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THE ENCYCLICAL ON SOCIAL QUESTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

The latest Encyclical (*) of Pope John Paul II, dated Dec.30th 1987, is an important document, written on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Populorum Progressio. The original text is in Latin, hence the title given to it: SOLLICITUDO REI SOCIALIS, which is the first three words of the text. In order to avoid different translations in the various living languages, the Holy See has made its own translations. The exact meaning of the title is: Active interest in the social question (no.1 par.1).

The following note, which has been composed after the publication of a good number of commentaries and appreciative notes, does not aim, strictly speaking, to make an exegesis of this encyclical, which is rich, deep and complex and bears on the great questions of the future of this current world and of the peoples composing it. My intention is limited only to providing a few indications on how to read it (without pretending, in these few pages, to make up a complete guide), and to underscore the major importance that this document must have for all the International Catholic organizations (ICO) as the reason for their existence and their involvement, each according to the specific nature of its vocation.

(*) Encyclical: comes from a greek word which means circular. An encyclical letter is a major message sent by the Pope to the World's Churches for the purpose of recalling or reviving the faith of the Church; at times it concerns some current problem. An Apostolic Letter is next in importance.

In various ways, according to their own objectives, the OICs will find in this encyclical, bases for reflection so as to locate themselves better within the actual world of today, and some principles in order to see some orientations for action.

I. BRIEF INTRODUCTION

To make a faithful summary of this long and complex document is impossible in this space, since its various themes are woven together and taken up time and again "symphonically", according to a logic that is different from a strictly linear argument.

The publishers have given several titles to their presentations of it: some "The Social question", others, "Development and liberation", and others again, "For a true development". The Latin edition has nothing else than the general title: Concern for the social reality. The text is broken up into seven parts, including the introduction and the conclusion, without any other subtitles. The Italian and French editions of L'Osservatore Romano divide the encyclical in the following fashion:

- I - Introduction, nos. 1 to 4
- II - New features of the Populorum Progressio encyclical, nos. 5 to 10
- III- A panoramic view of the contemporary world, nos. 11 to 26
- IV - Authentic human development, nos. 27 to 34
- V - A theological reading of modern problems, nos. 35 to 40
- VI - A few special guidelines, nos. 41 to 45
- VII- Conclusion, nos. 46 to 49

A rather longish title, but one giving the complete meaning of this document, might have been: The teaching of the Church on the social question, under the new challenges of development. In fact, twenty years afterward, Paul VI's encyclical has kept its upto-dateness; but faced by the serious problems of a development that has not been carried out well, John Paul II harks back to

doctrinal responsibility and underlines the moral obligations of the community from the teaching which is both evangelical and ecclesial, in order to wake up Christians and alert the consciences of all.

In order to properly follow the Pope's thinking and to understand the route he takes, it is necessary at first to know that within the broad lines of thought set forth above, the text plays upon a number of keys at the same time; the themes and motifs are taken up and combined into various melodies and variations upon them. Or, to take another image, the encyclical pursues a number of hares at the same time, and lets none of them get out of sight. Thus it is that, quite outside its formal divisions, there emerges along the way, more or less intensely, a humane understanding of the present world, the ideal of "total development", a theological vision, a doctrinal plan, an ethical intent, and a certain social scheme.

Supposing this, and keeping it in mind, I am going to say what appears to me to be the dominant idea of its several chapters, so as to prepare you for reading it.

I - Introduction

Within the line of the social teaching of the Church, and especially of *Populorum Progressio*, the reason for and the meaning of this encyclical are stated. (1 to 5)

II - New features of *Populorum Progressio* (5 to 10).

It comes from within the line of thought of the Vatican Council II (6), examines the new signs of the times and interprets them in the light of the Gospel (7), shows the Church's interest in the development of the whole person and of the earth's peoples (8), since the social question has by now a global dimension (9). Within the horizon of an ethics at the level of humanity itself, the concept of development must be profoundly revised (10).

III - A Panoramic view of the modern world (22 to 26)

- Hopes and negative aspects of development (12 & 13)
- Aggravation of negative aspects (14 to 16): The gaps are growing (14) - Those who are excluded from their own development (15).
- Bad development has world-wide effects (17 to 19): The housing crisis (17). The seriousness of unemployment (18) - the negative consequences of the foreign debt (19).
- The causes of delayed development (20 to 24, par. 1-2). Ideological conflicts between the power blocks (20). False systems of development that want to impose themselves on others (21) - The negative effects of these imperialisms on North-South relations, and on the independence of the developing countries (21-22). The temptations and dangers of protectionism (23) - The evil of the trade in weapons (24, par. 1 and 2).
- The consequences of such state of affairs (24 par. 3 to 25)
Refugees (24, par. 3), terrorism (24 par. 4), the population problem (25)
- Some positive aspects (26):
The development of the consciousness of the rights of men and women (26). The consciousness of a common destiny, and of a sense of limits (26).

