

The Council of Florence: a great turning-point in world history

The following are summaries of speeches given and greetings sent to the Schiller Institute's conference on the 550th anniversary of the Council of Florence, held in Rome, May 5-6, 1989.

The legacy of the Council of Florence

His Eminence Cardinal Mario Luigi Ciappi, Theologian of the Papal Household, member, Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints, delivered greetings to the conference in person, speaking of "The Protagonists of the Council." (See page 25.)

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the founder of the Schiller Institutes internationally, and president of the Schiller Institute in the Federal Republic of Germany, spoke on the theme of "Nicolaus of Cusa and the Council of Florence." She discussed the great German churchman's contribution to organizing the Council and his role in shaping the conception of man "in the living image of God" which marks Christianity as a unique turning-point in human history. No other monotheistic religion, she noted, had contemplated God's becoming man, and this is the essence of man's liberation.

"Let us seek in ourselves what Christ is!" Cusa proclaimed. "If we do not find him in ourselves, then we will not find him at all." Cusa believed that man is the microcosm in which the various elements of the macrocosm are united, thus uniting the order of creation. Each man recapitulates within himself the whole history of evolution, from the inorganic to the spiritual—"an incredibly modern idea for a thinker of the 15th century," Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche said.

Today, she stressed, the primary task before humanity is to create a new just world economic order, and for that, Cusa's conception of man is essential. For, as in the time of the Council of Florence, a just union will be attained only on the same high level as the *Filioque* principle itself. The 550th anniversary of the Council of Florence serves as the occasion to revive this grand proof of man's capacity to act on the basis of reason, with our theme this time being the realization of a plan for the development of all peoples. (Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche's speech was published in full in the *New Federalist* newspaper, May 26, 1989.)

Father Luigi Iammarrone, OFM Conv., professor at

the "Seraphicum" Pontifical University in Rome, spoke on the topic of "The 550th Anniversary of the Dogmatic Redefinition of the Eternal Origin of the Holy Spirit from the Father and From the Son or Through the Son, Emanated by the Ecumenical Council of Florence in 1439." He referred to April 13-14, 1439, when the future Cardinal Bessarion, then Metropolitan of Nicea, presented a critical oration that brought together the Greek and Latin positions on the Trinity question, by showing that there was no real contradiction between the Latin *Filioque*, "and from the Son," and the Greek formulation *per Filium*, "through the Son." The Latin formulation stressed the equality of Father and Son, while the Greek formulation gave emphasis to the priority in time of the Father. Bessarion was able to show that the most revered of the early Greek Doctors of the Church, had accepted the idea of an active role of Christ in communicating the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and this was key to persuading the Greek delegation that they could accept the *Filioque* and union with the West.

Father Isydor Patrylo, OSBM, superior general of the Basilian Order of St. Josaphat, spoke on "The Metropolitan Isidore." Born in the Peloponnesus between 1380 and 1390, Isidore was a man of great talent and intellect who rapidly rose in the Greek Orthodox Church and was sent in 1434 to the Council of Basil as the spokesman of the Byzantine delegation. In 1436 he was named Metropolitan of Kiev, the biggest church province in all of Christendom. He was bitterly opposed by Grand Duke of Moscow Vasily. A zealous promoter of union with the West, "not for political motives but by conviction," Isidore convinced his fellow Greeks to accept the *Filioque* doctrine, but was arrested when he returned to Moscow and expelled. "He can be considered not only an architect of the Union in Florence, but also the spiritual father of the Union of Brest [where the Church of Kiev officially returned to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church in 1592] and its daughter, the present day Ukrainian Church, which is free and prosperous in the Western lands, but even today finds itself in the catacombs in its native land." (The speech is published in full in *New Federalist*, May 26, 1989.)

