

71/15

Rome, 7 May 1971

To all Superiors General
 To all their delegates for SEDOS
 To all members of the SEDOS group

A tous les Supérieurs Généraux
 A tous leurs délégués
 A tous les membres du SEDOS

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COMING EVENTS

BRIEFING SESSION - BRAZIL

10-V-71 - 16.00 - CMM Generalate, Via S. Giovanni Eudes 91, ROME

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

13-V-71 - 09.00 - SEDOS

SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

14-V-71 - 16.00 - OMI Generalate, Via Aurelia 290, ROME

HEALTH CONTACT GROUP

18-V-71 - 15.30 - House of the White Sisters SA, v. XXX Aprile 15, ROME

DEVELOPMENT WG

21-V-71 - 16.00 - SEDOS

PROCHAINES REUNIONS

SESSION D'INFORMATION - BRESIL

COMITE EXECUTIF

COMMUNICATIONS SOCIALES

GROUPE MEDICAL

GROUPE DE DEVELOPPEMENT

N.B. Members of Large Medical Group - see enclosure

N.B. Members of Health Contact Group - see enclosure

Y ours sincerely,
 P. Leonzio Bano, fsci

HEALTH SERVICE

REPORT - on the meeting of APRIL 27th 1971 which was held at the
OSU Generalate, Via N omentana 236 from 3-7p.m.

Present were: Sr. Frieda Avonts sa	Sr. Gemma Galgani Gunn mmm
Sr. Hélène de l'Annonciation fs	Sr. Cécile Gonthier sfb
Sr. Jean Bernard sa	Sr. Michael Marie Keyes scmm
Sr. Margreet Biesterweld scmm-m	Sr. M. Leonora osf
Sr. M. Fiorentina Buontose pmn	Sr. Mary Ann Loughlin fmm
Sr. Joan Burke snd-n	Sr. M. de Lourdes osf
Sr. Mary Aaron Burke smsm	Sr. M. Aldine Martin pmn
Sr. Josée Clijsters scmm-t	Sr. Margaret Mary csj
Sr. Bernadette Coebergh scmm-t	Sr. Helen McCarron fmm
Sr. Marie Josée Dor sa	Sr. Annemarie Oosschot scmm-m
Sr. M. Emerentiana smsm	Sr. Maura Ramsbottom mmm
Sr. Helen Fernando sfb	Sr. M. Redempta osf
Sr. Brigid Flanagan sfb	Sr. Helene Rosenberg csj
Sr. Jane Gates scmm-m	Sr. Geneviève Samson sa
Sr. Arlene Gates sa	Sr. Mary Valentine smsm

In the absence of Sr. Annemaria DeVreede, the meeting was chaired by
Sr. Michael Marie Keyes.

From SEDOS: Fr. B. Tonna, Mlle Fernandez, Miss Ashford

The study topic of this meeting was: "Implications of Population Growth for the Missions". As Fr. McCormack mhm, was still unable to attend due to his illness, Sr. Jane Gates M.D. gave a short talk on "Responsible Parenthood" as an introduction to the group discussions.

Sr. Jane began her talk with a poem by Michel Quoist which vividly portrayed the present state of hunger and suffering in the developing world. She then continued:

" These words say something to us about the problem of population - about responsible parenthood - about the father who cannot provide bread for his family, about the mother who watches her child die of starvation.

Today there are twelve million children under the age of 5 years, who are in danger of dying from malnutrition in developing countries. If they survive, they and another 70 million children of the same age will probably not grow to normal size, and their ability to learn will be impaired.

Twenty percent of all children from birth to five years of age in developing countries show definite signs of protein malnutrition, and three percent are in danger of death if they are not given an adequate diet. There are more than 420 million children under age five in developing countries. These figures and reports come from a forecast made in Rome by the protein advisory group, sponsored by the United Nations, and were made early this year (1971). How many of us sitting here in this room, know what it means to be hungry for days - weeks - months - even years as these innocent children are hungry since birth?

Do we have the right to call ourselves Christians if we are not concerned about the malnourished, the mentally retarded, made thus by protein deficiency? Do we have the right to close our eyes to the fact that another 420 million human beings are condemned before birth to a life of hunger and mental retardation secondary to protein deficiency? And what are we doing about the 420 million hungry humans living right now? Prayer is not a very satisfying snack for a hungry child. Are we doing something to stir the conscience of the policy and decision-makers? If we can't be involved, what are we doing to stimulate the members of our respective congregations to be concerned and involved in these vital issues? Are we convinced enough to be participants in demonstrations for a more equal distribution of this world's resources? Are we willing to walk in a Freedom from Hunger March? Are we willing to or do we take the time to encourage our Sisters to be part of such undertakings? Are we Christians?

We need to remember that we are not God living in an infinite world. We are finite creatures living in a finite world where there is a limit to resources like air, water, minerals, food and space - where we could run out of ground and start standing on each other's heads! The future and the size of the family of man are now a matter of human choice.

When speaking of 'responsible parenthood' one has to consider duties as well as rights. While moralists have long been concerned with arguments regarding the terms under which man may take human life, they must today become equally concerned about the terms under which man may give human life. We must surely temper our concern with the rights of many, ^{by} re-establishing the fact that no right exists which does not carry with it duty. We must ask whether any parent has a right to bring a child into the world unless he or she can fulfill the duty to love it and to nourish it, physically and spiritually.