IV - Authentic human development (27 to 34):

- It is the very concept of development itself that has to be revised (27 - 28, par. 1 to 3), with its notion of automatic and unlimited progress (27), with its objective of a purely economic way of thinking (28, par. 1), and "over-development" that is really a bad development (28, par. 2 and 3).
- For a development in which "having" is ordered to

"being", and in which goods and property are at the service of human societies (28 end par. 1).

- The direction of creation and the true development of men and women (29, par. 2 to 30). Their affinity with the whole of creation and with God (29 end). Their vocation for development (30, 1 and 2). Ruptures because of sin and continual resurrections of it (30 end). Development within the perspective of faith in Christ as redeemer (31, par. 1 to 4). "The duty of the Church's pastoral ministry" (30, par. 5) - the teaching of the Church Fathers and the ancient practices of the Church (30 par. 6 and 7). The development of peoples, the duty of all towards all, and the rights of all peoples and nations (32). The rights of men and women and the rights of nations and of peoples are conditions for development (33) whether on the international level or on the level of each country (33). Development demands respect for the environment, for natural resources and for the quality of life (34).

V - A theological reading of modern problems (35 to 40):

- Development, political action, presuppose an ethical decision that concerns both the economy as well as scientific and technological instruments (35).
- The categories of sin and the structures of sin applied to the structural causes of bad development (36).
- Two dominating elements: The all-consuming desire for profits and the thirst for power (37).
- The decision to go on the right path demands conversion (38 par. 1 to 4). Positive aspect: the consciousness of interdependence and the new solidarity (38 end); forms and levels of solidarity; requirements for getting it going (39).
- For the Christian, this solidarity broadly understood corresponds to universal love (40).

VI - Some particular orientations (41 to 45):

- The meaning and function of the Church's social doctrine. It brings up to date the requirements of the Gospel within and for the modern world, and does not provide technical solutions (41).
- This teaching is open to an international dimension, in its privileged love for the poor (42).
- A reminder that the goods of creation are destined for all (42, par.5).
- The necessary reform of the commercial, monetary, financial and international systems; international sharing of work and transfers of technology (43, par. 1 to 5). The international organisations (43, par.6).
- An appeal to initiative, to responsibility, and to reform, within the developing countries (44).
- The necessity of putting into effect regional solidarity (45).

VII - Conclusion (46 to 49)

- The process of liberation is one with true development (46); overcoming obstacles and arriving at a "true liberation": this is the task of Christians and indeed of all men and women, without forgetting the Ecumenical dimension (47).
- To reflect upon and in some fashion anticipate the Kingdom of Heaven (48).
- Spiritual recourse to the Virgin Mary (49).

II NOTEWORTHY THEMES AND OPEN QUESTIONS

It is quite remarkable to notice that Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (and henceforth I shall refer to it by its initials: SRS) is wholly within the line of development made by Populorum Progressio (PP), and wants to actualize it, to give to it as it were a new "elan" a new impetus, taking into consideration a new and worsening world situation. It also gives to it a clarity and motivation which is more explicitly theological and Christian.

SRS, rooting itself explicitly in Vatican Council II and taking Populorum Progressio as a given, constitutes therefore a very important Pontifical document, one that is to be taken into consideration with gravity and urgency. Since, considering the current interdependence of all the major human phenomena, of all the social and economic problems, of all systems of organizing and managing societies, each Christian, and even more, every Christian association or movement is directly concerned with this text, in particular as regards to everything that concerns working life, social commitments, and political, cultural and service activities.

Far be it from me to substitute myself for each OIC so as to examine in what manner S.R.S. must be taken into account. Each person and each group must be questioned and must itself examine this text, starting from what it is doing and from its responsibilities and functions at the national level quite as much as at the international. I wish to add here simply a list, and not an exhaustive one, of topics, of points of departure, and of problems that S.R.S. contains, and that could for different reason be of interest to this or that OIC.

1. The first observation is that this document does not pretend to say everything about the immense problems of the development of peoples. Let us keep in mind that, if you were to put edge-to-edge all the books and reports that have been written for the past thirtyfive years just on this problem, they would surely run more than once around the world. The Pope's text presupposes and demands that we have an ongoing education on this great question, one that is always a burning issue.

2. S.R.S. insistently underscores two things that were perfectly well known but that people have to be reminded of at this serious time in the world's history.

