

DEVELOPMENT OR LIBERATION IN GUATEMALA

This text is the work of a group of missionaries in Guatemala (partially abridged). Its objective is to evaluate, in a critical fashion, the situation and certain activities in the country. At the same time it gives voice to the hope that they share with the people who are their collaborators. (From: CHRONICA, CICM, Sept. 73)

We will attempt here to describe, in summary fashion, the situation in the region of Guatemala where we are working - the province of Escuintla. Escuintla is located in the south, in the mountain range which crosses Guatemala from east to west, and which runs practically parallel with the Pacific Ocean coast at a distance of from 40 to 50 miles. The northern part of the region is mountainous, consisting of highland spurs and the flanks of a series of high volcanoes. The principal crop is coffee. The rest of the province (about 1,000 square miles - more or less the area of the grand duchy of Luxembourg) consists of a vast, very fertile, tropical maritime area. Its principal agricultural products are sugar cane and cotton. On the other hand, pasture land is being used more and more for grazing, which finds a market in the United States and which is considered a favorable factor in economic progress. In view of this productivity, the province of Escuintla has achieved some fame in these years, as a region of intense economic development. In comparison with the rest of the country, it has certainly measured up to expectations. Several months ago, Mr. Carlos Molina Mencos, minister of economic affairs, in his economic report for the year 1972, spoke of the favorable growth rate of the gross national productivity for that year: 5.8% more than in 1971. If one looks at numbers, the minister's optimism is understandable. But if we examine more closely the situation of the littoral populace, optimism on the score of development becomes completely incomprehensible.

The population - estimated at 35,000, in the lack of exact statistical data - is 84% ladino, 16% Indian. The overwhelming majority of both groups lives in an inhuman situation. Thus, those who have really profited from "the development" in these years have been some few landowners and industrialists and, to a lesser degree, the middle class of merchants and functionaries.

In a region of relatively dense population, where the growth rate due to births and migration is on the increase, and which is characterized by vast landed estates (2% of landowners in Guatemala own 65% of the land under cultivation) and monoculture, the agrarian population is more or less condemned to seasonal work which covers only about half a year. The priority given to grazing augments unemployment, because it requires less manual labor. The problem of unemployment becomes even more acute at certain times of the year when the Indians come down from the highlands and head for the coast, looking for work. Because their economic situation is even more extreme, they are obliged, for part of the year, to leave the area where they live. Thus, at harvest times, they come to augment the surplus of very badly paid manual labor. This surplus, together with the nearly total absence of labor union movements and unions for agricultural workers, explains the impossibility of even formulating demands for a just salary and for other needs. In this way, the population remains

prisoner to a desperate fatalism. This is a people in suffering. When one finds them every-day faced with undernourishment, sickness, infant mortality, illiteracy, exploitation, one is forced to the conclusion that this suffering is leading people ever closer to total inaction. But those who believe in the theory of western development, such as it is followed and applied here, do not know anything about this desperate situation. The inhabitants of the southern coast of Guatemala belong to the forgotten world, those whom the developed countries and the developed pockets of their own countries, dismiss out of hand.

It can be alleged that suffering is inevitable despite all, and that extraordinary efforts must be made to attain a higher level of development. In the coastal region of Guatemala, extraordinary efforts are demanded, but the "economically powerful" monopolize the plus-value realized by the efforts. The general population does not receive any advantage from the economic boom of recent years — a boom which it helped to produce by its hard labor. On the contrary, the situation of the rural population has become more agonizing. In recent months there has been a boom in food prices, while salaries have remained where they were.

The preceding description makes it quite clear that the action model presently in force in Guatemala is one that puts the accent on development without structural changes.

The "progress" achieved in these years is very dubious, because it is to the advantage of only a privileged minority. It is evident that such a system cannot but increase discontent. But there are hardly any groups offering an alternative. The liberation model has been put forward from time to time by isolated individuals, students and opposition parties, but there is no coherent movement. Hence the support of the masses cannot be counted on ; they are withheld from any form of participation.

Dr. Guzman Bockler has sketched the following tableau of the present situation in Guatemala when he explained, some months ago, why he refused to be a candidate for rector of the San Carlos National University : "The Right has not only opted for the maintenance of dependence vis-à-vis foreign elements and exploitation within the nation, but, in order to reach its objectives, it has also chosen ways which, for more and more Guatemalans, become painful, to the point of becoming insupportable. The Left not only has shown itself incapable of clarifying its own ideological position, but, what is more, is crumbling to pieces in a continual process of attrition, deriving principally from the priority given, at any price at all, to personal interests, to the absurd wish to come to the foreground as an individual, and to the desire, scarcely disguised, to retain and consolidate lucrative positions. All this is put ahead of consolidation of a genuine unity based on a program incorporating resolute position-taking." (El Pacifico, May 14, 1973)

DEVELOPMENT OR LIBERATION IN THE CHURCH OF GUATEMALA

After the sketch above, of the province of Escuintla and the regional and national problems facing the population of the region, we want to examine the attitude of the Church towards this situation.