Right now there are one million more people in the world than there were last week this time. By 1975 the world will have added a billion people to its population in only 15 years; and the next billion will come in half of that time - in $7\frac{1}{2}$ years or by 1983. The most threatening bomb in our global village is the world population - it grows faster than we can imagine.

Perhaps we want to look at the problem of overpopulation as self-solving - breeding the human species into extinction. This could happen by death from pollution and from wars and plagues and famine. These would start in the most underprivileged part of the world, but eventually they would spread even to those societies that had hoarded more than their share of the world's resources. People would die off until a tolerable level had been reached and then they'd live a more primitive simple existence.

Quite apart from the moral issue of what methods are used to achieve responsible parenthood, it seems clear that the whole concept of dignity and responsibility in family life is ruled out by the present flood of ignorant and poverty stricken people moving from under-employment in the stagnant countryside to equal misery in the alien, teeming hostile cities. In many of the largest urban concentrations, illegitimacy rates reach 60 percent, as casual unions, unlinked to any hope of settled shelter or settled work, produce the crowds of sickly children, trachoma-ridden, protein deficient, listless and rickety who throng every doorway of the tarpaper shacks. The same desperate poverty and insecurity account for the appalling rates of abortion - One to every two live births is the official figure for Santiago de Chile. The unofficial figure may well reverse the proportions.

Like all problems today, that of population is also multifaceted and cannot be tackled from one aspect alone. We have to look at the socio-economic factors which have contributed to today's problems if we would intelligently search for a solution that includes social reforms together with responsible parenthood.

One of these factors is the degree to which large cities grew up in a developing continent ahead of any generalized or systematic movement towards modernization. These cities were, in the main, transmission centers for the despatch of primary materials from local mines and plantations back to Europe and North America, and for the receipt and distribution in return of Western manufactures. Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Bombay, Calcutta, Shanghai on a much more modest scale - Dakar, Lagos, Dar-es-Salaam --

- these were all cities looking outward to the world's markets, to the global exchange of primary goods for industrial products. They did not grow up like the cities of Europe and North America, in the wake of local diversification and sustained development. They were, in a real sense, larger than and ahead of the economy sustaining them. It is significant that in 1920 Latin America had as large a proportion of its urban population in cities of over 500,000 as had Europe after a century of full scale modernization. Today the proportion is actually 10 percent higher and in 16 out of the 20 republics more than half the urban population lives in the capital city.

The explosive growth of population has followed from the conquest of major epidemics and the grosser forms of contamination ahead of full scale diversification of the economy. By the end of the 19th century, population growth in the developed countries had slowed down in the main to below 2 percent a year. The work force was growing by only 0.5 percent. In Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the rates are above 2.8 percent and in many cases run at 3 percent and even higher. The increase in the work force is correspondingly high - over 2 percent. In spite of some evidence of rising birth rates in some areas, it is in the main longer life expectancy, springing from better public health, that is responsible for the change. In Latin America for instance, the birth rate has not increased over the last sixty years. It is still between 40 and 45 births per thousand inhabitants. But over the same period, the death rate has tumbled from 28 deaths per thousand to under 15.

Urban areas therefore expand inexorably - from 68 million to 320 million in the last forty years, with the big cities of over 500,000 inhabitants accounting for nearly half the increase. And the countryside cannot absorb a rural increase which, between 1920 and 1960 added over half a billion to the country people, all but 56 million of them in the developing continents.

If a projection is made forward to 1980, the results are even more remarkable. By then world population could be over 4 billions with 1.3 billions living in urban areas - 725 million of them in big cities. The share of the developing world might be 814 million urban dwellers, 451 million of them in big cities. This means that between 1960 and 1980 the developing world could add to its urban settlements more than the total urban population of the developed world today. The houses, power systems, the drains, the schools, the transport, the equivalent of the whole complex pattern of urban living created over several centuries would have to be duplicated in just twenty years.

There has to be renewed agriculture which is already beginning to take place through the scientific breakthrough known as the 'green revolution' coupled with regional manufacturing services and urban growth, to begin creating the environment in which it is even possible to talk about responsible parenthood and family life. Today, in the ghettos of the world, poverty and despair erode away all the preconditions of stability. It is only when there are responsible parents that one can begin to talk about the parents' responsibility. Indeed, if conditions continue to deteriorate while the flood of births goes on, the risk is that governments will feel compelled to intervene with forcible methods of containing population growth.

If we don't cooperate with governments now in the open-programs they have for family planning we will share the guilt when these same governments are obliged to impose forced population control measures on their peoples.

The churches can afford the luxury of ignoring statistics - governments cannot. Governments have a responsibility to all their peoples - to try to assure them a means of living and to raise the standard of whatever this living is. Maybe, up to now, the churches have not concerned themselves sufficiently with such issues - maybe religion has been the opium of the people. If we don't use our Christian influence now in cooperating, what influence can we hope to have in the future, when more pressing statistics force the governments to tighter measures of control, whether humane or not?

Government concern with the size of population is hardly a new development; ancient Rome had laws related to family size. The new twist is that governments used to try to increase population; now they're trying to hold it down. Arguments for population control boil down to the statement that it's necessary, or will be in the near future, to ensure the survival of civilization, perhaps of human life, on our planet. Some critics say that this may not be true of the USA, though few will deny that it might be for India, Africa or Latin America.