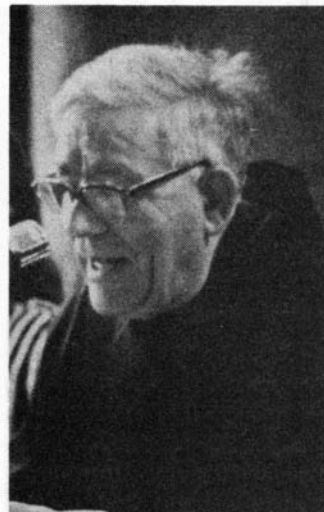
Father George Zabarian, procurator in Rome of the Patriarchate of Cilicia of the Armenians, spoke on "The Participation of the Armenians at the Council of Florence." He described the "*Decretum pro Armenis*" which was drawn up by the Armenian Catholicos Constantine VI at the Council of



Cardinal Mario Luigi Ciappi



Helga Zepp-LaRouche



Father Luigi Iammarrone



Father George Zabarian

Claudio Rossi, Nora Hamerman

Florence and his legates, which included agreement on the procession of the Holy Spirit “from the Father and from the Son,” purgatory, and the primacy of the Roman Pope. Most historians say this agreement had no effect in Armenia, but in fact while the events in Florence were probably unknown to most of the Armenian prelates in Eastern Armenia, in the Kingdom of Cilicia and especially the Patriarchate of Sis there was a serious effort to maintain the agreement and spread the notion of the *Filioque*. (Published in *New Federalist*, May 26, 1989.)

Father Luca Kelati, S. Ord. Cist., Rector of the Ethiopian Pontifical College in Rome, read a letter sent in November of 1440 by the Abbot Nicodemus of the Ethiopians, from Jerusalem, to Eugene IV. The letter declares the fealty of the Ethiopian Church to the Pope in Rome, and adds: “I would have come to thee, but I have feared the Muslims, if [my coming] were evident. Therefore I have sent my sons to thee, who bring the present writing, so that they can soon come back to me and arrive by Easter, and then go to the Negus of Ethiopia and report all which Thou wilt have said. So complete what Thou hast begun! For God has made Thee greater than all the Bishops and has placed Thee on the See of St. Peter so that Thou mayest feed the sheep of Christ. . . . Blessed art Thou who labor for the faith like the Apostles! . . . Those who were before thee did not do thus.

“And mayest Thou complete [the work]. . . . Thou, seek to reunify together all Christians so that the faith be only one: just as the 308 [Fathers of the Council] met together in Nicea of the true faith.”

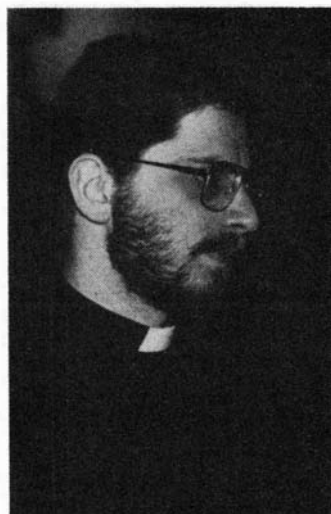
Father Michel Aoun, a priest of the Lebanese Maronite Church, spoke of “The Maronite Church and the Council of Florence.” He recounted how the Maronites, founded by St. Maron in Antioch (Syria), combatted the monophysite heresy. Pope Eugene IV, the Pope of the Florentine Council,

organized a missionary effort to the Christian East by Franciscans, which also went to the Maronites, surrounded by Muslims and considered heretical by many because of their physical separation from Rome. “Friar John, the superior of the Franciscans in Beirut, arrived at the Council of Florence. He came in the name of John Al-Giagi, patriarch of the Mount of Lebanon, to render homage to the Vicar of Christ and assure him that the chief of the Maronite nation accepted in advance all the decisions of the assembly,” reported Father Aoun. “In the midst of a war which has been destroying Lebanon for 15 years, the Maronite Church, with all the Eastern churches, is called upon today to rediscover its identity to actualize again its mission in a world which more than ever needs to discover the meaning of love and of truth,” he concluded.