The episcopacy of the Church of Guatemala has never taken a clear position vis-à-vis the problems posed. The bishops, and also a great part of the laity and priests - more than 80% of the latter are non-nationals! -- want to keep the Church neutral as regards political questions. In wanting to avoid confrontation in this way, the Church nevertheless is not entirely out of the picture -- which it would gladly be -- but has in fact pronounced itself in favor of maintaining the present situation.

In 1962 and 1967, pastoral letters were published which denounced the intolerable social situations, but the statement of the problem in these letters was so circumspect, and proposed solutions so vague, that, for those who knew how to read them, it was more than obvious that the Church did not want to take part in a domain that it did not consider its own. The episcopal letters thus found very little echo, especially because its authors let their lack of social preoccupation show through.

Photographs of bishops, which the people see in the newspapers, invariably show them in the company of upper society. Thus they automatically lose their neutrality and present themselves, whether they explicitly wish to or not, as in solidarity with the political option of those who hold power.

In the seminaries the traditional Roman theology is taught. The structuration of the Church also constitutes for the national clergy and its bishops an invitation to adopt a foreign life-style and mentality. And so we are not astonished to see the clergy prefer to associate itself with European development policies, as elaborated for Latin America, rather than adopt the properly Latin American view which recognizes dependence on Europe and the United States as the root of under-development, and urges a program of liberation.

Against this alienation of the Church in Guatemala, some voices have nonetheless been raised. The determination to build up an authentically Guatemalan Church has been expressed, e.g. in the program worked out by COSDEGUA (Federation of Diocesan Priests and Laymen of Guatemala), an unofficial group which has been condemned from its beginning by ecclesiastical authority. COSDEGUA members have been concerned, on several scores, to find a true way towards a Church free of all forms of pastoral colonialism and religious importation. Internal difficulties and painful conflicts with the bishops have soured COSDEGUA, to such an extent that the liberation force alive in it is almost extinguished now.

COSDEGUA could have been a promising point of departure for renewal, and counter-weight to the conservative tendency characteristic of the traditional Church in this country. Authoritarian ecclesial structuration and fear of every type of change continues to diminish noticeably the chances for liberation. The present pastoral ministry keeps the Church a stranger to life, because it isolates the people from socio-economic and political problems, orienting them to a life-beyond-death which will mean release from this present life. The opium effect of this policy is not eliminated by the charitable works set up and maintained by the Church. In the final analysis, they only pour balm on wounds. They even reinforce the established order and hamper liberation.

Lay movements such as the Cursillos de Cristiandad and the Movimiento Familiar Cristiano recruit their members almost exclusively from among the better off. Their spirituality is

very individualistic, while in the social sphere, they limit themselves to paternalistic works not involving commitment. For the disinherited, a rural Catholic action program has indeed been elaborated, but, with some few exceptions, it does not open a road to liberation, due to its dualistic and moralistic character.

In a continent where, in 1968, at Medellin, there took place a general assembly of bishops which described the de facto situation in terms of dependence, and the mission of Church in terms of liberation, it is truly astonishing that the Church of Guatemala continues to stand by the side of those who opt for progressive development, i.e. the maintenance of the status quo. In Guatemala prophetic figures in the cut of Helder Camara, Antonio Fragoso, Sergio Mendez and Camilo Torres are not yet to be found. While in other Latin American countries the two orientations are present -- that of development and that of liberation -- the Guatemalan episcopacy lacks frank proponents of the liberation model. There is instead apprehension at the Latin American theology of liberation - a theological thought this time not imported from Europe.

DEVELOPMENT OR LIBERATION IN CORE COMMUNITIES

What is the significance of the presence of a group of foreign missionaries in such particularly difficult circumstances?

We are well aware that we were invited here as a stop-gap measure to make up for the lack of Latin American personnel; hence, the aim of those who invited us here is not at all that we should change the present pastoral practice.

José Luis Segundo, a South American theologian, has said in this regard : "Foreign personnel has not been asked to change, by an utterly new pastoral ministry, the present vicious circle. They have been asked to work in the same direction, i.e. to contribute making the Latin American Church anemic, by consolidating tasks which, as we have seen above, only end by robbing the pastoral ministry of a content which would be able to recruit its own pastoral workers." (Acción Pastoral Latinoamericana, p. 49).