Limited support for government population programs came from a surprising source in Pope Paul's encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*: 'It is certain that public authorities can intervene, within the limit of their competence, by favoring the availability of appropriate information and by adopting suitable measures, provided that these be in conformity with the moral law and that they respect the rightful freedom of married couples.' While it admits a government role, this statement seems to limit it to an advisory capacity.

Other alternatives that have been suggested include (in approximately ascending order of severity):-

- Ending present programs designed to encourage large families such as income-tax deductions or subsidies for children.
- Rewards for parents who limit their families.
- Tax penalties for large families or limitations on housing and food supply which will make it difficult to raise many children.
- Making contraceptives or abortions available free or at nominal cost.
- Laws which outrightly and explicitly prohibit families to have more than a given number of children (probably two). At its extreme, this measure could go as far as the compulsory sterilization of parents who exceed their quota.
- Mass extermination of "undesirable elements" in the population.

Presumably none would object to government programs of information on family planning, though some might want to veto parts of the information conveyed. But it is presumed that none would accept the final solution. In between, there are a number of alternatives, all of which are being actively discussed. India has gone so far as to offer material rewards for adults who accept voluntary sterilization.

If parents are to decide, morally, freely and responsibly, the number of children they can nurture and educate, a complete revolution will have to be achieved in the social environment of most developing countries. In lively regional centres, that are supported by productive agriculture and offer jobs, schools and clinics to their families, it is possible to think of parents with the stability, the self-confidence and the growing education to make responsible choices. Illegitimacy and abortion will remain the crippling penalties of the world's present catastrophic migrant floods.

The whole question of social infrastructure - education, health - is intimately connected with the question of basic social justice. If the **wealth** of the community, created by the work of all its inhabitants, is **so shared** that the mass of the people do not receive the opportunities, the skills and the physical vigour for self-advancement, external aid to that society will simply tend to increase the wealth of the possessors of power and property, leaving the masses in their present ignorance, ill health and stagnation. Moreover, even in purely economic terms, the stagnation at the base of society will also cut short sustained growth since no mass market comes into being to match increased supply. In the field of public health, programs for family planning, already adopted by governments ruling two thirds of the developing peoples, will become a more and more important issue. Catholics will have to decide whether or not to give a measure of support and cooperation. Doctrinal differences apart, there would appear to be a number of possible lines of action:-

1. To encourage increased research in the context of human fertility

2. to campaign against such fundamentally unnatural methods of control as irrevocable sterilization and abortion.
3. to resist compulsory government intervention.
4. to join with other groups in campaigning for decent family wages, shelter and environment.
5. to take part with other groups in family health clinics and give Catholic parents who ask for instruction the methods of birth control acceptable to the church.

We began our look at 'Responsible Parenthood' with some verse from Michel Quoist and we can end in the same way with something he has written on HOUSING.

Lord, I can't sleep; I have got up out of bed to pray.
 It is night outside, and the wind blows and the rain falls,
 And the lights of the city, signs of the living, pierce the darkness.
 They bother me, Lord, these lights - why are you showing them to me?
 They beckoned to me, and now they hold me captive, while the woes
 of the city murmur their muffled lament.
 And I cannot escape them, Lord; I know these sufferings too well.
 I see them rising before me,
 I hear them speaking to me,
 I feel them hitting me,
 They were bothering me when I was trying to sleep.

I know that in one single room thirteen crowded people are breathing
 on one another.
 I know a mother who hooks the table and the chairs to the ceiling
 to make room for mattresses.
 I know that rats come out to eat the crusts and bite the babies.
 I know a father who gets up to stretch oil-cloth above the rain-soaked
 bed of his four children.
 I know a mother who stays up all night since there is room for only
 one bed, and the two children are sick.
 I know a drunken father who vomits on the child sleeping beside him.
 I know a big boy who runs away alone into the night because he can't
 stand it any more.
 I know that some men fight for the women as there are three couples
 in the same attic.
 I know a wife who avoids her husband as there is no room for
 another baby at home.
 I know a child who is quietly dying, soon to join his four little
 brothers above.
 I know...
 I know hundreds of others - yet I was going to sleep peacefully
 between my clean white sheets.

I wish I didn't know, Lord.
 I wish it were not true.
 I wish I could convince myself that I'm dreaming,
 I wish someone could prove that I'm exaggerating,
 I wish they'd show me that all these people are to blame, that it's
 their fault that they are so miserable,
 I'd like to be reassured, Lord, but I can't, it's too late.
 I've seen too much,
 I've listened too much,
 I've counted too much, and Lord, these ruthless figures have robbed
 me forever of my innocent tranquility...

The question that sticks in our minds is - "What are we going to do - you
 and I."

* * * * *

Four discussion groups - in English, French and Dutch - were then formed
 to talk over the facts and questions contained in Sr. Jane's talk.

