

crowd, "If you can make it, we want to help you make it. For the past 12 years, we haven't been in that posture. But baby, it's a new day now."

In addition to his announcement of the selective farm foreclosure suspension, Espy has said that there will be a USDA investigation of the FmHA in regard to government guaranteed loans. He also said that he has appointed a committee to "look across the entire farm law to see what we can do for farm income."

The heat is on the administration to take action on the farm and food emergency. About half of the USDA annual budget, depending on the accounting methods used, goes for food stamps and other food relief. In February, a record number of 26.5 million Americans were officially reported to be receiving food stamps—and this number does not count those eligible who are not signed up.

Under the banner of "farmers and eaters united," all these issues of fraud, organized crime, and the right to grow and eat food, were taken up last fall in a campaign initiated by Rev. James L. Bevel, vice-presidential running-mate of Lyndon LaRouche, who was on organizing tours in the Dakotas in August, October, and December 1992, and March 1993.

In December, Judge William Goodloe, a former Washington State Superior Court judge, held four days of hearings in the Dakotas, to take evidence of wrongdoing. He was joined on the presiding panel by Rev. Wade Watts of Oklahoma, a former member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and Philip Valenti, leader of the Schiller Institute Food for Peace effort. Preliminary findings of the Goodloe commission were circulated to the new 103rd Congress, when farm, Native American, and other activists from the Dakotas went to Washington, D.C. in early 1993.

Representatives Fred Grandy (R-Iowa) and Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) issued a call for a moratorium on foreclosures, pending a congressional investigation of fraud and abuse in farm credit lending policies, which they have requested of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Credit. On Feb. 3, this author raised the issue of federal loan guarantee swindles at the first full hearing by the House Agriculture Committee, chaired by Kika de la Garza (D-Texas).

On the state level, resolutions calling on Congress to investigate fraud and stay farm foreclosures, were introduced and debated in January and February in both North and South Dakota. In Pierre, S.D., a crowd of 150 people showed up for the March 3 legislative committee hearing on the matter—despite efforts to harass and deter backers of the resolution. Longtime South Dakota political leaders Ron Wieczorek (state representative of the LaRouche-Bevel campaign) and Charles Bellmon (former head of the state Democratic Party) are conducting citizen's hearings in Nebraska March 10 and 12 to assemble more evidence for redress in the farm belt. Already calls are coming in volunteering new evidence on the Kansas City Federal Reserve's involvement in farm dispossessions.

Library of Congress Exhibit

Vatican exhibit in D.C. shatters myths

by Warren A.J. Hamerman

In early January a myth-shattering exhibit of more than 200 items chosen from the collections of the first modern research library—the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana—opened at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The exhibit entitled "Rome Reborn—the Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture," continues until April 30, and demonstrates that the Vatican was at the center of the explosion of learning and culture associated with the Renaissance rediscovery of ancient Classical learning in the aftermath of the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1437-45). The manuscripts, books, maps, and other items are selected to show an aspect of Vatican policy that is not well known: the decision of the Renaissance popes, starting with Nicholas V in 1451, to vigorously promote the revival of antique learning, especially Greek science and art.

The Washington exhibit, by laying evidence before the public in the form of the library's original manuscripts and books which launched modern science, Renaissance perspective, and polyphonic music—some spectacularly illustrated by great Renaissance artists such as Ghirlandaio—puts to rest the fundamental myth of the Enlightenment that Renaissance learning and creativity in the arts and science were somehow "secular" accomplishments in opposition to a "reactionary" and "repressive" church.

Many of the manuscripts give unique insights into the history of knowledge, as the viewer sees the actual works which were in the hands of the Renaissance humanists—their comments written in the margins in some cases.

Mathematics, astronomy, geography

The items in the show, selected and catalogued by non-Vatican-linked American scholars, include the first translation from Greek into Latin of certain works by Archimedes, which was sponsored by Pope Nicholas V (the pope who publicly announced that Nicolaus of Cusa had been made a cardinal). In 1453 Cusa dedicated his *On Mathematical Complements*, a critique of Archimedes, to this pope in gratitude for the translation project. The works of Archimedes survive at all only by virtue of three manuscripts, two of which are now lost, but were translated into Latin in the papal court and preserved later in the Vatican Library. There is also an elegant series of manuscripts of mathematical and optical

works by Euclid, Ptolemy, and others, as well as a 10th-century Latin version of Plato's *Timaeus* with wonderfully colored diagrams.