The de facto situations of Guatemala and Latin America in general oblige us to question the present pastoral ministry. If our presence is only a service to a Church without social commitment, and hence to the maintenance of unjust structures or of a position of dependence of the people, it is impossible to justify in conscience our presence.

In the same regard, during the course of the 2nd Assembly of Latin American Bishops in Medellin, 1968, the necessity of engaging in a new pastoral approach was pointed out. The Latin American Church was asked "to inspire, stimulate and hasten a new order of justice, which would concern everyone in the functioning of their communities". (Introduction). To arrive at this new order of justice, Medellin insists on the importance of small communities on a sociological basis, "to establish an equilibrium vis-à-vis the minorities who have the power in their hands." (I,20).

The new pastoral initiative here envisioned consists precisely in the formation and orientation of small communities towards becoming elite communities of evangelical inspiration.

Since 1969 we have been trying to put this new pastoral ministry of core communities into effect in the coastal region. In urban neighborhoods, villages, plantations and hamlets visits are made to the people in their homes, and they are invited to an initial meeting. There the idea is proposed of meeting regularly in the future, each time in the home of one of the participants, to talk about the personal and local situation. It can result that a certain number of persons thus form a group, learn how to reflect openly in common, and become friends.

In this community, the participants have the opportunity — often for the first time in their life — to express themselves freely. For the first time they are asked, in this circle, to give their personal opinion, which is listened to and accepted as an enrichment of value to the whole group. Discussions bear on local, national and international situations, on personal and family questions, on workers' problems, on social and economic subjects — in short, all the questions that life in this milieu gives rise to. On the occasion of a very concrete happening, such as the death of a child, an increase in the price of basic commodities, the devaluation of the dollar or communal elections, the personal situation becomes the object of a critical examination in which cohesion with the structures of society becomes progressively more clear.

This manner of procedure, which is called the pedagogy of liberation developed by Paulo Preire, and which clearly figures in Medellin documents, has a strong influence. This pedagogy is based on belief in the value and creativity of every man, notwithstanding the oppression which perhaps defaces these values. Thanks to reflection on the concrete situation of the life of the group, an ever more distinct taking of awareness appears. The participants begin to realize that the history in which they take part is not a blind process, but a challenge that demands a response. A new attitude of dialogue vis-à-vis the world, as also vis-à-vis people, sees the light of day. In solidarity with others, man enters into history not as a spectator but as an active subject. This new way of seeing things is not limited simply to reflection. In and by his activity, man realizes himself as man. It is important also to note that the response given by a person to a challenge does not only change the reality confronted ; it changes the person, each time somewhat more, and always differently. The group thus soon finds itself faced with a decision to make: if it does not want to exhaust itself in thinking and discussing, it must pass on to concrete action, which will be the object of reflection in a subsequent meeting.

The process of conscientization in core communities must take its inspiration and depth from the biblical message, with its culminating point being the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

This message puts the group's process of conscientization and liberation in a very personal light. It reveals that the oppression and exploitation that many are physically subject to are the consequences of sin as a fundamental rupture in existence which touches the heart

of all men, and at the same time the structures in which they live. It is not a blind destiny. Jesus denounced all forms of injustice and oppression, but he also announced by his coming the definitive liberation. The life of Jesus, his total gift of self to his brethren, opens the way of true liberation, not only for himself but for all those who want to live and act in remembrance of him. Thanks to him we know that the efforts spent for the reconciliation of all men are not based on an unrealizable utopia, but on a founded hope, for all those who follow him in his liberative mission.

Reflection on the biblical message demands that the core community rid itself of all forms of injustice and oppression, and spend itself without stint to achieve concrete forms of justice. But the group does not lose courage when its efforts are not successful, because it believes that true liberation is given as gift of God, even via reverses. This belief does not create into the group a spirit of resignation, but appeals to it to take very seriously its responsibility for justice. In this way the core community, as a small church, distinguishes itself from other groups which are content to follow the course of social and political struggle for freedom. A church lives from the commemoration and promise of the coming of Jesus Christ. The core community wants to be a group of persons who know how to pray for the coming of the Kingdom and who wish to celebrate even now its advent in the Eucharist. But for this the churches will certainly have to find a new form of prayer and celebration, because the traditional liturgical forms emanating from other cultures, are often too extraneous. We must recognize that this search has not yet attained valid results. In this regard also the core communities are still communities in formation.

In the meetings of the groups that we have tried to describe above, the role of animator or coordinator has extreme importance. He is a member of the group and his function consists in getting dialogue underway, getting the others to speak out, and collating the various contributions. Besides the weekly training sessions, where, for example, discussion themes are worked out and prepared, we have this year prepared for them eight study days and two study weeks.

