

Tradition Family Property (TFP) Committed to Causing Confusion over Fatima

[\(New Era World News\)](#)

Error on the Right: Tradition Family and Property

BOTH ULTRA-LIBERALS and ultra-conservatives have their own version of the Virgin Mary, a version they think should be adopted by the rest of the Church, a version that they spare no cost in advancing. Disobedience might be expected on the left, but it is surprising when it comes from the right as with the zealots from Tradition Family and Property (TFP) and their subsidiary, *"America Needs Fatima."*

Tradition Family and Property

Tradition Family and Property (TFP) is a traditionalist community founded in 1960 by Prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, a Brazilian politician and intellectual activist. TFP claims to be "the world's largest anti-communist and anti-socialist network of Catholic inspiration." As such, it was founded to "confront the profound crisis shaking the modern world" ([1](#)), a crisis rooted in something it refers to as "Cultural Marxism".

Although it is to be lauded for its efforts in this area, it seems, nonetheless, overly committed to anti-socialism and too *uncritical* of capitalism. According to TFP, the social-cultural problem facing the modern world is rooted in "materialism", but when considering the social effects of materialism, TFP limits its analysis to socialism and then proceeds to an unsustainable conclusion that the American Founders (certainly not socialists) rooted the country in moral values.

"Since [materialism is the root of socialism](#), today's widespread practical materialism prepares the ground for the germination of the

socialist seed.

*“By agreeing to compromise on moral values, one betrays the principles contained in the **legacy given to the Founding Fathers**. An **America of moral values** is the foundation of the nation and especially the bulwark of the conservative movement.”*

A review of [Benjamin Franklin's autobiography](#) in which he turns fornication and adultery (which he referred to as venery-[Article 12](#)) into virtues, as long as they are practiced according to Aristotle's maxim of moderation, manifests a serious misunderstanding of virtue by some of the founders. If that is not enough, consider that the US Constitution is a secular document void of any mention of God, divine law, or even natural law, and it is easy to see that the [Christian morality that the folks at TFP want to sustain, was not a concern of the Founding Fathers](#) whom they applaud.

The Christian founding motif is a typical theme of the religious right coming from the Conservative Camp. Thus, it is not surprising that, under the guise of anti-Socialism, TFP has successfully forged political connections with prominent people on the political and religious right along with whom they have become advocates of a type of American Manifest Destiny associated with Neoconservatism.

TFP is so intent on mounting a counter-revolution against Communism, and promoting renewal and advancing of Christian civilization, that it seems to get confused and conflates those goals with its *Americanism*. For example, one [prolifer blogger](#) recently posted the following:

*“At the Arkansas March for life, I was handed a pamphlet from an organization called TFP (Tradition, Family, Property). This is apparently a paleoconservative Catholic movement. The pamphlet was explaining how we need to return to the values of historical Christendom. It **listed one such value as representative government.**”*

*“This is how deep the “liberal mind trap goes (blogger is correctly Identifying representative government, and therefore TFP itself, with “liberalism”). Even if you are a Catholic who explicitly recognizes that authority comes from God, you’ll still probably toss a pinch of incense to republicanism without even blinking an eye. The mind trap goes so deep that even an organization which expressly wants a return to the values of the medieval past, still doesn’t even think of the fact that **medieval Christendom was not democratic.** (or a republican form of government).”*

[Nor were the main architects of the Constitution](#) (Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison) [Christian](#). Nonetheless, TFP leaders hold these men up as shining examples of the type of elite class that should lead America in this its hour of great need. According to a [TFP publication](#),

“Outrage against the liberal establishment has sparked increased talk about America’s Founding Fathers. However, few remember to note, much less ponder on how they were members of the social, cultural, and political elite of their time.”

TFP holds up the Founding Fathers as elite men to imitate without demonstrating that they realize the Fathers whom they honor were the authors of the liberalism they profess to be crusading against. Rather, they advocate the need for a similar contemporary elite. Clearly, for members of TFP, those on the political left are too decadent to lead; leadership for our times requires men and women of virtue on the right. Unfortunately, members of TFP seemingly fail to realize that the contemporary Conservative Republicans they honor, represent the liberal tradition (economically-politically) they ashen. Thus, under the guise of fighting communism, they unwittingly and at least partially promote capitalism, although John Hovart’s Book, *“Return to Order”* is a move in the correct direction (it would benefit by a more precise critique of finance and usury). Nonetheless, they

have focused myopically on communism.