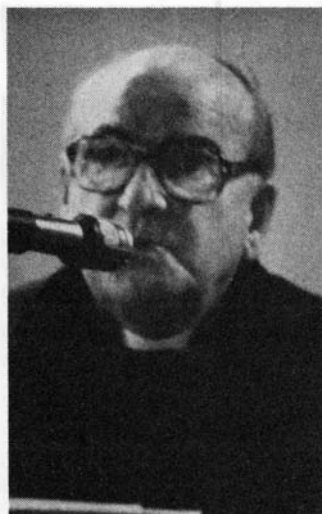
Father Antonio Coccia, OFM Conv., Secretary of the Bessarion Academy, Rome, submitted an article, “The Library of Cardinal Bessarion and the Donation to Venice.” One of the great protagonists of the Council of Florence was the Metropolitan of Nicea, the young John (Basil) Bessarion, who was 36 years old in 1439. Made a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church in 1440, he was the leader of the pro-*Filioque* faction of the Greek Church, and was selected to read out for the Greeks the Bull proclaiming the union of the Eastern and Western churches on July 6, 1439. He had an intense love of books and a burning desire to save classical Greek culture; therefore he, was constantly acquiring books despite his limited means and brought his extensive library to the West before the fall of Constantinople in 1453. He was the great defender of Platonism within the Roman Catholic Church. Although his home and Platonic Academy were in Rome, near the Church of the Holy Apostles, he decided to leave his library to St. Mark’s in Venice, so that it would be equally accessible to Eastern and Western scholars.



Father Luca Kelati



Father Michel Aoun



Prof. Dario Composta



Prof. Lando Bartoli

Claudio Rossi, Nora Hamerman

Father Anselmo Giabbani, Camaldulensian Congregation, OSB, editor in chief of *Vita Monastica*, submitted a writing, "The Monastic Conception of Ambrogio Traversari," a biographical study of the superior general of the Camaldulensian Order Traversari (1386-1439) who was more than anyone else the mastermind of the Council. Traversari spent 30 years without ever leaving the monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence, yet had enormous influence on his times through the collaborators he drew to his cell, including leading political, scientific, and artistic personalities such as the architect Brunelleschi, the painter Lorenzo Monaco, the banker Cosimo de' Medici, and the Pope Eugene IV. The article stresses Traversari's dedication to the Doctors of the Church Ambrose and Augustine, and his remarkable conception of friendship: "Humanistic friendship [in the classical Greek sense] is the expression of *eros*, or of human possessive pleasure. This is surpassed and elevated by the Christian revelation of *agapē*, the expression of divine love shared by the conscious and mature believer to experience the very love of God which extends without limits to every being, because loved by God, and is based on oblation dynamism, beyond and often against one's personal interest."

If Traversari's teachings had prevailed, Giabbani concludes, "we would not have had, in all probability, either the Reformation or Counter-Reformation. Now, after five centuries, the Church, with the Vatican II Council, has taken up again that tradition, of which Traversari presents himself as the master, of the new ecclesiastic and monastic way, on behalf of the supremacy, which has to be assured, by faith, to the Holy Spirit, which is the spirit of freedom and of liberation, above laws and structures which have value only if they are at His service, and hence [assured], to the pre-eminence of brotherly love toward all, which is the only

commandment left us by the Lord and is the only force capable of bringing peace to mankind."

The Council and the birth of the Renaissance in art, science, and economic theory

Prof. Dario Composta, SDB Urbaniana University, Rome, spoke on the theme of "Economics and Ethics in 15th-Century Florence: St. Antonino of Florence, Moralizer of the Florentine Renaissance." One of the most difficult topics in theology and moral philosophy has to do with the relations between business and ethical standards, Father Dario began. He traced the history of this problem in Florence, Europe's major banking center of the era, starting in the 13th century, and outlined the financial crisis after the Black Death of 1348. Holding the Council in Florence, after the plague again broke out in its original site, Ferrara, in 1439, posed a major financial problem, and it was the generous offer of the Medici that allowed the Pope to move it to Florence. St. Antonino wrote a *Summa* on economics clarifying the problem of usury. He distinguished for the first time between the *principal intention* of the investor, whether it be simply to make profit on money (usury, a deadly sin), or whether it be as a *means* to facilitate real creation of wealth, in which case a modest return is not usurious.