The core communities, such as they have developed until now in the coastal region, are very diverse. There are all manner of emphases and degrees of maturity; questions and problems are also different. But we dare to put our hope in this new form of pastoral work, which is also taking shape in other parts of Guatemala and Latin America. Such communities can deepen and bring to expression the desire for liberation which otherwise will remain buried, unconscious and unexpressed in our oppressed people.

But can we -- we Europeans -- maintain sufficient discretion in animating these communities? The colonialist mentality and the fact of wanting to impose new theories, even if in more subtle forms than in the past, is a danger from which we do not always escape. The temptation to want, in the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed, to act more for the people than with them could very well eviscerate our work, tainting it again with the charge of colonialism and putting the people, in another way, under pressure.

Another question that we must pose: in these core communities, will there one day result really liberative undertakings? The activities of these groups that we have so far seen emerge -- for example, the committees for neighborhood amelioration, the attempts to form trade unions, cooperatives, neighborhood dispensaries -- have been very modest. The results obtained so far have been rather in the line of development without structural change rather than that of liberation. At any rate, the mentality behind the initiatives was positive, especially as an expression of the desire for change. We have already mentioned the lack of models for liberative action at the national level. If such were available, Christian core communities could support them, could take part in them in a critical way, and breathe into them a spirit based on the Word of God. But for the moment they are rather like newborn infants. Will they one day have the competence to elaborate themselves a socio-economic and political model?

Where work begins in small communities, there also begins a process of decentralization. The center of the church is no longer the parish complex, as a distribution center of the sacraments and parochial administration, but becomes the small community circle. Churchmen sometimes consider this a process of disintegration, a disintegration of what was a solid and well organized unity. It is forgotten that the parish has always had a function vis-à-vis the masses. Contact with the people was above all an official matter. The relations in a core community are humanly different. We find there an enormous wealth of sensitivity and friendship, which awakens in us an astonished recognition of the values that this population holds to. In view of the cold and functional relationships which have so often characterized our churches, we have here a chance to rediscover the small church in the sense of "the church which meets in your house", as Paul wrote to Philemon.

Reflection on what we see every day in this poor and humanly depressed population urges us on to look for work methods which will put liberation ahead of development.

We believe in the power and the grandeur of the oppressed and bypassed man, and in the Christian core community which offers the possibility of giving dimension to its human value.

We believe in the liberative force of Jésus Christ, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, to which we want to open ourselves in the core communities and which spurs us on to engage ourselves daily in true fraternity with all men.

Often we lack the courage to respond to the Christian mandate for total commitment. Insecurity vis-à-vis the future and the fear of reversals also affect our personal process of liberation, as is true also of the Guatemalan people with whom we are trying to enter into solidarity.

DEVELOPMENT

The WG Development met at the SEDOS Secretariat on 11th December, 1973 at 4p.m.

Present were: Bro. Vincent Gottwald fsc, Fr. Verschuur svd, Sr Mary Motte fmm, Fr Moody, pa
Sr. M. José Tresch ssnd.

Chairman: Sr Danita McGonagle ssnd.

The meeting turned on questions regarding mission in the rural-urban continuum that the members had been asked to bring as a means of finding consensus for orienting the study.

Sister Joan Burke sndn had sent questions concerned mainly with education: the needs of the people not always being met by government schooling programmes, what can educators do to make them relevant? (cf. Fr. Latapi, Educ. International '72) the lower 40% of world population, mostly rural farmers, being stagnant, how can schools contribute to their liberation? (cf. Impact VIII,4, Robert McNamara to World Bank '72) and how activate new ministries of serving Church in rural areas of the traditional "mission" church?

Brother Gottwald fsc brought questions related to the different continents: Latin America - is it possible that small multi-disciplined pastoral communities situated at strategic points could stimulate adapted Christian life in depth where till today there is largely superficial Christianity?

Asia - could we not find an integration of réal evangelisation and development of the whole man that would respect his local identity, be based on his expressed needs and aspirations, and be a unifying not divisive force in pluralistic societies? Africa - can we not come up with a remedy for the inequitable distribution and planning of activities that leaves rural man always a poor second in the advance to overall well-being?

Fr Moody pa confined his questions to the needs for adapted pastoral approaches: community - how to avoid growth of separatist, minority-minded, apprehensive Christian communities? faith and prayer - how to advance from mere orthodoxy to an ortho-praxis that integrates worship, belief, in the wider context of incarnation in the human family? witness and conversion - how to promote justice and joy, the concern and the face of Christ, as a dynamic of change and whole-man growth?

Sister Danita ssnd proposed questions that underlined the need to respect existing community, that emphasised self-reliance and self-help in Christian growth, and that demanded adapted preparation of personnel in skills and attitudes answering to ascertainable needs.