“Let us eschew all muddled, anti-elitist thinking and rhetoric and remain faithful to America’s principled and battle-seasoned anti-communist and anti-socialist past. Should we do this, the troubles we are going through may well become America’s “finest hour.”

It might be a hard pill for TFP members to swallow, but as Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland, stated: “Communism is dead.” Fighting communism is not going to make America great again. TFP could use a dose of Saint Padre Pio, a Catholic who when asked to compare communism and capitalism said that

“They are both indescribably evil. In the East they deny God from the head to the belly button. In the West, they deny Him from the belly button to the feet.”

In other words, both communism and capitalism are two sides of the same coin, viz., materialism. The East under communism was guilty of scientific or atheistic materialism (in the head) while the West was guilty of hedonistic materialism (sexual organs – belly button to feet).

Thus, TFP falls into the trap of elevating the right due to its sole critique of those on the left. Materialism is *not* limited to communism/socialism (or to “Cultural Marxism”); it is manifest in capitalism as well. If TFP continues to conduct its crusade against socialism, it might end up being guilty of advancing the very liberalism that it claims to be combatting.

Unfortunately, although TFP representatives speak admirably of Christian culture, they often seem over embroiled in the liberal economic-political program of Americanism as evidenced by their anti-papal stance, and willingness to act as moral arbiter of presidents while concomitantly taking pope’s to task on Catholic Social Teaching applied to America, among other things.

No Problem Disagreeing with the Pope's Judgments

With the outbreak of the Iraqi War in 1992, leaders of the TFP such as Vice President John Horvat lined up behind President Bush in full support of the invasion. Mr. Horvat wrote the following letter to President Bush:

9 March 2003

*The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500*

Dear Mr. President:

"I am writing to express the American TFP's full support for our Armed Forces which you, as Commander-in-Chief, have sent into combat against the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq.

As you have often said, the United States, as a sovereign nation, has a right to declare war when its people, territorial integrity, or interests are attacked or threatened. Our sovereignty allows us to make this decision independent of international organizations or bodies.

Moreover, natural law does not distinguish between defensive or offensive war. It is sufficient that the threat be real and menacing. That same law supports the right of a sovereign state to come to the aid of an oppressed people that suffers under the yoke

of an unjust regime, and, depending on the circumstances, this natural law right may even oblige in charity.

The September 11 attacks underscored the existence of an enemy whose ideologues proclaim their goal shamelessly: the extermination of America and Western civilization.

Nevertheless, throughout the world a chorus of socialists, liberal clergy, radical pacifists, anarchists, and leftist non-governmental organizations dispute not only the cause for this war, but even America's right to declare war. Such a position is unacceptable since it would leave America dishonored and defenseless before a very real threat."

According to Mr. Horvat, Pope John Paul II must be either an "unacceptable" "socialist, liberal, radical or anarchist" because **Saint John Paul was among those who not only opposed the war but counseled President Bush not to wage it.**

In 1991, John Paul II opposed the Gulf War and publicly appealed to U.S. President George H. W. Bush *not* to wage it. In 2003, he again opposed the war in Iraq and appealed to President George W. Bush to refrain from engaging in it. According to the [New York Times](#), the pope

"...expressed his strongest opposition yet to a potential war in Iraq today, describing it as a "defeat for humanity" and urging world leaders to try to resolve disputes with Iraq through diplomatic means."

"No to war!" the pope said during his annual address to scores of diplomatic emissaries to the Vatican, an exhortation that referred in part to Iraq, a country he mentioned twice."

“War cannot be decided upon, even when it is a matter of ensuring the common good, except as the very last option, and in accordance with very strict conditions, without ignoring the consequences for the civilian population both during and after the military operations.”

The Pope continued to oppose the war even after it started in 2004. He composed a [formal address to President George W. Bush](#) in which he stated that

*“You are very familiar with the **unequivocal position of the Holy See in this regard**, expressed in numerous documents, through direct and indirect contacts, and in the many diplomatic efforts which have been made since you visited me, first at Castelgandolfo on 23 July 2001, and again in this Apostolic Palace on 28 May 2002.”*

- [Cardinal Ratzinger](#) also argued that **“reasons sufficient for unleashing a war against Iraq did not exist,”** in part because:

“Proportion between the possible positive consequences and the sure negative effect of the conflict was not guaranteed. On the contrary, it seems clear that the negative consequences will be greater than anything positive that might be obtained.”