Apollonius's famous studies on *Conics* was all but unknown in the West until the 15th century, and is in the exhibit. Besides containing a parchment manuscript of Euclid's *Elements* dating from the ninth century, there is an incredibly beautiful copy of Euclid's *Optics* from 1458 on parchment with a miniature illustration of a street lined with buildings painted in true Renaissance perspective.

The Renaissance artist Piero della Francesca (d. 1492) researched his great geometrical works on *Perspective* and the *Five Regular Solids* from manuscripts in the Vatican Library. A beautiful edition of his work on the *Five Regular Solids* in Latin from the 1480s is opened to a page showing an icosahedron inscribed in a cube facing a cube in an octahedron. In terms of astronomy, the exhibit contains the oldest and best manuscript of early Greek astronomical works, as well as Ptolemy's famous *Almagest* on a parchment edition from the ninth century. There are also Arab and Persian astronomical works from the 13th and 14th centuries. Beautiful and large versions of Ptolemy's maps are laid open.

There is no less impressive a collection of books and manuscripts on the life sciences—medicine, botany, and Renaissance anatomy.

Promoting polyphonic music

Contrary to popular misconceptions, the music manuscripts of the papal choir demonstrate that the Renaissance Vatican choir was at the center of developing, promoting and encouraging polyphonic music along with preserving chant. From the 15th to the middle of the 16th century, the singers in the papal choir included such great composers as Guillaume Dufay (ca. 1400-74) and Josquin des Prez (ca. 1440-1521), the greatest composer of the late 15th century. The polyphonic manuscripts in the Sistine Collection demonstrate that the great composers of sacred music in the Renaissance celebrated God through polyphonic music as part of the liturgy. Much of the polyphony preserved provides musical settings for the ordinary of the mass. The ordinary consists of the five components of the mass texts—Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei.

At the point in the mass called the offertory, it became the custom for the singers to perform motets, polyphonic settings of any number of religious pieces. There are also manuscripts of many settings of the Magnificat—the canticle of the Virgin Mary, sung at vespers—and settings of hymns. One source dating from the late 15th century is a treasury combining hymns and Magnificats with motets. The papal singers had their own library, now containing 600 items, containing everything from documents relating to their daily lives, to manuscripts of chant and polyphony.

The essay on the music in the collection in the accompanying catalogue reveals that "The manuscripts of Renaissance



From "Rome Reborn" at the Library of Congress: The earliest illustration of a subject seen through a microscope, a 1625 engraving of Francesco Stelluti's observations of insects. Bees were the emblem of the Barberini family, to which the pope belonged.

polyphony are all arranged in what is called choirbook format. In each opening, the first two facing pages of the manuscript, the layout of the music presents the polyphonic lines as separate voice parts, rather than as a score as we might see it today, in a notation strikingly different from anything we are used to. There are no bar lines, for instance. The names of the several parts varied, but they correspond more or less to the soprano (top left), alto (top right), tenor (lower left), and bass (lower right) of the modern choir—remembering, however, that in the Vatican all parts were sung by adult men. Each singer or group of singers would read from his or their own part like the players in a modern string quartet. No conductor was needed, although there probably was a time beater employed to keep all the singers together. The result was a music of great power, beauty, and complexity that must have entranced the congregation in the Sistine Chapel during the long celebration of the liturgy."

Other gems

Among the stunning other items in the show are several closely associated with the Council of Florence of 1439, such as the first Coptic, Armenian, and Ethiopian manuscripts to enter the Vatican Library, and a liturgy book which belonged to Isidor of Kiev (who tried to bring the Renaissance to Moscow). A major section is devoted to the efforts of Jesuit missionaries in China to show the coherence between Christianity and Confucian morality. There is also an illuminated manuscript of the plays of Plautus, a Latin comedy writer whose works were found in Germany by Cusa and brought to Rome in 1429. This became the basis for launching secular drama in the Renaissance. Also: Galileo's 1612 drawings of sunspots seen through

the telescope; Henry VIII's love letters to Anne Boleyn (in possession of the library since the mid-16th century); the Urbino Bible, a two-volume work the size of a coffee table, with spectacular illustrations, dating from 1476; prayer books written on palm leaves, from Sri Lanka.

There is a copy of the 12th-century Latin translation of a medical encyclopedia by Ibn Sina (Avicenna), illustrated with miniatures accurately depicting patient problems. The exhibit contains famed manuscripts, beautifully illustrated, of Euclid, Plato, Homer, Ptolemy, Petrarch, Cicero, Vergil, Thucydides, Alberti, etc.