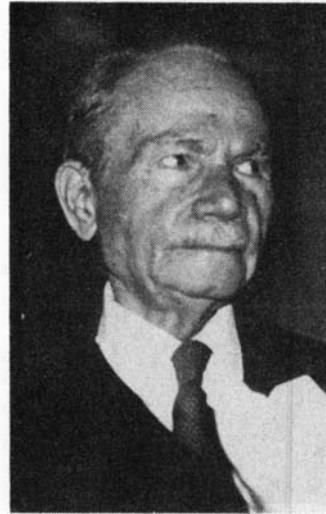
"Today, neo-capitalism has made the banks into a Golden Calf before which not only the workforce is supposed to bow, but also businessmen and even politicians. The abuses of world high finance and especially of the International Monetary Fund have been denounced by the most recent Encyclicals and especially by the *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* of 1987-88, opposing to the enormous mortgage of profits of inter-



Paulgerd Jesberg



Prof. Bruno Barosi



Prof. Giuseppe Padellaro



Dr. Fausto Tapergi

Claudio Rossi, Nora Hamerman

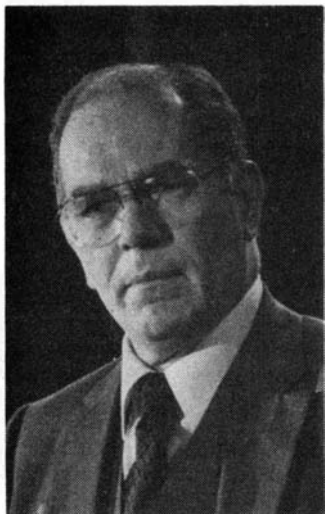
national bank loans—the ‘structures of sin’—the concept of ‘solidarity’ between world politics and economics on the basis of Christian and human ethics.”

Prof. Lando Bartoli, of the University of Florence, architect and author, member of the commission to study the Brunelleschi Dome, gave a presentation on Brunelleschi’s method of construction of the famous dome in which a spherical cupola is embedded geometrically within the non-spherical dome (it is an eight-side “cloister vault” raised over an octagonal base). He used slides and a cut-away model, built by Claudio Rossi of the Schiller Institute, to illustrate his hypothesis. Dr. Bartoli stressed the drama of Brunelleschi’s solution to the dome construction “without scaffolding,” a problem that gave the Florentines nightmares and almost made them repent of the project. Brunelleschi was treated as a madman and even expelled from many meetings of the building committee, before his design was finally approved.

Engineer **Paulgerd Jesberg**, city architect of Wiesbaden, West Germany, editor in chief of the review *Baukultur*, and professor of architectural theory at the Wiesbaden Hochschule, gave a slide-illustrated talk on “The Ideal City as the Aim of Humanistic Education.” He described the eight-pointed star as the humanistic concept of the ideal city which appeared first in the Renaissance, following the Council of Florence in 1439, where East and West, antiquity and Christianity came together in an attempt to unify diversity. The Florentine-born Antonio Avernio (1400-69), who took the nickname Filarete (friend of virtue) wrote a treatise on architecture which first illustrated the ideal city. He made the bronze doors of St. Peter’s that illustrated the Council, in 1445. His treatise used the Platonic dialogue form. His city became the symbol of spiritual freedom, the freedom to grow and develop of every individual. Education played a key role in his city plans.

Sen. Paolo Emilio Taviani, senator of the Italian Republic, and president, National Scientific Commission for the Columbus Celebrations, submitted an essay, “Toscanelli,” celebrating the work of one of the lay protagonists of the Council of Florence, who used the opportunity of the visit of many foreigners to his city to debrief them about geography. Known as the most illustrious mathematician of his era, the Florentine physician Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli, born in 1397, lifelong friend of Nicolaus of Cusa who dedicated his work on the isoperimetric theorem to him, was “one of the great protagonists of the Columbian epic.” His exchange of letters with the self-taught navigator Christopher Columbus was of crucial help in launching Columbus’s 1492 voyage to the New World. “It is likely that worldly events thrust Toscanelli to abandon contemplating the stars and mathematics to intensify geographical researches, which earlier had been a pastime. . . . The taking of Constantinople by the Turks had ruined many Venetian, Genoese, and Florentine families.”