Sister Mary Hlotte fmm, referring principally to conditions in Colombia and in the Lebanon questioned the apostolate pursued hitherto in terms of the identity of migrants while they take time to integrate, in terms of selection of traditions that will be preserved in a time of change, and in terms of development of new forms of service that really convey gospel values.

The ensuing discussion brought to light many interesting points of existing programmes that answer all or some of these criteria.

Two major factors of more adapted apostolate were considered to be:

- the increasing activity and sense of responsibility of governments to which the Church can respond as partner and not rival in society.

It was observed, and examples were cited in support, that opposition to Government is in some places almost a fetish and almost invariably one realises later that this posture was unprofitable.

- the rapidly growing amenities for communication which bring new importance to the regional and national values, which allow us to incorporate more elements in the procedures of evaluation and which introduce more people to a concept of identity in terms of the national ethos.

CONCLUSION:

It was decided to continue the search for a programme of ongoing study. As the next step it was agreed that each member of the group, and those also who wish to join us should be invited to bring to the next meeting AN ACCOUNT OF A LOCAL SITUATION IN BRAZIL, THE IDEA OF A CRUCIAL FACTOR IN THAT SITUATION, AND AN ESTIMATE OF WHY IT IS IMPORTANT. Maximum exposition to be 10 minutes.

The next meeting has been fixed for the 22nd January 1974.

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AGRIMISSIO : PROJECT I/73-74

AGRIMISSIO in collaboration with FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and CESTA (Center for Social Training and Action of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome) has planned a series of group discussions on subjects pertinent to socio-economic development of rural areas.

The study programme intends to create critical awareness of development problems in rural areas among clergy and religious (men and women) who are studying in Rome.

Study sessions lasting from two to three hours are being held every Thursday morning and afternoon at the FAO headquarters and Saint Thomas Aquinas University.

The subjects covered during the sessions are as follows:

1. Integrated Rural Development

- a. Socio-economic analysis of a rural community
- b. Sociology of change in rural communities
- c. Concept of rural development
- d. Integrated rural development
- e. Human factors in rural development
- f. Building up rural institutions
- g. The role of local leaders in rural development
- h. The role of women in rural development
- i. The role of youth in rural development
- j. The role of religious leaders in rural development
- k. Planning community development projects
- l. Presentation of projects to funding agencies
- m. The need for evaluation of development projects

2. Cooperative as means of rural development

- a. Socio-economic significance of cooperatives
- b. Cooperative education and training
- c. Cooperative Structure, organization and administration
- d. Financial aspects of cooperative movement
- e. How to organise a cooperative
- f. Rural credit cooperative
- g. Farmers' cooperatives
- h. Single and multipurpose cooperatives, etc.

3. Land Reform

- a. Concept of Land reform
- b. People's participation in land reform
- c. Land reform in Asia, Africa and Latin America

4. Nutrition

Though Agrimissio's main target in this project is to reach the full time students in Roman educational institutions, those who are in Rome for other than study purposes are also most welcome.

Those interested in participation in the study programme should contact Agrimissio for further information.

NEWS FROM AND FOR THE GENERALATES

1. SCMM-M New Council - The Medical Mission Sisters in their Chapter elected these Assistants for the next six years:

Sister Antoinette De Sa, Indian

" Catherine Ouelette, American

" Francis Webster, American.

2. CORRIGENDA - Please, for your own convenience , rectify in the Joint Venture list of Institutes and Addresses:

MM Maryknoll General - Rev. Fr. Raymond HILL
MM Procurator - Rev. Fr. Delbert ROBINSON

SCMM-M MEDICAL Mission Sisters General - Sister Godelieve PROVE.

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MANY HOMES - ONE FAMILY

Educ-International Seminar, Domus Mariae, December 4th-7th 1973.

Educ-International is an association of members of religious congregations who have advisory or administrative roles regarding education. Its purpose is to assist the professional growth of its associates and to provide services to agencies interested in the trends and developments in the field of international education. At present, five out of its seven administrative officers are members of SEDOS member-institutes.

The recent seminar was the third to be organised by Educ-International; the others were in November 1970 and May 1972. Doubtless there will be a printed report on the 1973 meeting; the others, "Tomorrow began Yesterday" and "Let No Flame be Quenched" were published in English and French, are of enduring value and are still available.

"Many homes - one family" was chosen as title of this seminar because the considerations hinged on the important role of Christian educators in forming young people for healthy family living, and the repercussions on educational theory and method and content of current trends and problems in the family. It is certainly an indication of the effectiveness of Educ-International that some 70 religious teaching congregations were represented at the meeting, and that 20 Superiors General, 9 Vicars General and 62 General Councillors figured among those present.