- the economic and political problems of world development are not at all merely technical ones: they necessarily imply an ethical attitude and they demand a moral orientation towards the greater good.

- It is more urgent than ever for Christians to get directly involved in order to keep faith with the gospel in these tasks aiming at a universal human upgrading.

3. Several times S.R.S. attaches especial importance to the cultural dimension, and even to the religious dimension of development. This opens up a vast field of reflection:

- in order to really see how and why development itself is cultural,
- how it must be expressed in cultural terms.

4. Quite as much too S.R.S. opens up paths for a renovation of the foundation of a Christian humanism for the present-day world.

5. Christianity truly lived, has something significant to say and to do in and for the historical becoming of the world. Secularization and the autonomy of the temporal do not at all mean that "Christians have to stay inside the sacristy".

6. The "spiritual" and the "temporal" are not opposite entities, but rather dimensions of life: their relationships are not opposed but are, the one within the other, implied. On another level, the Church of these times is in the world, and the world is quite as much within this Church.

7. What does human history mean, and where is it going, when it is made by men and women who often wish to do without God? How do we realize God's design (the history that God makes) in the face of sin and each person's only partial obedience?

8. What comes out of the structures of sin when applied to the causes of underdevelopment? How are they to be interpreted? This "category", which surprises certain theologians, isn't something new at all. It was born at Medellin in 1968. John Paul II spoke of it during his

first trip to Mexico; it appeared in Puebla in 1979, and in the expression "social sin" in the exhortation on Reconciliation in 1984.

9. If the structures of sin can account for, after the fact (from the ethical viewpoint), of what is structurally evil or perverse in the way our societies function as systems, is it reasonable to think, in looking into the future, that these structures will be easily reformed?... or will they have to be radically changed?

10. How is it possible within our actual historical existence to reconcile and articulate a Biblical anthropology (Genesis), where the norm is the harmonious relationship between Adam and Eve in Paradise both with nature and God at the same time (29-30), with a Christian anthropology demanding a necessary conversion and the actualization of the mystery of the Cross of Christ in our lives in a world which is permanently sinful?

11. S.R.S. gives back justification, consistency and value to the Church's social teachings; it is very explicitly considered to have doctrinal value. In what manner and up to what point does that teaching provide "principles for reflection, criteria for judging, and directives for actions"? (8).

12. How does this doctrinal teaching square with the special guidelines and recommendations given by S.R.S.?

13. Here and in other documents, John Paul II makes a reading of what human intelligence is and provides a rational presentation of the global changes in the modern world. The Pope wants here to sketch out the large features of the modern world as they affect and are affected by its major problems (4, par.1). In some of its aspects his language is neutral (gap, mechanisms, aid, interdependence), while in others it qualifies certain forces or power blocks confronting one another (their will to expansion, imperialisms, etc) or it omits other realities (technological structures, large scale technical and economic systems, multinational companies, structures of

domination). But this does not prejudice in any way the encyclical's aim and burden, but urges that current global realities, in a continual state of development, be looked at and interpreted.

14. In parallel and at times simultaneously with the reading of human intelligence, S.R.S. also makes a Christian and theological reading of the direction of humanity's development (exegesis of creation, the role of Christian mysteries, the role of sin, etc). This teaching invites us to look into how the Christian mystery is actualized and how the Kingdom of God will be realized (a messianism for today); but also, how the present time of the Christian is taken up simultaneously by the cross of Christ and the victory already achieved by Christ over the sin of the world (eschatology).

15. It is often of great clarifying value for faith itself to observe the articulation that it itself places between the human interpretation and the Christian interpretation that are made of historical development and of the present times. It is necessary to see how the demands of the Gospels are linked to the totality of historical becoming, something that, considering the difficulty of it, demands reflection and a strategy for action.

16. Realizing this teaching in action also poses a certain number of varied problems that each organization or each movement must be careful to define well at the start and to resolve properly afterward. They concern in particular the nature and the forms of Christian practice in the divers actions and temporal commitments, depending on the ethical judgement that each person makes on this or that process or on this or that force. Can one and the same faith and one and the same social doctrine lead to different options and commitments?

17. The breadth and wealth of content of this major encyclical, brings into being a good number of other questions. So, for example, we might pose: what are the social "visibility" and weight, and what is the actual effective audience of Christianity today, so that it be

able to carry out what must be called a social and cultural revolution, one that will even be, to some degree, a political revolution? Or again, the dual logic of liberal capitalism and of Marxist communism, so definitely condemned (in the encyclical), is this logic truly irreversible, or if it is not, how is it to be changed while it is working within its world-wide field of action?