Prof. Bruno Barosi, director of the Acoustical Physics Laboratory of the Cremona International Institute of Violin Building, offered a brief philosophical paper on the issues at stake in restoring antique art. The true work of art must be in harmony and syntony with the universe, he asserted, and every work of art contains a message for man. Restoration of works of art has to be undertaken with the awareness that the maker is no longer around to defend his creation. The restorer must tend to “conserve” any material testimony that remains of the human presence. He cited two outstanding examples of a correct approach to restoration, the 1987 “Cremona Charter” for methodology of safeguarding and restoring stringed instruments, and the ongoing restoration of the Cathedral of Cremona. The charter marks a new era in conservation because it provides the ordinary citizen with an aware-



Lyndon LaRouche, Jr.



Prof. Ali Mazaheri



Sen. Vincenzo Carollo



Mirella Cece

Claudio Rossi, Nora Hanerman, Philip Ulanovsky

ness of the principles of restoration. Barosi underlined the role of the Schiller Institute and of Lyndon LaRouche in fighting for the lower tuning fork which will “also allow us to preserve and prolong the life of great masterpieces of the past such as the violins of Stradivari, Amati, and Guarneri del Gesù.” The same *human* standards are being applied in restoring the beautiful Romanesque Cathedral of Cremona, which was about to collapse. Barosi concluded, “Only man exists: Everything is the projection of the ideas and of the mind of man.”

Prof. Giuseppe Padellaro, vice president of the Dante Alighieri Society, presented the work of the society, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. “Where politics divides, culture unites,” he stated, and recounted the Dante Society’s worldwide campaigns to bring the language and culture of Italy, centered on its greatest poet, to every corner of the globe, as well as teaching it to foreigners inside Italy.

Dr. Fausto Tapergi, industrialist from Padua, presented a paper on the necessity of art, not as an ornamental or optional activity, but as necessary to human existence as practical activity. He compared the qualitative decline of art and poetry in Italy today, to the higher levels attained during the formation of the nation a century ago.

The strategic and moral crisis today

Lyndon LaRouche, a co-founder of the Schiller Institute, former Democratic U.S. presidential candidate, and current political prisoner in the United States, sent a letter which was read to the conference on the importance of the Council of Florence in providing relief from the Dark Age and the impetus for the Golden Renaissance. (See page 24.)

Prof. Ali Mazaheri, professor emeritus, Higher School

of Social Sciences, Paris, France: “Lyndon LaRouche Is Presiding Over Our Gathering.” Dr. Mazaheri, renowned French-Iranian historian, focused his brief remarks on the “illegal and unjust arrest of a great humanist, perpetrated by a band of liars which does not shrink from greater crimes, only illustrates better the greatness of his soul, the justice of his ideas, the elevation of his spirit and the nobility of his teaching.” Mazaheri denounced the “New Yalta” conspiracy between Moscow and the U.S. leaders, as a new “Golden Horde,” created to keep the people in obedience. If the injustice against the philosopher LaRouche is not reversed, if the American people does not “shake itself up,” then the gulags are not far away from America and Western Europe, he warned.

Sen. Vincenzo Carollo, former senator of the Italian Republic and former president, Region of Sicily, author of several books on the present Soviet threat, spoke on “The State of Justice in the World Today,” making particular mention of the case of the prosecution of Lyndon LaRouche and his associates in the United States. If LaRouche had been a drug pusher, Carollo noted ironically, he would be at the pinnacle of power, and instead he has been thrown into jail for leading the war against drug legalization in Ibero-America and elsewhere.

Attorney **Mirella Cece**, of the European Christian-Liberal Movement, Rome, spoke on “Humanity and Solidarity, Fixed Points of a Just Society.” The Council of Florence held 550 years ago, opened participation in the Church to the faithful and sanctioned the ideals of the true and the beautiful as the basis of inspiration for society. “Today as then, these ideals clash with a world made of power, of appearance, and of illegality, such as that which has struck down the humanist Lyndon LaRouche,” she said.