The meeting was genuinely international with resource persons from all corners of the world, and it was conducted in four languages with translation services for the general sessions. As is usual in such reunions many of the real exchanges were made, and the durable impressions gained, in personal encounters after working hours. It is there that one loses the euphoria so easily generated by a group dynamic directed from a 16-foot table on a dais.

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

The Councillors of Educ-International (Fr John Blewett sj, Sr. Alma Cornely shcj, Bro. Quentin Duffy fms, Sr Bridget Mary Fitzgerald rscm, Bro. Pietro Monti, sm) and the Secretary, Sr M. Alphonsine Di Julio ssnd, together with many others notably Sr Claire Herrmann fdlc, staged an impressive visual aid display. It covered family values and religious life - the same exhibit that was prepared by the UISG for its Assembly - as well as selected material on family planning (including stark realities of contraception and abortion) and world population problems.

One could not help feeling that the photographer might have done a more useful job had he made reproductions of some of that instead of making rather indifferent pictures of random groups of participants.

Before the meeting, 15 positions papers were circulated in English, French and Spanish.

1. Holy Father's discourse to 2,000 married couples of "Equipes Notre Dame" 4.5.70.. "As an interior and spiritual reality, (conjugal love) transforms the community life of the spouses into what we could call, according to the authorized teaching of the Council "the domestic Church" (L. G. 11) a veritable cell, a germinal cell, the smallest one no doubt, but also the most fundamental of the ecclesial organism." (7 pages)

2. Statement of M.de Seynes to Population Commission of U.N. Ecosoc.; 7.8.72
"It must also be noted that the economic argument according to which population growth is a major obstacle to development, has not as yet convinced many governments of the need to control population growth. Moreover the argument is ambiguous and in some cases even circular, since at least until now the main cause of a voluntary decline in the birthrate appears to have been economic development and its accompanying cultural changes, and it is not even certain that in a particular set of circumstances population pressure has not acted and does not still act as a powerful spur to economic development." (6 pages)

3. Birth control and married love, by Jack Dominian, author of Psychiatry and the Christian (1962), Christian Marriage (1967) Marital Breakdown (1968) and the Church and the Sexual Revolution (1971).

"It is now clearly known that the biological infrastructures in man is in favour of infertility in terms of the possible time open for procreation. However, so long as other factors such as population needs, lack of proper obstretic care and inadequate medicine were present, then the attack on contraception was a vital way of supporting God's plan for procreation. Now that God's intention is far more clear biologically, sociologically and psychologically both in terms of the fact that the world is no longer threatened with underpopulation and that each individual life needs such an enormous personal attention to fulfil its potential, the design can be used as it is meant to be; namely, to take infertility as the norm and fertility as the exceptional use of an already restricted rhythmic sexual faculty." (13 pages)

4. Holy Sexuality by Gregory Baum (Toronto), author of That they may be one (1958). The Jews and the Gospel (1961), Credibility of the Church Today (1968), Man Becoming God in Secular Experience (1971) and New Horizon (1972).

"It is the great merit of Stephen Pfuertner to adopt a radically new approach to sexual morality from the start and to deal with the thorny problems raised by this. Catholic theologians will be critical of some of the points made by the Dominican moralist, but I foresee that a majority of them will eventually accept the basic shift from an ethics of law to an ethics of personal and social responsibility." (8 pages)

5. "Family and Demography, Medellin 1968
6. "The Population Problem", a statement by Bishop Harris of the English Catholic Social Welfare Commission.
7. "The Church and Family Policy" - address by Philip Garrigue to francophone Bishops of Canada 1970.
8. "The Population Problem is Not Just Babies Being Born", by Mercedes Concepción of the Population Institute, University of the Philippines, Manila.

"Although it would take many years before the impact of population education would be felt, I think it would be more effective than the mere provision of clinics. There is talk now of various incentive schemes... The provision of higher education and more job opportunities for women outside the home are still other ways to lower the birth rate, and once started will go on and on of their own momentum... In the end, however, overall economic and social development programmes being implemented fully will be the thing that matters." (6 pages)

9. Youth and Population, a U.N. consultation, 1972.
10. Age at Marriage and Fertility, by Etienne Van de Walle, Princeton University.
11. Crisis of Faith, by Carrie Lorenzana F.P.I.A.

"Those of you who live in the East, who wake each morning to see the stark realities of malnutrition, of disease, of ignorance and poverty... you can not remain untouched.

You can not watch the degradation of man to a life just a notch better than an animal and not feel compassion. You can not feel compassion without doing something about it.

