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WORLD MISSION & THE LAYMAN

CICOP

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A program for Catholic Inter-American cooperation is the theme of the lead article in JM this month. The context there is the Papal Volunteer Movement, and the focus is the recent field-evaluation meetings in Peru.

The Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program (CICOP) is also the name of a mammoth project of the U.S. Bishops Committee for Latin America. CICOP (or "Cyclops" as the lady at our house, who is allergic to initials, has it) held its first and also mammoth annual conference in Chicago last January.

Members of few Catholic organizations failed to be notified of this meeting. Totting up one's multiple invitations became something of an apostolic status symbol around New Year's. Perhaps it was also a salutary reminder of how fragmented one's involvement can be.

The Catholic press, in general, provided good coverage. Apart from

newspaper accounts, a generous sprinkling of reportorial articles and extended editorials have appeared in the magazines. I'd like to share a few isolated impressions.

first

The turnout was huge and heterogeneous, some 2,000 persons representing every degree of interest and knowledge in this area save only complete indifference.

The two notes of size and diversity should be considered together. On the debit side, it kept some discussions fairly stiff: the panelists seemed never sure how *au courant* their audiences were. Still, lively debate and even fireworks were not entirely absent. The size also assured some real benefits. The meeting was, at base, a dramatic act on the part of the Church of the Americas, a resounding affirmation of solidarity and cooperation. History is often chronicled in terms of such events.

A great many North Americans were much enlightened during those few days. A diocesan International Relations Chairman declared that the meeting had changed her life. Cardinal Cushing's talk alone, said one priest, was worth coming from New Jersey to hear, and another priest commented that the idea of such a meeting was so excellent that large conferences similar to this

should be held on other areas of the world.

second

The calibre of the Latin American representatives was exceedingly high. We, the giants of the North, clearly came off second best. All "our favorite Latin Americans" were there or were frequently referred to—men like Cardinal Silva, Bishops Larrain, Sales, McGrath and Helder Camara, the Jesuits Vekemans, Poblete and Mejia, and (aren't they really Latin Americans?) the Abbe Houtart and Msgr. Illich.

The North American speakers, perhaps understandably, got the lion's share of the press coverage from here. Apart from a dogfight in Brooklyn being more newsworthy than a war in Vietnam, I think this is explainable by the fact that the North Americans were speaking to North Americans, recognizing that most of us are just waking up to our Inter-American destiny. The Latins, some of them, treated of ground still being broken in their countries, of the exciting new awareness of the Church's role and mission to mankind.

third

Despite much of what some of the speakers said about the Church's and the Christian's involvement in

the work was pushed forward. So large a project was not without initial difficulties, but at last a suitable site was obtained on Taiwan's main highway to the South.

One of the prime movers of the project, Archbishop Paul Yu Pin, is the over-all President, the Rector Magnificus of the restored University. Msgr. John Niu, former Vicar-General of Nanking and present Vicar-General of Taipei, is Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Faculty members of old Fu Jen, as is happily fitting, include Dr. Chien Shih-liang a former chemistry professor at Fu Jen, and now President of the National Taiwan University, and Dr. Ignatius Ying, head of the Department of Foreign Languages at NTU and concurrently Vice-President of the new Fu Jen. Fr. Richard Aarens, S.V.D., veteran professor of old Fu Jen, is now Superior of the S.V.D. community at the new.

The Jesuit College of Law is headed by Msgr. Eugene Fahy S.J. who has played a large part in the rebirth of the University. An "Old China Hand", Msgr. Fahy has had a hand in a host of things during his eventful 23 years in China. Shortly after his arrival in 1941, the Pacific war broke out. He was ordained in an interment camp in Zikawei, Shanghai, returned to the States for tertianship and then back to China where he was named Prefect Apostolic of Yangchow shortly after the Communist occupation. He was arrested, imprisoned for ten miserable months and then expelled from China "forever". A short few weeks in the States to recuperate and he was back in Taiwan in 1952 where he was appointed Superior of the Jesuits in Hsinchu and Vicar Forane in 1954.