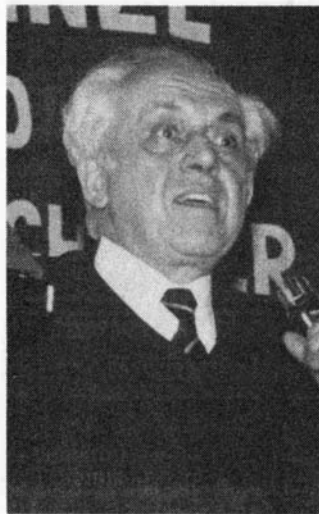
Dr. Victor Trad, Lebanese Christian Resistance, Rome, spoke on “Lebanon Today.” Lebanon as the historic emblem



Dr. Victor Trad



Dr. Alfredo Jalife



Prof. Luigi Zampetti



Sen. Carlo Tani

Claudio Rossi, Nora Hammerman

and defender of peace and democracy in the Middle East has become a hotbed of war and a target for the expansionism of aggressive neighbors. (See page 34.)

Dr. Alfredo Jalife from Mexico is secretary of the Executive Committee of the World Catholic Reformed Lebanese Maronite Union and journalist and professor of psycho-endocrinology. His speech took up the decadence of Western civilization, beginning with the various "junk" phenomena from junk bonds to junk food and junk sex which have spread from the United States in particular. He attacked the hoaxes perpetrated in the name of "ecology," *perestroika*, and the Trilateral Commission, then scored the Bush administration's foreign policy as fraudulent, based on perpetuating misery in Ibero-America through debt collection, and in Lebanon. If the war on drugs and the war on terrorism are supposed to be high on the Bush agenda, how can the U.S. condone Syria's actions in Lebanon, he asked, when Syria is the mother of terrorism and drugs in the Middle East. The West's Trilateral Commission is in league with the "Eastern Trilateral" of the Satanic Assad of Syria, Qaddafi of Libya, and Khomeini of Iran, he continued, and the policy problem goes beyond the question of Lebanon per se. *Executive Intelligence Review* is alone among the American media to have made an outcry over the genocide of the Lebanese people, Jalife continued, and he called for a revival of the philosophy and rationality of the Council of Florence and the Renaissance as the only way to halt the decay of Western civilization.

Prof. Luigi Zampetti, University of Milan, spoke on the topic of "An Economics Not Based on Liberalism." He denounced the degradation of economics by observing that drug-related activity accounts for almost one-third of finance capital, and called for a "human ecology" which would situate the well-being of man at the center of economics.

Webster Tarpley, president of the Schiller Institute of

the United States, brought the conference to a close by demonstrating the need for intervention into the United States from the standpoint of the *Filioque*, the principle of the divine spark of creative potential in every human being, that divided the free nations of the West from the despotisms of the East. The map of the world today still reflects the division of those who accepted or rejected the Council of Florence, Tarpley stated. He brought the greetings of LaRouche and seven associates convicted of political crimes in the United States, describing the perilous process of tyranny which revealed itself in their trials and sentencing. Tarpley then sketched the strategic danger of the pre-revolutionary situation inside the Russian empire, as the collapse of Moscow's power increases the desperation in the Kremlin and therefore increases the danger of war.

Science and cultural optimism, versus the false ecology movement

Sen. Carlo Tani, senator of the Italian Republic and city councilman in Rome, opened the second day of the conference sessions with his greetings. He praised the "courageous" initiative of the Schiller Institute in holding the conference on the theme of the Council of Florence, and asked for a detailed report on the entire proceedings for circulation within the Parliament and government. He stated that the modern phenomenon which most contradicts the spirit of the Council is that of the so-called ecology movement.

His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Palazzini, STD, JUD, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Beatification and Canonization of Saints, sent a written message to the conference, on the subject of "Man at the Summit of God's Creation." (See page 33.)