I challenge you as leaders, as educators, as communicators, as Jesuits, as Priests to do something about it. And the time is now." (3 pages)

12. The Contribution of Women to African Development, by Hon. Mrs B.N. Kunambi.
13. The "Family Life Center" in the Indian Social Institute, Delhi.
14. The Modernisation of Family Reproductive Behaviour, by Prof. A. Easterlin of the University of Pennsylvania. 1973.
15. Socio-Cultural Patterns, Fertility Cycle and Fertility, by Moni Nag, of the Social Demography Section, Columbia University, 1973.

RESOURCE PERSONS.

Glancing over the above list one might get the impression that the Seminar was designed as a super-heated symposium* ethics and human reproduction. In fact, it turned out to be no such thing, and for that we have perhaps to thank not only the Generals and Assistants who manifested certain interests, but also the wide competence and experience of the invited resource people who took their place on the platform and in the discussion groups.

There was a group of Jesuits: Fr Blewett, of course as Councillor of Educ-International, and Fr. Herbert de Souza as his deputy and secretary of the session; Anthony de Souza of New Delhi, Philip Land and John Carroll from the Gregorian, Professor Janssen from the Hague, Roger Tandonnet of the Equipes Notre Dame, Jose Aleman from the Dominican Republic, Alejandro Angulo from Bogotà, Colombia, and last but certainly not least William Ryan of the Centre of Concern in Washington were the principals (it was a fortunate coincidence that brought them to Rome for a meeting of their own Congregation).

Then there was Fr Gabriel Calvo together with another Jesuit Father, Charles Gallagher, representing a "Marriage Encounter" movement for better communication in the marital setting. We also had a Jesuit from Zaïre, Joseph Boute, and Pedro Richards cp of the Latin America Family Movement.

Noteworthy was the presence of married couples: Dr and Mrs Cullikal (he is from the secretariate of the Justice and Peace Commission); Dr and Mrs Claude Lanctôt from Canada; Mgr Ngombo Mbala, a writer, and his wife, of Zaïre; Mr and Mrs Guy who represented Mauritius; Mr and Mrs Pich-Botey of the Christian Family Movement in Spain, and Mr and Mrs Campbell of the Marriage Encounter Movement in the United States. Though outnumbered by religious, they all contributed a special experience and insight that could only enrich reflections on family life and religious involvement in the world.

Two very colourful and articulate people on the resource side were Dr Mercedes Concepcion from Manila and Dr Marie Mascarenhas from Bangalore, both of whom shared very freely not only the fruits of their research but their sense of Christian and Asian responsibility.

ORIENTATION OF THE SEMINAR.

The aims of the meeting were expressed by the organising committee before the opening: to promote understanding of problem and stresses in family life; to increase pastoral concern for family apostolate; to underline successful family life programmes in various places, and to increase the awareness of religious that they have peculiar responsibility and possibilities especially in education to help and be helped by the Christian family.

* on conjugal

CONTENT OF THE SESSIONS.

The first day was devoted to considerations of changes and trends in functions and values of family life. The principal shaping forces are no longer those of conscience and religious persuasion; socio-political and socio-economic pressures such as education programmes, employment possibilities, urbanisation and modern communications are inducing subtle and often unconscious modifications in human attitudes and expectations.

There was apparently an assumption that the trend towards the nuclear as opposed to the extended family was inevitable and even desirable. This phenomenon has to be seen in its widest implications; not only social services but associations of all sorts (cooperatives, clubs) do in fact remove certain pressures and some urgency from the circles of kinship. They also change the degree and kind of child dependence on parents and their psycho-affective needs.

Public attitudes are changed, and not always for the better, with regard to sex, marriage and parenthood. There has been serious research into the attitudes of young people, especially in France and in the USA, from which certain constants emerge such as the value given to fidelity and tenderness and openness to the collectivity.

It is recognised more and more that the cost of satisfying certain demands, not only of family members but of society, is too high; ultimately one must resist inroads made on the quality of relationships.

In his 1970 address to the Equipes Notre Dame the Pope said that "too often the Church has appeared, and wrongly so, to question human love." Enigmatic, but worth consideration. Inside the tradition of celibacy as a higher vocation there is the seed of depreciation of marital love and conjugal ideals. One's eyes can not be closed to phenomena such as the turning away of so many priests and religious to the married state; they have meaning if one can find it.

The accent on the second day was set by Fathers Calvo and Gallagher and the couples Campbell and Pich-Botey who presented the Marriage Encounter movement as operating now in 28 countries. They made three main points: that one can come to interesting and profitable conclusions by thinking of God revealing himself as love, a relationship between persons; that one can profitably re-examine the notion of the sacrament of matrimony in other contexts than that of parenthood; that the quality of marital relations depends largely on an acquired ability to communicate.