Revival of the city of Rome

The creation of the Vatican Library, and especially the building of St. Peter's, was an integral part of reviving the city of Rome, which began the Renaissance as a collapsed city and cultural backwater compared to Florence. The population had fallen to 20,000, and was dominated by feuding noble families, terrorized by gangs, and devastated by malaria and other diseases. When the papacy returned to Rome from Avignon in 1377, the French party at the papal court elected its own pope. This Great Schism lasted for 38 years until 1415; in 1409 the situation became worse when the Council of Pisa elected a third pope. The financial and spiritual authority of the church was at an all-time low.

The conception behind the library was to throw open the windows and let in some fresh spring air by creating a public or Vatican center of learning opened to scholars of whatever religion, as opposed to a purely papal or private one. Humanist scholarship, centered on the recovery and explication of classical texts, was brought to the center of Christendom. Pope Nicholas V (1447-55) described his purpose in a letter to Enoch of Ascoli in 1451: "For the common convenience of the learned we may have a library of all books both in Latin and Greek that is worthy of the dignity of the Pope and the Apostolic See."

Two decades later, Pope Sixtus IV issued a famous bull giving form and structure to the library in which he again cited the aim "for the convenience and honor of the learned and studious." He installed the books in a custom-built suite of rooms, spectacularly decorated by artists of the day. The books themselves lay flat on the *banchi* or wooden benches with tables attached. Chains were specially forged in Milan to attach the books to their places. By the time Sixtus died, the library had more than 3,600 manuscripts. Today the Vatican Library includes 60,000 or more western manuscripts, 8,000 books printed before A.D. 1500, and vast numbers of non-western books and manuscripts.

Borrowers recorded the books they took and returned in simple notebooks. The Washington exhibit contains the entries by Pico della Mirandola when he borrowed and returned the works of the famous English Franciscan Roger Bacon. The library lent Cardinal Ximenes two manuscripts of the Greek Old Testament for his great edition of the Bible in three languag-

es. When the codices did not come back, Pope Leo X himself sent out a "recall" notice, also in the exhibit.

During the Renaissance, the Papal Curia—the priests, scholars, canon lawyers, and artists who were at the center of the pope's intellectual and artistic projects—were swept up in the excitement of a revival of learning and creative activity of all sorts. In the 15th century, humanists came to dominate the secretaryships and the entire papal bureaucracy. Papal secretaries had to have a mastery of ancient Latin literature and preferably Greek as well. It is estimated that at its height in the Renaissance, the papacy employed more than 100 humanist scholars.

The East—Near and Far

The strategic outreach of the Vatican during the Renaissance is represented in two other sections of the exhibit. One section displays treasured manuscripts from Isidore of Kiev to the Bulgarian czar, from an early Cairo edition of the Gospel of Luke in Arabic, to an Ethiopian Psalter, to early fragments of Arabic manuscripts in Spain. An edition of the Gospel of Matthew in Persian is displayed next to a Gregorian *Calendar for All Eternity* in Armenian. The other section is a most intriguing record of the great Christian humanist missionaries in East Asia.

Beginning in the 1540s, Italian, Portuguese, and later Spanish, German, and French missionaries carried western ideas and technologies to the Orient. St. Francis Xavier landed in Japan in 1549. Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) established a mission in southern China in the 1580s. The exhibit contains a rare and beautifully executed Chinese portrait of Matteo Ricci, the most famous of all the Jesuit missionaries to East Asia, a manuscript letter of appreciation to the church from Japanese officials in 1621, and an extensive collection of maps of Asia from the Vatican Library. Printed Chinese translations of western science and technologies from the early 17th century are also on display.

Those unable to travel to Washington to visit the exhibit can study the treasures in a beautifully printed 323-page catalogue published by the Library of Congress. The catalogue contains full-color photographs of all the most important manuscripts as well as extensive and informative essays by different scholars on the following areas: The Vatican and Its Library, The Popes and Humanism, The Ancient City Restored, The Recovery of the Exact Sciences of Antiquity, The Life Sciences and Medicine, Music and the Renaissance Papacy, Eastern Churches, and East Asia in the Vatican Vaults.

The lasting cultural impact of the exhibit will be to bury in the cemetery of dishonesty the attempt of 20th-century academics to replace Christian humanism with their invented, false construct of "secular humanism." It also contributes considerable evidence to disprove the false dichotomies between science and religion, between faith and reason, along with the overall Enlightenment myth that Classical learning, art, science, and Christianity are mutually incompatible.