Clearly, Pope John Paul II, then Cardinal Ratzinger and Mr. Horvat held differing views about just war. Mr. Horvat however, had no problem playing teacher to presidents while disagreeing with his own pope, the Universal Shepherd and Head of State equal to the president in diplomatic rank and exceeding him in spiritual authority, while Mr Horvat has neither diplomatic rank nor teaching authority in the Church. But that did not stop him. He even presented his teachings about Just War to the president thereby helping the president to justify his opposition to the Pope. **It sounds as if Mr. Horvat was more loyal to his Country than to his Church**, something TFP has been warned about by bishops in Latin America . According to the [Brazilian](#)

Bishop Castro de Meyer:

*“There is a visceral anticlericalism in TFP: everything that comes from the clergy is prejudicially received. Basically, it holds that all priests are ignorant, not very zealous or interesting, and have other such qualities. Well, then, keeping in mind the divine Constitution of the Church which was instituted by Jesus Christ, **TFP’s habitual anti-clericalism, latent, makes it an heretical sect,** and therefore, as I have said, is animated by a principle contrary to the dogma established by Jesus Christ in the constitution of His Church”*

“Individuals become incapable of seeing objective reality, of perceiving even fundamental errors, because of this inversion of following a lay person (referring to TFP founder Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira) instead of the legitimate Shepherds of the Holy Church.”

TFP not only had a problem with Pope John Paul II, it also has one with Pope Francis whom they also would like correct and to tutor. In regards to the recent Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, [TFP tellingly published this papal broadside:](#)

*“In particular, **the pope has directly or indirectly countenanced the beliefs** that obedience to God’s Law can be impossible or undesirable, and **that the Church should sometimes accept adultery as compatible with being a practising Catholic.**”*

WAR IS MORE WITH CHURCH THAN WITH WORLD AND DEVIL

Since, TFP leaders have no problem lecturing popes on Just War Theory and moral theology , it should *not* be surprising that members of TFP have boldly professed to [“resist the pope to his face”](#) so much so that at times, it seems that they have decided that the war they’re waging is a war with the Church, rather than with a fallen world. Nor

is it surprising that the name “Hovart” (Marian Hovart, the sister of John Hovart) appears on the list of literary architects behind the [resistance declaration](#), a declaration that is an invitation to engage the “heretic **Karol Wojtyła aka John Paul II** in dialogue on how he had deviated from what the perennial Magisterium of the Church taught.”

Although Marian Horvat, Ph.D formed a new group “*Tradition in Action*” that dissociated from the TFP, both Hovarts harbor an animus toward Vatican Council II and the modern papacy, an animus that they have learned to tone down so that they can better work from within inside the Church rather than as suspect laity compromised by association with priests that have been suspended *a divinis* (meaning that they are canonically prohibited from exercising ministries such as Holy Mass and the sacrament of confession).

According to Catholic tradition, the Church Militant is involved in a threefold war against the world, the flesh and the devil; the church is *not* a fourth candidate on the threefold list. The Church *cannot* go to war with itself because any kingdom divided against itself cannot stand ([Mark 3:24](#)). That does not stop TFP however from waging war against the Church; worse, those waging the war with the Church are not even clerics or shepherds of the flock – **they are laymen** who have judged themselves important and competent enough to correct popes and bishops. At least that is what it seems when we read many of the documents coming forth from this camp. To those who asked Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira, founder of TFP, why contend with bishops and cardinals when there were so many evils in the world outside the Church, Plinio replied:

“If the enemy is storming the (church) walls, everyone must unite. But if it has penetrated the citadel (presumably the Vatican), then it is not enough to fight outside the walls, but also within the walls”. [\[1\]](#)

Because of actions flowing from this attitude, the bishops of Brazil took decisive action. At their 23rd [General Assembly](#) (April 10-19, 1985) [the Brazilian Bishops](#) drafted a formal notice regarding the TFP:

“The lack of communion of TFP (Society in Defence of Tradition, Family and Property) with the church of Brazil, with its hierarchy, and with the Holy Father is well known.”