S.R.S. demands, first of all, to be read attentively and at the same time to be studied with care. Then there may arise specific reasons to go into it in depth, and to find answers to the questions that it puts on its subject. My attempt here is not meant, then, to suggest that it be questioned skeptically, but only to urge the reader to let himself or herself be profoundly interrogated by this document, as I myself have tried to do.

L'Osservatore Romano, a daily newspaper, published a series of articles on the encyclical on its first page, at regular intervals. Each author took into consideration one aspect or dimension of S.R.S. To date (March 10th) the most significant and instructive have seemed to me to be:

1. Msgr. A. Quarracino: The obstacles to development on the level of human conduct; sin, and the structures of sin (OR. March 5th 1988).
2. G. Salvini: The Church's social doctrine in John Paul II's encyclical (OR, February 24th 1988).
3. H. Carrier: Towards a new development culture (OR, Feb. 27th 1988).
4. H. Cazelles: Development, the expression of the human vocation in light of the Scriptures (OR, March 2nd 1988).
5. R. Buttiglione: The reforms that are needed in the developed countries and in the developing countries (OR, March 4th 1988).

Alain Birou (*)

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AN EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE IN BOMBAY, INDIA

We are 12 adult members and have been together for 7 years. The first 5 years were spent in transition from Sodality to CLC pre-community stage of the Survey document. At this stage, the members experienced every year the 8 day Sp.Ex. of St Ignatius and weekly meetings of prayer and sharing. We remember poignant moments when members responded to the needs, problems and joys of one another. Occasionally, the field of service was extended to the community at large and the members participated in several "nuclear" experiences like the visit to Mother Teresa's "Asha Dan", a house for the handicapped or an exposure to a slum in the vicinity of the parish boundary. The members were growing in an awareness of the social reality in an area of the city where there are marked differences between the rich and the poor. These experiences were shared in subsequent meetings through the "revision of life" together with the Consciousness Examen. All this brought about a growing unrest in us to undertake a group apostolate. A community discernment was carried out over 4 meetings where the LISTEN, DISCERN, RESPOND method was used. The active involvement of the group in parish life and their exposure to the immediate environment assisted the process. The group decided that "building communities in the neighbourhood" would be their group service.

Accordingly one or two members are involved in bringing the elders of the parish closer by visiting them, assuaging their feelings of loneliness by finding them companions for card playing etc., and having occasional get-togethers. Two such get-togethers have been organised by the group in support to this member. The local YMCA having similar objectives has just started a Club for elders and this member intends to actively co-operate.

Another member along with her children decided to work with the slum residents for their uplift. This member

has helped solve the acute water problem, teaches the slum children, helps the women learn some occupation. Recently the group supported this member by helping start a food co-operative within the slum manned by the people of the slum to help themselves - food can be purchased in that co-operative at lower prices than the open market. And when a flood breached the walls of the slum area and some lost their shanty huts, the group approached CLC members of New Zealand for assistance which came and enabled the boundary wall to be rebuilt. Each member, singly or in small groups is involved in this work in the neighbourhood always with the help and blessings of the parish. The work is shared at a special meeting at least once a month and this enables the entire group to help and support the members.

The challenge is one of wanting to do more and then finding it is not possible because of limitations of manpower, ability and money; so we realise that we must first try and "be more" to people instead of "do more". There is hostility from different quarters and danger too. One of our members involved in trying to get "prostitutes" off the road and to rehabilitate them was attacked by the "pimps" and another working among "mental patients" was almost strangled by one of them. Both members revealed a sense of deep peace and calm during these encounters.

The experience of group work in the neighbourhood has made a deep impact on the life of the group especially their faith life. For one, there has come a deep realisation that faith and justice must be integrated, that the poor and the suffering have much to teach us and that the world will only be a better place to live in when the values of Christ replace the values of the world. The members find themselves largely at peace even amidst deep family problems. The husband of one member is an alcoholic and the member suffers deep pain and loneliness but with the help of the group she has found deep peace and has taken as her work the rehabilitation of other alcoholics in the neighbourhood along with AA.

The evangelical calls these experiences incarnate are the calls of the kingdom. We realise that the root of the problems lie, like Ignatius put it, in the striving

for money, the desire for prestige and the thirst for power, in the three-fold ambition of "holding", "climbing" and "commanding" that spurs people on to rivalry, hatred and violence. That is why there are slums and degradation and marginalization.

We feel ourselves called to be "poor in spirit", to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world". To be Jesus' disciples, we need to uproot all vestiges of self-interest. "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself, take up his cross and follow me" (Mt 16:24). Another important aspect of mission is our attitude in the face of suffering and injustice. We cannot remain indifferent to any kind of suffering. Jesus never refused to heal a sick person, nor did he turn away from the widowed mother. We must also be ready to improve the lot of people by conscientization -as Jesus did- opening their eyes to the causes of evil. One of our members has achieved much of this through the Citizens Committee of her neighbourhood, especially by her witness and way of life. Another conscientizes through her local newspaper which mostly reaches the poor.