The groups came together again for a plenary session in which the parti-
 cipants voiced their concerns and posed some questions. This could be
 summarized in the following points:

1. Sr. Jane was asked to explain her words: "Religion is sometimes the
 opium of the people".
 - She answered by quoting another phrase from her talk: "The Church can
 afford the luxury of ignoring statistics, governments cannot". She
 explained that to say that 'the poor and the hungry have always existed
 and always will' does not represent a very realistic attitude or ef-
 fective remedy to the problems of hunger and population. It was right
 to trust to Divine Providence, but to do so and at the same time de-
 liberately shut one's eyes to these problems, was self-deceptive and
 resorting to religion as to a tranquilizer. Governments take an
 overall view of the entire population and have to act on the face of
 statistics. The Church, too, should consider the total population and
 not just part of it.
2. A question was raised if the Church is to decide 'yes' or 'no' to con-
 traceptive methods, - or if her role rather is to promote better social
 conditions and to help people form their conscience, so that they can make
 a free decision about their own families?
 - It was remarked by some participants that there was no positive answer
 in terms of black and white to this question, but only in shades of grey.

The educational role of the Church was stressed as being of paramount importance, so that people would be prepared to make their own decisions in a responsible way.

It was also said, that we should not think along Catholic and Western lines only, as we are often dealing with people of other religions, and we should definitely take their beliefs and traditions into consideration.

3. One participant mentioned that so much more could be done for unmarried mothers - and as so many cannot face the consequences of their actions, would not much misery be prevented if they were informed about contraceptive techniques?

The question was not further discussed as it did not actually pertain directly to the subject under discussion.

4. Sr. Jane was asked to provide those present with a list of reference books on the subject. She was also asked to provide them with information about the various contraceptive methods, including those approved and not-approved by the Church, as several participants recognized that they were not sufficiently informed in this area.

5. In answer to Sr. Jane's question: "What are we going to do, you and I?", it was suggested that we spread information on the facts about hunger and the population increase and protest at the social conditions. Our aim should be to educate people and develop in them a religious and social conscience. Also, a joint meeting with the Communications group was proposed. Three volunteers will approach them about it. It was suggested that the reports of the discussion groups should be sent to the Generalates. It would be interesting to see what the reaction would be.

6. It was pointed out that the heart of the problem lay in social conditions and to change or better these demanded a long-term approach. However, statistics called for urgent action and, hence, there is a dilemma of time.

The meeting was closed by Sr. Michael Marie Keyes, after it was agreed that for next year's program, more meetings on this subject should be planned, as all participants had found it very profitable and had gained new insights in one of the world's main problems.

(FOR REPORTS OF THE FOUR DISCUSSION GROUPS, SEE PAGES 334 and fol.

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GROUPE MEDICAL - RAPPORT DE LA REUNION DU 27 AVRIL

La réunion commençait avec une conférence faite par Sr Gates sur la "Paternité Responsable".

Sr Gates introduisait sa conférence avec un poème de Michel Quoist qui décrivait d'une manière très vivante le problème de la faim et de la souffrance dans les pays en voie de développement. Ensuite, elle continuait:

Ces paroles ont pour nous une signification à propos du problème de la population - de la paternité responsable - du père qui ne peut pas fournir du pain à sa famille - la mère qui regarde attentivement son enfant mourant de faim.

Aujourd'hui, il y a 12 millions d'enfants au-dessous de 5 ans en danger de mort pour cause de sous-alimentation dans les pays en voie de développement. S'ils survivent, eux et 70 autres millions d'enfants du même âge ne se développeront probablement pas d'une taille normale et leur capacité à apprendre sera très limitée.

Dans les pays en voie de développement, vingt pour cent de tous les enfants de la naissance à 5 ans accusent les signes de manquant en protéines et trois pour cent sont en danger de mort si on ne leur donne pas une nourriture suffisante. Il y a plus de 420 millions d'enfants au-dessous de 5 ans en pays en voie de développement. Ces chiffres et rapports viennent d'une prévision faite à Rome par le Groupe consultatif "protéines" organisé par les Nations Unies et ils furent publiés au début de cette année 1971. Combien parmi nous, assis ici dans cette salle savent ce que signifie avoir faim pendant des jours-des semaines - des mois - même des années comme ces pauvres enfants ont faim depuis leur naissance ?

Avons-nous raison de nous appeler nous-mêmes chrétiens si nous n'accordons pas d'intérêt aux mal-nourris, aux retardés mentaux à cause de la manquant en protéines ? Avons-nous le droit de fermer les yeux sur le fait que 420 millions d'êtres humains sont condamnés avant leur naissance à une vie de famine et à une insuffisance mentale à cause de la carence de protéines ? Et que faisons-nous pour les 420 millions d'affamés vivant actuellement ? La prière n'est pas une ration suffisante pour un enfant qui a faim. Faisons-nous quelque chose pour alerter la conscience de ceux qui prennent les décisions et dictent la ligne de conduite ? Si nous ne pouvons être engagés que faisons-nous pour stimuler les membres de nos congrégations respectives afin qu'elles puissent être intéressées et engagées dans ces questions vitales ?

Sommes-nous suffisamment convaincus que nous devons participer aux manifestations afin d'établir une distribution mieux répartie des ressources du monde ? Sommes nous disposés à participer à la marche pour la libération de la faim ? Sommes-nous disposés ou prenons-nous le temps d'encourager nos soeurs à prendre part à de telles entreprises ? Sommes-nous Chrétiens ?