Sen. Luigi Noè, former Italian senator in the European



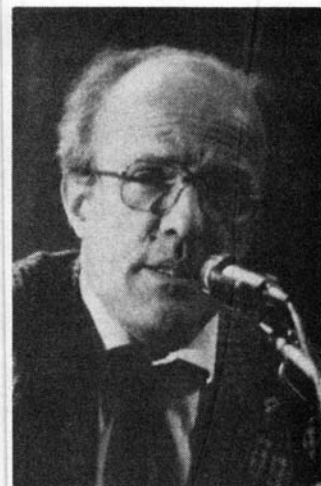
Sen. Luigi Noè



Mrs. Rita Matteuzzi



Prof. Corrado Perrone



Prof. Francesco Premuda

Claudio Rossi, Nora Hancerman

Parliament, now vice-president of ENEA, National Agency for Alternative Energies, spoke on "Waste and Nuclear Energy: Two Examples of Green Folly." He decried the ill-informed and unobjective activities of the media in whipping the public into a state of mind incapable of solving these problems. Italy was stampeded into abandoning nuclear energy after Chernobyl and is now 45-48% dependent on petroleum imports, even though when the Russians finally made their detailed reports of what occurred at Chernobyl, it was totally clear this could not happen in the West. Senator Noè described the insanity: Italy's projected nuclear power plants at Trino Vercellese and Montalto di Castro, designed as some of the safest in the world, were dismantled and the years of careful work that went into them thrown away.

Mrs. Rita Matteuzzi, speaking on behalf of the Hunting, Fishing, and Environment Association (CPA) of Italy, first responded to the question of what her organization's fight for hunters' rights against the Green lobby had to do with the conference on the Council of Florence, by evoking the commandment of Genesis to man to be fruitful, multiply, replenish the Earth, and have dominion over nature. She charged that the "ecologists" seem to regard animal life more highly than human life, and are in fact acting on behalf of an oligarchy which hopes to appropriate control of land and to charge exorbitant fees from hunters. The CPA, she stated, is defending not only the rights of citizen-hunters, but is fighting the real pollutants, by its absolute opposition to drugs and abortion, and in running candidates for office, and will fight side-by-side with other groups opposing the red-green alliance, which she characterized as "neo-pagan" and "pro-Dark Age." She pointed out that the anti-hunting lobby is openly backed by the Communist, Socialist, and Green parties.

Prof. Corrado Perrone of Florence, president of Fed-erplastica (federation of plastics manufacturers) spoke on the topic "Plastics and Environment," criticizing the law imposing a prohibitively high tax on plastic shopping bags which

is based on the spurious assertion that they "pollute." The environmentalists don't want to protect nature, he charged; they want to destroy industry. He cited a recent Swiss government study which shows that to make a paper bag of the same size as a comparable plastic bag, it takes four times more energy, causes six times more pollution of the atmosphere, and 76 times more water pollution. Four times more solid waste is produced, and moreover, the trees so beloved of the Greens, are cut down to produce paper bags! Let's say "enough," Perrone proclaimed, to the enthusiastic applause of the audience. This is a law in favor of pollution, not against it.

Prof. Antonio Vitale, director of the National Institute of Nuclear Physics at the University of Bologna, and **Prof. Antonio Bertin**, professor of physics at the University of Bologna, Italian collaborators of American physicist Steven Jones, as well as **Prof. Francesco Premuda**, Nuclear Engineering Department of the University of Bologna, all addressed various aspects of the "cold fusion" issue. Following brief remarks by Vitale and Bertin, Professor Premuda gave a more extended presentation on the Fleischmann-Pons experiments. He began by noting that the fusion process created the stars and that physically speaking we are the children of the stars, which makes us "children of God through fusion reactions, amid infinite mysteries and treasures of beauty. Man is the protagonist destined to save with himself all of creation. . . . He must today be capable of defending science, endowed with the sense of the mysterious and the new, with ethics and faith, according to the ideas of the Pope, in order to face with the best culture and technologies the realization of the full potential of the human eco-system (also in the Third World), in a natural environment which is respected, and if possible, improved." He suggested a hypothesis he termed "fusion chain reactions" as a partial explanation of the remarkable results attained by the "cold fusion" experiments.