In the discussions on this aspect of family life, many interesting points emerged: that for too long and for too many Catholics, vocation to marriage has been understood as second-class, involving even some loss of closeness to God; that within the variety of cultures there is a world-culture and a youth-culture distinguishable in inescapable facts and irreversible trends; that healthy affectivity is achievable, does not demand to be based on moral conformity and inhibition, and is vital

for human wholesomeness even in religious life; that religious and priests can, if educated for it, serve as resource-persons for members of families, and that all over the world they are searching for this education and accepting its implications for their own lives.

With regard to the school, not any longer the only channel of education, it was remarked that it should operate in a community setting, discover new skills and invent new techniques as its clients change, and that in a world where change does not just happen but can be influenced for good, credibility and acceptability are promoted by the liberating question and by frank sympathetic dialogue. If youth are isolated and contestatory it is often because maturity has been achieved in advance of shared responsibility - hence personal and social frustration. Perhaps we should be concentrating more on changing the attitude of adults.

In these considerations there was a missionary dimension in so far as the context of Christian marriage is worldwide and because the missionary has both evangelical and cultural responsibility; it is well known now that much of what has been taken across the world as Christianity was in fact western cultural prejudice. It is very encouraging to see the practical acknowledgement by religious and priests of their educational and pastoral inadequacy. There is room for their participation in the Christian Family and Marriage Encounter Movements and a consequent possibility of enrichment for themselves and those whom they influence.

NOTE: Two remarks - that a good farmer can help his poultry to produce larger eggs, he does not need to lay them himself; that when we are sick we do not always get an injection in the sick part but in a healthy part of the body.

The last day of the Seminar was devoted to considerations on and around the present state of world population. The highlight of the day was the presentation of a paper by Fr Philipp Landsj and the response by his former pupil in economics and fellow Jesuit Fr William Ryan. The challenge of a situation where because of inequitable distribution of world resources two thirds of the human family have no hope of a free dignified existence and where the lowest 40%, mostly rural cultivators, have made no progress in the last fifteen years, demands a Christian response.

It seems clear that there has been a diminution of (pseudo)-scientific dogmatism of late, an awareness that the situation which involves so many variables requires a comprehensive, multi-disciplined approach. It seems certain that the world population is going to double by the first decades of the next century. Emphasis is rightly put on enlightened motivation in every field of influence, and this is our special field as religious and missionary members of society. Social institutional change is not tied to particular levels of well-being, and the deprived can be agents of change if they are given a hope of something better.

For various reasons, governmental interest in sharing resources is declining but governments respond to public opinion. There is widespread ignorance and wilful blindness to the facts. Vatican II gave the Catholic Church a hope of honest dialogue with the world, and in many ways we have given the lie to that hope.

More than ever before international organisations and institutions are open to and anxious for the input of non-governmental insights and experience. Consultations now in progress will culminate in the policy-making meeting of the U.N. in Bucharest in late 1974. There is the possibility of Catholic opinion making itself felt and acceptable in the "open tribune" which will accompany that meeting.

In general it is more important to propose alternatives than to try simply to influence agreed policies. An example is the outlook on celibacy as a genuine human way of life with possibility of real interpersonal affective fulfilment in a world where a very large and growing number of people are psychologically and physically unfit for married life. Discussion of this very point occupied two or three days of the 1973 Honolulu Conference on Population, and although twenty of the twenty-seven participants in one commission were Catholic, positive suggestions and motives for action were proposed by Professor Nag and non-Christian experts.

It is more and more accepted that the scandal of excessive financing of war and sophisticated communications systems by the big international corporations is a scandal. There is no easy answer; while we develop some technologies, others that would relate to people and not just to power are neglected. Ecological and employment problems are crucial to the issue and we are far from being able to correlate all the variables - emigration, fertiliser distribution, marketing and transport, world price structures and fluctuating exchange values.

Within the wider context there was animated and informative discussion on the various methods of family planning and control of births; only in reference to Asia was there reference at depth to cultural sensitivity as regards family planning, though on the other days of the seminar this had been discussed in connection with other continents. Man needs not only physical but psychological space for decent living.

CONCLUSIONS

1. To anyone who assisted at other Educ-International seminars, the change towards openness, the evidence of progressive self-education for Christian living in today's world, was obvious in the representatives of religious congregations.
2. SEDOS has had ongoing input over the last two years from FAO and ECOSOC sources on problems of development and better family living. This has been assured by the Development working group and the Health Task Force. The documents of this conference are available in Spanish, French and English at the SEDOS Documentation department for all who realise their need.

This report was authorised by Bro. Aloysius Carmody fsc, Educ-Intern. President.

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