The Church documents are sometimes used by the group to fuel their waning energies in the face of adversity. Sentences such as these following ones strike deep roots in our beings and pull at the chords of our hearts: "There is growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he/she stands above all things, and his/her rights and duties are universal and inviolable... Hence the social order and its development must increasingly work to the benefit of the human person... It must be founded on truth, built on justice and animated by love; in freedom it should grow every day towards a more humane balance. An improvement in attitudes and widespread changes in society will have to take place if these objectives are to be gained. God's spirit is not absent from this development. The ferment of the Gospel too, has aroused and continues to arouse in the hearts of men and women the irresistible requirements of their dignity." (Gaudium et Spes. The Church today, n.26)

Tony Martyris

THE CHURCH AND UNIVERSITY CULTURE

We present the summary of the Responses to the Consultation of April 20, 1986 by the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Pontifical Council for Culture. The objective of this consultation was to have a better knowledge of the situation of the universities in the world and the new problems the Church finds in its action towards the different components of university culture.

INTRODUCTION

In 1976 a joint committee of the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Council for the Laity had been set up at the wish of Paul VI. This committee sent to all Bishops' Conferences and other interested bodies the "Tentative Findings" of several years of study and research on "Pastoral Work in the University Milieu". The findings were well received as an instrument for pastoral reflection and action. With the establishment of the Pontifical Council for Culture by John Paul II in 1982, a new joint committee was set up, namely that of the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Pontifical Council for Culture, and given a wider scope summed up in three words: "Church - Culture - University". Pastoral work in the university campus remained one of the focal concerns for the new committee; stressed, at the same time, was the encounter of the Church with the university culture.

Following the suggestion of many Bishops, and encouraged by the constant concern of Pope John Paul II for the university world, it was decided to bring the earlier study up to date, because the university world and

the cultural situations are different in many ways from those of the '70's. To this effect, a questionnaire was sent out in April 1986 to Bishops' Conferences, Religious Congregations and other Catholic organisations concerned. Replies have been received from 20 Conferences of Bishops, 7 dioceses, 6 Religious Congregations of men and 4 of women, 6 Secular Institutes, the International Federation of Catholic Universities, several international Catholic organizations and movements and a number of universities and individual experts consulted by the respondents. It is hoped that this brief summary of the responses will be a useful instrument and a stimulus for reflection and action in an area of deep concern for the Church and for society as a whole. The survey focused on all universities, not only on the Catholic universities.

The responses show, for the most part, the result of long reflection, consultation of experts and careful preparation. They tend to confirm the major conclusions of 1976, as well as those of a survey sent to Religious Congregations in 1979. In their diversity, they clearly depend on the political, cultural and ecclesial situations of the various countries, but there is a remarkable consensus concerning the "significant tendencies" of the university world.

The summary does not follow strictly the order of the questionnaire. In particular, the special features and mission of the Catholic university - which are today the object of ongoing study - are not treated in a separate chapter. They are, however, stressed in relation to the different points of the summary. It may be useful to recall that there are some 8000 universities (of various types) in the world, and of these around 650 are Catholic universities and "colleges". From the responses, it is clear that these Catholic institutions share with other universities the impact of social change and the need to respond in new ways to new challenges.

By way of conclusion, a few points which emerge from the documentation have been noted as needs and possibilities for reflection and action.

I - SIGNIFICANT TENDENCIES IN THE UNIVERSITY WORLD

1. The concept of the University

Although the reasons for it differ from country to country, the concept of the university is quite similar in nearly all parts of the world.

"University" was once understood as a community of scholars in search of truth. Today, more and more commonly, the term is used to indicate a vast assortment of institutions offering a variety of programs with little or no coordination between them. It is even applied to the "open university", which may offer courses by radio, TV or correspondence and has no university community, and no admission requirements. Because the term connotes excellence and prestige, more and more institutions, even though offering a limited number of programs whose quality may be questioned, call themselves Universities.

University studies and research, even in traditional institutions, increasingly concentrate on the scientific and the technological. The reasons vary. Funding plays an important role. Governments - especially but not exclusively, in the Third World - support technology as a means for economic development; industry and business are looking for skilled personnel; students are anxious for training that will enable them to get good jobs.

As a result, the university is rarely seen as dedicated to the integral formation of students, but rather as an instrument which will help prepare for a career. Specialization and professionalization are the norms. Value questions and personal education receive little or no attention.