Nous avons besoin de nous rappeler que nous ne sommes pas Dieu vivant dans un monde éternel. Nous sommes des créatures mortelles vivant dans un monde limité où il y a une limitation aux ressources comme à l'air, l'eau, les minéraux, la nourriture et l'espace. Où nous n'aurions pas suffisamment de terrain pour poser nos pieds et nous serions obligés de nous jucher sur la tête les uns des autres ! L'avenir et l'ampleur de la famille de l'homme sont maintenant une question de choix humain.

Quand nous parlons de 'paternité responsable' nous avons à considérer les devoirs aussi bien que les droits. Dans le passé, les moralistes se sont vraiment intéressés aux conditions dans lesquelles l'homme peut avoir le droit de supprimer la vie, ils doivent aussi s'intéresser maintenant aux conditions dans lesquelles l'homme peut donner la vie. Nous devons certainement tempérer notre comportement avec les droits de beaucoup d'autres personnes en rétablissant le fait qu'aucun droit ne peut exister **sans** qu'il n'y soit un devoir correspondant. Nous devons nous demander si les parents ont le droit de mettre un enfant au monde s'ils ne sont pas capables de l'aimer et de le nourrir, physiquement et spirituellement.

Aujourd'hui même, il y a dans le monde un million de personnes de plus qu'il n'y en avait la semaine passée. En 1975, la population aura augmenté d'un billion de personnes, et cela seulement dans une période de 15 ans; et le prochain billion arrivera dans la moitié de cette durée c'est à dire dans 7 ans $\frac{1}{2}$ ou en 1983. La bombe la plus menaçante pour notre planète est sa population. Elle croît à un tel point qu'on ne peut l'imaginer.

Peut-être, nous voulons regarder le problème de la **surpopulation** comme pouvant se résoudre lui-même - la race humaine réduisant sa reproduction jusqu'au point de disparaître. Ceci pourrait arriver en mourant à cause de pollution, de guerres, d'épidémies et de famine. Ceci commencerait dans les parties du monde les moins privilégiées, mais éventuellement cela arriverait aussi dans les sociétés qui ont accumulé beaucoup plus qu'il ne leur était dû des ressources du monde. Les gens mourraient jusqu'à réduire la population à un niveau acceptable et ils vivraient alors dans une existence plus simple et plus primitive.

Mise à part la moralité des méthodes employées pour obtenir la paternité responsable, il paraît clair que toute conception de dignité et responsabilité dans la vie de famille est éliminée à cause du grand nombre des personnes ignorantes et misérables qui émigrent des campagnes sans emplois vers les villes pour eux étrangères, surpeuplées et hostiles. Dans la plupart des grandes agglomérations urbaines, le taux d'illégitimité arrive à un pourcentage de 60% dans les cas d'union temporaire, sans espoir de logement stable ou d'un travail permanent ; ce taux produit un grand nombre d'enfants malades, atteints de trachome, déficients en protéines, apathiques et rachitiques qui affluent à chaque porte des bidonvilles. La même insécurité et pauvreté sans aucun espoir sont cause du taux effroyable d'avortement. Un avortement sur deux naissances est le chiffre officiel à Santiago du Chili. Le chiffre non officiel peut bien renverser les proportions.

Comme tous les problèmes contemporains celui de la population a plusieurs dimensions et ne peut être affronté sous un seul aspect. Si nous voulions intelligemment chercher la solution qui combinerait les réformes sociales avec la paternité responsable, nous devrions examiner les facteurs socio-économiques qui ont contribué aux problèmes d'aujourd'hui.

Un de ces facteurs est le degré de croissance des grandes villes qui croissent dans les continents du Tiers-Monde sans qu'aucun effort systématique et généralisé ne soit envisagé pour la modernisation. Ces villes étaient, en général, des centres de transmission pour l'envoi des matières premières des mines locales et des plantations vers l'Europe et l'Amérique du Nord ; ces villes étaient aussi des centres de réception et de distribution des manufactures occidentales. Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Bombay, Calcutta, Shanghai sur une échelle plus modeste - Dakar, Lagos, Dar-es-Salam -- Toutes ces villes étaient orientées vers les marchés mondiaux, vers l'échange global des matières premières pour la production industrielle. Elles ne sont pas développées comme les villes d'Europe et d'Amérique du Nord, à cause de la diversification locale et du développement soutenu. Elles étaient dans le sens réel, plus grandes et plus avancées que l'économie les soutenant. C'est assez significatif qu'en 1920 l'Amérique Latine avait une proportion de sa population urbaine vivant dans les villes de plus de 500.000 Habitants, comme l'Europe en avait après un siècle de modernisation à plein rythme. Aujourd'hui la proportion est, en effet, 10% plus haute et dans 16/20 républiques, plus de la moitié de la population urbaine vit dans la capitale.

La croissance "explosive" de la population fut suivie de grandes épidémies et des formes les plus évidentes de la contagion bien avant la gamme complète de diversification de l'économie. A la fin du 19ème siècle, la croissance démographique des pays en voie de développement se ralentit en général au dessous de 2% par année. La population au travail n'augmentait seulement que de 0,5%. En Afrique, Asie, Amérique Latine, les taux sont supérieurs à 2.8% et dans beaucoup de cas atteignent 3% et même plus haut. La croissance de la population au travail est donc haute et supérieure à 2%. Malgré l'existence du taux considérable des naissances dans certaines régions, c'est en général l'espérance d'une vie plus longue, grâce à une amélioration des services publics sanitaires qui sont responsables de ce changement. En Amérique Latine par exemple, le taux de natalité n'a pas augmenté pendant ces 60 dernières années. Il y a encore entre 40 et 45 naissances sur mille habitants. Mais pendant la même période, le taux de mortalité s'est réduit de 28 décès à 15 sur mille habitants.

