled reference to aberrant sexual chaos of the rainbow variety).

He went on to expound on how Europe and Western culture were born out of the encounter of Greek philosophy (Athens), Roman law (Rome) and Jewish religion (Jerusalem). To ignore or forget our common history is to run the risk of emptying Europe of it's very soul. He even warned that Europe was developing an attitude that was closing itself in like someone entering a "bunker without windows." He went so far as to say that it is running the risk of becoming cultureless. What in indictment!

We should not be unaware that the same warnings apply to America. Seeking to build society while pretending that God does not exist can only breed one sociological and political and cultural malady after another.

Who else but the Vicar of Christ can say these things before the modern, godless parliaments of mankind? Here was Truth speaking to Power at its best.

-Don Francesco