Respondents from a variety of countries insist that the service role of the university has increased noticeably in recent years. Examples include seminars, lectures, symposia, etc. offered for the general public ("university extension"); universities of the "Third Age", development programs, research projects which benefit the

community and sponsorship of students from poorer countries and classes.

2. New Forms of University Structures

While traditional universities have to a large extent maintained their basic structures, various factors, throughout the world, are modifying - in some cases, radically changing - these structures.

In most countries, government control over all universities is growing stronger. Freedom in developing a plan of studies, in selection of students and hiring of professors, and even in university "philosophy", is increasingly limited. The proportion between public and private education is changing dramatically. In the United States, for instance, 78% of students are in public institutions. In Africa, the few Catholic universities have been nationalized.

The authority structures are becoming more democratic with the participation of professors (and sometimes students) in decision-making and development of university policy. But some responses indicate a decline in student participation, e.g. in university elections.

The number of students has increased dramatically in the past twenty years. The make-up of the student body is also changing. Though most still tend to come from middle and upper classes, financial aid has enabled young people from all social classes, and of varying intellectual ability, to enter a university. There are more "non-traditional" students - older than 25 years - and more part-time students who work and attend classes at the same time. The quality of formation is necessarily affected, while the numbers make personal relations between students and professors almost impossible. The presence in Western universities of great numbers of foreign students (especially Third World) can be an important factor for international understanding, but also raises structural problems.

3. New areas of research - mostly scientific and technological - include:

- defense and weapons research
- genetic research and engineering
- studies related to human conception and birth
- economic research regarding equitable distribution of wealth
- computer science and artificial intelligence.

This type of research poses new moral questions while, because of increasing specialization, moralists find it difficult to be aware of all scientific advances.

In many countries, lack of financial resources and the fact that nearly all professors are part-time, especially in the Third World, severely limit the possibility of research in any area.

In contrast to these general trends, some universities are supporting interdisciplinary research; some also report a renewed interest in humanistic studies (Sweden, Great Britain, USA). Contacts between specialists in scientific disciplines, linguistics, etc., foster the international dimension of the university world.

4. Intellectual and Spiritual Currents

The materialism and secularism of modern society are reflected in university life. Many countries report an influence of positivism and Marxism (Africa and Latin America), though other responses say that Marxist ideology seems to be declining (Europe). A response from a European university deplores the growing influence of reactionary forces: racism, integrism, elitism. In the communist regimes, universities are controlled by the official ideology.

In contrast to the general secular spirit, there is, in many countries, a renewed interest in religion, among students and occasionally among teachers. This can exist alongside religious illiteracy of the majority even in the basic tenets of Christian faith. There may also be

disillusionment with the institutional Church. At times (India, Africa), this may be due to what seems to be a negative or indifferent attitude of the Church towards local cultural expression. In some African countries the influence of Islam is strongly felt; in some European countries also, there are groups of Muslim influence. Students interested in religion but unfamiliar or dissatisfied with the Church or suffering from insecurity can be attracted to the fundamentalist sects and Eastern religious practices that are increasingly present in universities of all countries.

The emphasis on professional training has resulted in a certain anti-intellectualism. At the same time, there can be "a strong opposition to dogmatism and control from without, whether political or ideological, and concern for what such controls would effect in the search for truth" (USA). There is at times an ambiguous view of the Church seen more as an external control than as a source of spiritual guidance.

Students awareness of social concerns seems to be increasing everywhere, although the proportion of students active in service programs may not be as great as it was some years ago. On the question of student involvement in politics there is no consistency. Tighter economic conditions have made many students more concerned with employment possibilities than with social commitment. South Africa presents a particular situation: Many Christians favour the promotion of Black students but job opening for them remain scarce. And from Korea: "It is anticipated that Korean students will persist in making known their very strong feelings about the process of democratization and humanization in society". In Poland, in spite of restrictions, involvement of university people in social change has developed in the '80's. In France, mass protests of students have forced the Government to review its university reform program.

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In order to continue this consultation, we have been asked to consider these two further questions:

1. What are your reactions or suggestions after these documents: is there any complementary information or initiative that you feel would be useful and that you would like to communicate to us?
2. What means would make it possible to achieve a deeper common reflection, and to foster the activity of the Church in the university world: meetings, research, exchanges of information, etc.?"

Those of you who are interested in these questions are asked to send us their responses before the end of October 1988.