Il est donc évident que le milieu urbain se développe sans cesse - de 68 millions à 320 millions pendant les 40 dernières années - les grandes villes sont responsables de la moitié de cette augmentation. En plus, le pays rural ne peut absorber une croissance rurale qui entre 1920 et 1960 a augmenté d'un demi billion la population rurale, dont seulement 56 millions de cette population se trouvent dans les continents en voie de développement.

En 1980, les résultats seront plus remarquables; alors la population mondiale pourrait être de plus de 4 billions avec 1.3 billion dans les régions urbaines - 725 millions dans les grandes villes -

Le Tiers Monde aura 814 millions dont 451 dans les grandes villes. Par conséquent, entre 1960 et 1980, les régions urbaines du Tiers Monde pourraient arriver à égalité avec la population urbaine totale du monde développé actuel. Nous devrions arriver à doubler dans une vingtaine d'années, ce qui a été créé pendant plusieurs siècles, c'est à dire: le logement, les centrales électriques, les canalisations sanitaires, les écoles, les transports.

Nous devons envisager un renouvellement de l'agriculture qui a déjà commencé par des moyens scientifiques sous le nom de "révolution verte", de même que des services de manufacture régionale, la croissance urbaine avant que nous puissions créer l'ambiance où il sera possible d'envisager la paternité responsable et la vie familiale. Aujourd'hui, dans les ghettos du monde, la pauvreté et le désespoir amenuisent les conditions préalables à la stabilité. C'est seulement le jour où il y aura des parents responsables que l'on pourra commencer à parler de la responsabilité des parents.

D'autre part, si les conditions continuent à se détériorer tandis que les naissances abondent de plus en plus, on court le risque que les Gouvernements se sentiraient obligés d'intervenir avec des méthodes de force pour contrôler la croissance démographique.

Si nous ne coopérons pas maintenant avec les Gouvernements dans les programmes "ouverts" qui préparent à la planification familiale, nous partageront la culpabilité quand ces mêmes gouvernements seront obligés d'imposer avec la force le contrôle démographique de la population.

Les Eglises peuvent avoir le luxe d'ignorer les statistiques. Les Gouvernements ne peuvent pas. Ils ont une responsabilité à assurer devant leur peuple - la responsabilité de leur assurer les moyens de vie et d'en relever le niveau quelquesoit le genre de vie. Peut-être jusqu'à maintenant, les Eglises ne ^{se} sont pas assez intéressées dans la question - peut-être la religion a été l'opium du peuple. Si nous ne mobilisons pas notre influence chrétienne aujourd'hui en coopérant, quelle influence pourrons-nous espérer avoir dans l'avenir quand les statistiques encore plus graves obligeront les Gouvernements à des moyens stricts de contrôle humains ou pas?

La préoccupation du Gouvernement devant l'ampleur de la famille n'est pas un développement nouveau; l'ancien Rome avait des lois relatives à l'ampleur de la famille. La nouvelle tournure est que dans le temps, les Gouvernements essaient d'accroître la population et, maintenant ils essaient de la freiner. Les arguments pour le contrôle de la population ne se réduisent qu'à la déclaration que le contrôle est maintenant nécessaire ou sera nécessaire dans un proche avenir pour assurer la survie de la civilisation, peut-être même de la vie humaine sur notre planète. Des personnes font remarquer que ceci serait peut-être vrai pour les USA, bien que peu de personnes nieront que cela pourrait être vrai pour les Indes, l'Afrique et l'Amérique Latine.

Les programmes du Gouvernement pour la population recevaient un certain appui limité provenant d'une source assez étonnante, c'est à dire: l'encyclique du Pape Paul, *Populorum Progressio*: "Il est certain que les autorités publiques peuvent intervenir dans la limite de leur compétence, en favorisant la disponibilité de l'information appropriée et en adoptant des mesures convenables pourvu que celles-ci soient en conformité avec la loi morale et qu'elles respectent le plein droit de liberté des couples mariés." Bien que cette déclaration admette que le Gouvernement a un rôle à jouer, elle ne semble lui accorder qu'une capacité consultative.

D'autres alternatives qui ont été suggérées, comportent (un ordre de sévérité graduelle):

Terminer avec les programmes actuels désignés pour encourager les familles nombreuses, tel qu'impôt sur le revenu, déductions ou subsides pour les enfants.

Allocation pour les parents qui limitent leurs familles.

Pénalités pour les familles nombreuses ou limitations sur la nourriture et le logement qui les mettent dans la difficulté d'élever beaucoup d'enfants.

Rendre disponibles et gratuits, ou alors à un prix insignifiant, les contraceptifs ou les avortements.

Des lois qui clairement et explicitement interdisent aux familles d'avoir plus qu'un nombre déterminé d'enfants (probablement 2). A cette extrême, cette mesure pourrait aller jusqu'à la stérilisation obligatoire des parents qui dépassent ce nombre.