He remained in Hsinchu until the arrival of Hsinchu's first Bishop, Msgr. Peter Tou in 1961. During the intervening nine years, Msgr. Fahy saw the Church in the present Hsinchu diocese grow from a mere handful to a Christianity of more than 40,000 souls. The great church of Hsinchu, now the cathedral of the new diocese, is one of many monuments to his talents and persistence, and

numerous Church projects and mission stations owe their existence to his patience in the penitential task of acquiring the needed land. Under his capable direction the present fine Law building was recently erected, and men's dormitories and a large dining hall are now rising.

Enrollment last October, since only two buildings were ready for use, was limited to 450 freshmen. In another three years an estimated 3,000 students are expected on the Fu Jen campus. Less than 20% of the present students are Catholic, but an encouraging number are now under instruction—the first of many, please God, and the first fruits of the sacrifices and prayers of many.

And so a new Fu Jen has sprung up amid the rice fields and encircling mountains of Taiwan—an answer of the Church to the challenge of our times, a monument to the call and mission of Christ to teach all nations, a profession of faith in the eternal values which transcend all cultures and embrace the good and the beautiful in order to lead all to Christ.



Here are smiles for a difficult job well done. The smiles belong to Bro. Robert Griffin S.J., right hand of Msgr. Eugene Fahy S.J. who has done a masterful steering job for the Jesuit part of Fu Jen.

Thanks to Extension Lay Volunteers, this school in Levelland, Texas, is in operation on a full scale. Otherwise, St. Michael's would be an empty shell for no teachers could be found to staff it. But three girls stepped into the breach and now there is laughter and learning in Levelland. (Below) Arlene Brooks of Detroit, Michigan, is the principal. Most of the students are of Spanish descent.



and commitment to the temporal, and despite the often voiced desire to abandon those historically conditioned structures and ways of thought which equate the Church with the institutional, the purely ecclesiastical, there was about the meeting a decidedly clerical, almost "churchy" atmosphere. It probably couldn't have been otherwise at this time, and surely no one would want to complain about the number of bishops present, still less about the crowds of priests and religious who have certainly taken back to their chanceries and communities and schools some new-found or renewed convictions.

But, merely to highlight a situation which is not the ideal, one must note that when laymen were not conspicuous by their absence, they were quite often characterized by their timidity or by too ecclesiastical a mode of thought. One Latin American lay speaker, for example, a man for whom we have the highest esteem, won everyone's heart with his movingly simple presentation on the new laity in Latin America. He pointed, with justice, to those areas of contemporary life where the theologian's silence has retarded needed progress.

"Where are the theologians?" has been a question some have asked for a decade and more when faced with

the great questions of war and peace, of marriage and family, of business, of race relations, and so on. Unquestionably, we need a more adequate theology of nuclear warfare, of the laity, of work, of the temporal, even of the secular (as opposed to the "secularistic", in Harvey Cox's useful distinction).

But in waiting for the theologian, aren't we doing both him and ourselves a disservice? I wonder, in brief, if we aren't inclined by our past habits of thought, to rely too heavily on the area of theology for Christian solutions to many temporal problems.

Whatever the answer, I know that there is need for far more confrontation between North American and Latin American laymen.

fourth

Several of the major thrusts of the Latin American Church in Renewal were conveniently summarized by the conference. The stress on socio-economic development was, of course, everywhere. It ran like a thread through the whole meeting and has been highlighted in the press. So, too, was the acceptance at every level of the (carefully defined) term "Revolution" for the process of change irreversibly begun in Latin America and through the whole world of development.

A revitalized sense of the Church as the people of God, the community of worshippers collaborating in the task of Creation-Redemption was dramatically evident in two papers by Father Leo Mahon, one of a team of Chicago priests working in an "experimental parish" in Panama. (One of these, "The San Miguelito Paper", was reprinted in the February *CIF Reports*.)

The need for the Church to be free, to be mobile, to break away from preoccupation solely with its own institutions and to enter other structures might describe another thrust, admittedly not everywhere in evidence at the meeting.

finally

A clear emphasis was given to the area of pastoral planning. Such regional or national assessment of problems, priorities, goals and methods is already showing remarkable progress in Chile, Panama, and parts of Brazil.

While Father Mahon's other paper, "What Latin American Catholicism Can Contribute to North American Catholicism", did not dwell on this practical issue, overall pastoral planning may indeed be one of the very significant areas in which the Church in Latin America has much to teach its brothers in the North.