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* We are announcing a reprint of the *
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EACH ONE FOR ALL

moral principle, freer than a "good action". The knowledge, that comes through our faith, became clearer through this scene. In this sharing we have surrendered our resistance in order to live God's love. "Lord, teach me to let myself be seized by the heart". "May I be given an understanding of the signs and values of service". "Thank you for opening my eyes and for liberating me". The prayers of one were taken up by others. Sin and humility were uncovered. When the fervour of another connected with our own quest, when another's cry to God carried with it the same hope, communion was there, as an intense experience of our communities.

Within this context, Jose Gsell, ex-Secretary of the WFCLC, put into perspective the slow work of unity carried out at the international level. Underscoring the mutual contributions made by the national communities, noting the efforts of the groups in Sri Lanka, South Africa, the Philippines, and of Lebanon, she let us see these "witnesses in favour of unity". They have as their aim to manifest to the world "light and peace", Our group experiences, she noted, in which we learn, through our exchanges, to accept and to love others in all their differences, in which we are led at times to deal with a difficulty, a lack of understanding, a tension, even a conflict, in approaching them with simplicity, truth and faith - concretely making of them an experience of salvation - strengthen, but most of all transform the ties among the members of the group. They exercise us, at the beginning, in respect and in reconciliation. They develop in us relationships of service, not of domination. At issue here are the dispositions necessary for welcoming the gift of unity, bearing witness to it and radiating it. Father Gellard, the French Jesuit Provincial, also spoke, in order to underline the importance of a true partnership between the Society of Jesus and the laypeople of the CLC in the mission that the Society has set itself to carry out within the French Catholic Church.

Here I have given no more than a personal glimpse, and therefore a limited one, of this gathering. I have not expressed the overflowing joy that I found in tying

together and retying attachments and affections. Unforgettable are those who were able to speak to me in my distress before my empty hands. The day before, my husband and I had been robbed. Thus I received with a force ten times greater, the appeal that Charles le Dû, National Assistant, made during his homily: "Our community will not truly be a Christian Life community until it is lived with a real passion for the one who is forgotten, for that least one with whom the Lord identified himself".

Dorothee Benoit

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* * * * * COMMUNITY PRAYER: * * * * * *
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*           IN JULY...
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* SOUTH AFRICA: The National 8 day retreat
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* EL SALVADOR: The commitments taken by the
*               new CLC members (on the 31st)
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*           IN AUGUST...
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* CHINA: Month of formation for college students
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* SPAIN: Formation courses and National
*        Community summer work camps
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NEWS FROM INDONESIA: CLC in Indonesia held their fifth General Assembly in December 1987. The theme they chose was in accord with the theme of the 1987 World CLC Day: "The Mission of the Laity". They focussed on implementation of General Principles 7 and 12: on CLC apostolic life and the daily CLC way of life.

The Assembly started with the celebration of the Eucharist led by our National Moderator Fr.J. Subagya s.j. After that, we listened to reports given by our National Committee, the 8 local CLCs, and our delegates to "Loyola '86", and then reflected on the realities received.

Then we divided into four groups, each to discuss one of the chosen General Principles either from a youth or students' viewpoint, or from an adult and married couples' viewpoint. We tried to clarify our views, decide on goals to be aimed at, and formulate the steps and criteria needed. On the third day, the results were reported and then each local CLC reflected on how to realize them at the local level. All this was then accepted as our homework for the next three years.

Before closing the assembly, we chose the members of the National Committee for 1987-1990, and it turned out that the previous Committee was kept intact, except for Fr. Ageng marwata s.j. who could not share any longer due to other additional duties in the Society of Jesus. His duties as consuler will be taken over by Mr. Henricus Sanyoto Hadi from the Semarang CLC. Henricus has attended the World Assembly in Providence '82, so he would be able to enhance the international dimension of the National Committee. The other members chosen were: A. Rusli (Chairman), A. Suprayitno (Vice-Chairman), B. Endang (Secretary), M.A. Rina Tjahjono (Treasurer), Fr. J. Handriyanto s.j. and J. Dinsbach (Consulters) while our moderator happily will remain Fr. J. Subagya s.j.

These next three years, we will try to improve the CLC spirituality in our groups, as this will be the main source of motivation in moving out of ourselves and into the service of Christ.

(From a letter of J. Rusli and B. Endang Widiyanti)

FR. BERNARD BASSET, s.j. died in Oxford, England on 13th June. He was 80 years old. Many people in his own country will remember him with much gratitude and affection: his fellow Jesuits, historians, broadcasters, the thousands of people who knew him through his writings and the many people who were guided by him in the "cell" movement. The CLC will remember him for the stimulus he gave, prior to the 2nd Vatican Council, to the renewal of the Socialities which were transformed eventually into the CLC. Father Paulussen remembers his vigorous and encouraging presence at the Newark, New Jersey Convention in 1959 where he called people together and said we must do something!