Extermination générale des éléments indésirables de la population.

Personne, probablement, ne ferait d'objection aux programmes d'information du Gouvernement sur la planification de la famille, bien que certains dési-
reraient supprimer une partie de cette information donnée. Probablement, personne n'accepterait la solution finale.

Parmi ces alternatives, il y a un nombre qui est activement discuté. Les Indes sont allées jusqu'au point d'offrir une "récompense" aux adultes qui acceptent volontairement la stérilisation.

Si les Parents ont à décider moralement, librement et en toute responsabilité, le nombre des enfants qu'ils peuvent nourrir et éduquer, une complète révolution devra être accomplie dans l'ambiance sociale de la plupart des pays en voie de développement. Dans les centres régionaux avec des écoles et des cliniques, aidés par l'agriculture productrice qui offre des emplois et en même temps des écoles et des cliniques pour leurs familles, il est possible de penser aux parents (avec la stabilité, la confiance personnelle et l'éducation graduelle) capables de choix responsables. Illégitimité et avortement restent les pénalités graves du fait de l'abondance catastrophique des émigrants dans le monde actuel.

Toute la question de l'infrastructure sociale - éducation, sanitaire - est étroitement liée avec la question de justice sociale fondamentale. Si la richesse de la communauté, créée par le travail de tous ses membres, n'est pas suffisamment partagée pour que la masse du peuple ne reçoive les opportunités, les capacités, la vigueur physique pour l'auto-avancement, aide extérieure à cette communauté, elle tiendra simplement à aggrandir la richesse des maîtres du Pouvoir et de la propriété, laissant les masses dans leur ignorance actuelle, mauvaise santé et stagnation. De plus, même dans les termes purement économiques, la stagnation à la base d'une Société coupera court à toute continuité parce qu'aucun marché n'assurera la vente de la grande quantité des produits acquis.

Dans le milieu de la santé publique, les programmes pour la planification des familles, déjà adoptés par les Gouvernements qui dominent les 2/3 des peuples en voie de développement deviendront de plus en plus une question importante.

Les Catholiques devront décider quelle est la mesure de soutien et de coopération à donner. Mise à part, les différences doctrinales, il apparaîtrait y avoir un certain nombre possible de lignes d'action:

1. encourager les recherches dans le contexte de la fertilité humaine.
2. contester les méthodes de contrôle foncièrement contre nature, tel que l'irrévocable stérilisation et avortement.
3. s'opposer à toute intervention obligatoire du Gouvernement.
4. Se joindre à d'autres groupes afin d'obtenir pour les familles un salaire décent, de même qu'un logement et une ambiance.
5. Participer avec d'autres groupes à l'organisation des cliniques pour la famille et donner aux Parents Catholiques toutes les informations qu'ils demandent sur les méthodes de contrôle des naissances acceptées par l'Eglise.

Compte-rendu des questions posées et des opinions exprimées pendant la session plénière.

1. Il fut demandé à Sr. Jane d'expliquer: "La Religion est souvent l'opium du peuple"

- Elle répondait en citant une autre phrase de son discours : "L'Eglise peut se permettre le luxe d'ignorer les statistiques, les Gouvernements ne le peuvent pas". Elle expliquait que le fait de dire: "Les pauvres ont toujours existé et ils existeront toujours", ne représente pas une attitude très réaliste ou un remède très efficace pour les problèmes de la faim et de la population. Nous avons raison de croire en la Providence Divine mais, croire et en même temps fermer les yeux sur ces problèmes, serait se désillusionner et recourir à la religion comme à un tranquillisant. Les Gouvernements s'occupent de toute la population et doivent agir devant l'évidence des statistiques. L'Eglise, aussi, devrait considérer toute la population et non pas seulement une partie.

2. Une question était soulevée pour demander si l'Eglise devrait décider d'accepter ou non les méthodes de contraception, - ou si son rôle n'était pas plutôt d'améliorer les conditions sociales et d'aider les gens à former leur conscience, pour qu'ils puissent choisir librement en ce qui concerne leurs propres familles ?

- Certains membres présents faisaient remarquer qu'il serait difficile de pouvoir donner une réponse concrète à cette question.
Le rôle éducatif de l'Eglise est très important pour que les gens puissent être préparés à prendre eux-mêmes leurs décisions en toute responsabilité.

Il fut ajouté que puisque nous entretenons des relations avec des personnes de religions différentes, nous ne devrions pas penser seulement selon nos idées Catholiques Occidentales, mais au contraire, nous devrions considérer leurs croyances et leurs traditions.

3. Un membre présent faisait remarquer que l'on pourrait aussi envisager le cas des jeunes-mères célibataires puisque, un grand nombre d'entre elles ne peuvent affronter les conséquences de leurs actions, ne pourrait-on pas éviter tant de misères en les informant sur les techniques de contraception ?

- Cette question ne fut pas traitée car elle ne rentrait pas directement dans le thème de la discussion.