“Its esoteric character, religious fanaticism, the cult given to the personality of its founder and head, the abusive use of the name of Most Holy Mary, according to circulated information, cannot in any way merit the approval of the Church.”

“We lament the difficulties flowing from a civil society which presents itself as a Catholic religious entity, without a tie to the legitimate pastors.”

“This being the case, the Bishops of Brazil exhort Catholics not to enroll in the TFP, and not to collaborate with it.”

*Signed by Dom Raymundo Damasceno Asas, the Secretary-General for the
National Bishops of Brazil*

Given these experiences of the Brazilian Bishops, it should not be surprising that TFP has been charged with all of the following:

1. Disobedience to bishops
2. Being a cult
3. Singing hymns of praise to their founder and his mother that belong to Christ and His Mother
4. The rejection of Vatican Council II, which they deem heretical
5. Sedevacantism *i.e.*, the belief that the popes since Vatican II are false popes – that is, the Seat of Peter has been vacant for a long time
6. Dismissing Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict and Pope Francis et

al as heretics

7. Gnosticism or elitism manifest in a *preferential option for the rich* and those who fill their ranks

What Have Other Brazilian Bishops had to Say about TFP?

[Bishop Castro De Meyer](#) knew Dr. Plinio personally; below are excerpts from a letter penned by this Brazilian bishop. The letter appeared in *Le Sel de la Terre*, [no. 28, Spring 1999], in an article entitled "*Documents sur la T.F.P.*".

*"In this case (of TFP), I can only offer the sole advice: pray, pray much, above all the Rosary or at least the five decades of the Rosary, asking the Virgin Mother, Mediatrix of all graces, to enlighten your son and make him see that **TFP is an heretical sect** because, in fact, although they do not say or write it, TFP lives and behaves in accord with a principle which fundamentally undermines the truth of Christianity, that is, of the Catholic Church."*

"In fact, it is de fide that Jesus Christ founded His Church – destined to maintain on earth the true worship of God and to lead souls toward eternal salvation – as an unequal society, composed of two classes: one which governs, teaches and sanctifies, composed of members of the clergy, and the other – the faithful – who receive the teaching, are governed and sanctified. This is a de fide dogma."

"It is a heretical subversion to habitually follow a lay person, therefore, not a member of the Hierarchy– as the spokesman of orthodoxy. Thus, they do not look to what the Church says, what the Bishops say, rather what this or that one says... Nor does it end there: this attitude – even if not openly avowed – actually positions the "leader" as the arbiter of orthodoxy, and is

accompanied by a subtle but real mistrust of the hierarchy and of the clergy in general."

"Well, then, keeping in mind the divine Constitution of the Church which was instituted by Jesus Christ, TFP's habitual anti-clericalism, latent, makes it an heretical sect, and therefore, as I have said, is animated by a principle contrary to the dogma established by Jesus Christ in the constitution of His Church."

*"Perhaps I (once) gave it support beyond a licit point. I retracted it only when it became clear to me that my warnings were not being taken into consideration. It is necessary to pray, because **charismatic fervor produces a certain fanaticism: individuals become incapable of seeing objective reality, of perceiving even fundamental errors, because of this inversion of following a lay person instead of the legitimate Shepherds of the Holy Church.**"*

Associated with its problems with ecclesial authorities, TFP is part of the "Fatima Cabal". It is contributing to confusion in the Church by refusing to accept the Church's official interpretation of the Third Secret of Fatima and the Consecration of Russia to be explored in the following article.

To be Continued: Disguised Error about Papal Consecration of Russia

[1] Plínio CORRÊA DE OLIVEIRA, "[Razões e contra-razões em torno de um tema efervescente](#)", *Catolicismo*, no. 71, November 1956; ID., "[Indulgentes para com o erro, severos para com a Igreja](#)", *Catolicismo*, no. 72, December 1956; ID., "[Não trabalha pela concórdia senão quem luta contra o erro](#)", *Catolicismo*, no. 73, January 1957; Cunha Alvarenga (=José de Azevedo Santos), "Infiltrações comunistas em ambientes católicos", *Catolicismo*, no. 61, January 1956. Along the same lines are three articles on modernism, that

appeared in numbers 81, 82, 83 (Sept.-Oct.-Nov. 1957) with the titles “ *O cinquentenário da Pascendi; Por orgulho repelem toda sujeição* and *Revivem nos modernistas o espírito e os métodos do Jansenismo*”