I visited him at Nazareth House, Oxford, just a month before he died. John Ruming, at that time Chairman of the English and Welsh CLC and Mrs Margaret Partridge, well known CLC member for many years were with me. He was confined to a wheel-chair because both his legs were amputated due to circulatory problems. He was full of life and joy and said he had never been closer to God and more at peace. We thank God for his presence amongst us and the part he played in the evolution of the World CLC.

Tim Quinlan s.j.

THE U.N. COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS approved a draft Convention on the Rights of the Child in March 1988. Remarkably this document omits all reference to the rights of the Child during the pre-natal stage of its life. These rights were explicitly stated in the 1959 U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

As a Non Government Organisation (N.G.O) at the United Nations we have written to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights UN Commission on Human Rights to

express our concern and propose the explicit mention of the Rights of the Child during the period of its pre-natal life. We are pleased to mention the initiative of the International Right to Life federation in this matter and join them in proposing that the 6th paragraph of the Preamble reads:

"Recognizing that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted in 1959, the child due to the needs of his/her physical and mental development requires particular care and assistance with regard to health, physical, mental, moral and social development, and requires legal protection in conditions of freedom, dignity and security, before as well as after birth."

The draft statement goes back to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in the Autumn. CLC members are encouraged to approach their member nations and suggest this amendment to the preamble to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A MEETING OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANTS OF EUROPE will take place in Rome next September, between the 24th and 29th. Various topics will be discussed such as the reality of mission in Europe along the lines of the Loyola Assembly, the formation of guides, the role of the Ecclesiastical Assistant, simple life-style and the partnership between the Society of Jesus and CLC.

Immediately afterwards, the European CLC Team will be holding their next meeting in Rome. They have been invited to attend the last day of the Ecclesiastical Assistants' meeting to join in a discussion of topics of mutual interest.

FRED SOLOCHI WHO WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE ZAMBIAN CLC died on the 1st May as a result of injuries sustained in a car accident on the previous day. Our sympathy and prayers go out to his family and friends who will miss him dearly. I recall with gratitude his welcome to me in Lusaka last December and his enthusiasm for CLC. With Ignatius Mwanza, who wrote telling us this sad news, we can say: "We pray that the Father receive his soul and that we shall meet again in His Kingdom."

Tim Quinlan s.j.

A SUCCESSFUL WORLD CLC DAY AT SCRANTON (USA)

On Sunday, March 13, an ample group of people gathered at Scranton Prep to celebrate World Christian Life Community Day. Our day began with an opening prayer of Pope John Paul II, and introducing ourselves.

In keeping with the theme of the Marian Year, we role played Mary as an unwed mother. Everyone agreed that Mary was a courageous woman who was willing to risk public humiliation to bear God's child and had fulfilled God's will. Then we had another discussion following the movie "The song of Bernadette". For us the meaning of the film was accurately expressed in the words of the dean spoke to Bernadette: "For those who believe, no explanation is necessary, for those who don't, no explanation will suffice".

We ended the day celebrating Mass. We left Prep feeling spiritually refreshed and with additional insight on Mary. She is truly a model for everyone. Hopefully she will continue to be an inspiration to us all in our everyday lives.

(Taken from a letter of Lisa Chichak)

OUR ATTITUDES TOWARDS MONEY AND MATERIAL GOODS was the title of an article by Walther Fincke (Germany) published in PROGRESSIO (n.5-6) during 1987. By mistake, we did not include a book he recommended there by Rudolf H. Strahm

(Switzerland) which is entitled:

"Why are they so poor?

Facts and figures in 84 tables on the processes of development"

The author explains the steps towards under-development in the Third World in spite of all predictions and three decades of aid towards under-developed countries. With regard to the themes of world nutrition, ecology, the debt crisis and armament, he demonstrates that up to the present moment, the help given to these countries by way of development allowed for a growth which was not at all helpful to the poor.

In an intelligible manner with the help of graphs and clear commentaries, he unfolds the different steps of his argument.

Walther Fincke proposed as well some passages from Scripture which may help our reflections on the theme:

The great commandment: Lk 10: 25-37; 11: 41-42; Mt 26: 6-13.

The right use of money: Lk 16: 9-13; Ep 4: 28; 1 Jn 3: 17; Lk 16: 19-31; Jm 5: 1-6; 2 Co 8: 13.

Trust in Providence: Lk 12: 16-32; Mk 8: 36; 1 Tm 6: 6-10.

Call to conversion: Lk 3: 8-14; Mk 1: 15; Jn 2: 13-16; 1 co 3:16.

True treasures: Lk 12: 33-34; Mk 10: 17-31; Mt 6: 19-21.