4. Il fut demandé à Sr Jane de fournir à tous les membres présents une liste des livres se référant à ce sujet; de même aussi que les différentes méthodes de contraception, y compris celles approuvées par l'Eglise. Plusieurs membres présents se rendaient compte qu'ils ne possédaient que très peu d'information dans ce domaine.
5. Comme réponse à la demande de Sr Jane: - Qu'allions-nous faire, vous et moi ?
 - On suggérerait que l'on pourrait propager les données statistiques de de la faim et de la surpopulation.-
 - Que nous devons protester contre les conditions sociales. Notre but devrait être d'éduquer le peuple et de développer en eux-mêmes une conscience religieuse et sociale. Il fut donc proposé une réunion d'ensemble avec le groupe de communications. Trois volontaires se chargeront de l'organisation.Il a été aussi suggéré d'envoyer les rapports des discussions de groupes à tous les Généralats. Il serait intéressant d'en connaître la réaction.
6. On a remarqué que le cœur du problème se trouve dans les conditions sociales, mais les changer ou les améliorer, demande une planification à longue échéance. Les statistiques par contre, demandent une action immédiate, et, il y a donc le dilemme du temps.

La conclusion de la réunion fut donnée par Sr Michael Marie Keyes. Il fut décidé pour le programme de l'année prochaine que d'autres réunions sur ce sujet devraient être envisagées du fait que tous les membres présents en avaient tiré profit et acquis une connaissance plus ample d'un des principaux problèmes du Monde.

HEALTH GROUP MEETING, April 27, 1971

Summaries of the Discussion Groups at the Meeting

SUMMARY OF REPORT - GROUP 1 (English)

-- Dilemma of time was keenly felt....

On the one hand, the problem of population is one that is very related to social and economic conditions, mores and religion-sanctioned attitudes, level of human development. To change these so that human promotion can be better fostered will require a great and concerted effort. By its nature, such a task requires a considerable amount of time.

On the other hand, there is great urgency since the extent and the dimensions of the problem today are so great.

-- Religious need to seriously study all methods of birth control and the implications of their use, as well as consequent side-effects. The matter is a multi-faceted one which involves consideration of medical and physical, psychological, moral questions.

Sister Jane Gates was herself a member of the discussion group and explained briefly the officially church-approved methods of birth control--total abstinence and the rhythm method. She also discussed with the group control by "the pill", mechanical means, operative means.

-- Basic to any education program in this area is the question of conscience-formation. The Church today, in pointing out that not all moral matters can simply be defined in terms of "black and white", is asking that the individual Christian recognize the many shades of "gray". Educators have the serious and difficult burden of education-for-freedom and the delicate challenge of fostering conscience-formation.

-- The immensity and extent of the population problem have led many of its students into the 'school of defeatism and fatalism.' Religious must continually renew one another in courage to face the problem and be constant in the complex search for ways to work with the question.

-- To the four proposed suggested actions on the part of religious, two others could be added: (1) resolve to educate and inform oneself re the problem, and see to it that such be incorporated into Formation programs; (2) recognize and accept the importance today of educating the young to develop their consciences so that they can responsibly exercise moral freedom.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION GROUPE 2 (FRENCH)

- version française à la page suivante

The following points were discussed and studied by the French group.

1. "What can we, as the Church, do and what must we do in face of the extremely difficult living conditions prevailing in developing countries, if we want to bring about a change so that the irresponsible increase in population may be avoided?"
 - We must assume an educative role vis à vis parents, and a contestatory role as regards inhuman social structures.
 - We must allow couples to decide for themselves, helping them to reflect on their responsibilities and seeking to better their social conditions.
2. "To what extent may we intervene in the private life of a couple? Are we sufficiently informed about contraceptive methods to be able to give advice to couples?"
 - Should our advice be limited to the encyclicals?
 - Shouldn't there be Orientation and Formation Centres for parents?
3. On the question of government collaboration for birth control, the group pointed out that collaborating meant judging the situation and the system from a Christian standpoint. To alleviate the seriousness of the situation, the Government should improve social conditions such as housing, work etc.
4. On the question of sex education for young unmarried people in over-populated countries, the group made the following observations.
 - Unmarried couples, especially young people, bring children into the world who will later rank among the under-privileged. Due to their immaturity these parents commit an act without exercising freedom of choice. In order to avoid these sad cases, couldn't the young people be informed and advised on the use of technical contraceptive methods?
 - Consequently, couldn't we point out to them that what should be an act of love, has become no more than an animal act; and couldn't we help them to face up to the situation and to their responsibility?

GROUPE MEDICAL

- Rapport de la discussion du groupe de langue française sur le thème "Paternité responsable".

Le groupe relevait les questions suivantes qui méritaient d'être discutées et étudiées.

1. Nous, comme Eglise, devant les conditions de vie actuelle, très difficiles, que pouvons-nous faire et que devons-nous faire pour apporter un changement afin d'éviter l'accroissement irresponsable de la population?
 - Nous devons avoir un rôle Educatif sur les Parents et contestataire sur les structures inhumaines.
 - Nous devons permettre aux couples de choisir eux-mêmes en les aidant à réfléchir sur leurs responsabilités et cherchant d'améliorer leurs conditions sociales.
2. Jusqu'à quel point, nous Célibataires, pouvons-nous/^{nous}permettre d'entrer dans l'intimité, la vie privée des couples?
 - Sommes-nous suffisamment formées sur les techniques de contraception, pour pouvoir conseiller les couples?
 - Ou doit-on conseiller seulement d'après les encycliques?
 - Ne devrait-il pas exister des Centres d'Orientalion et de Formation pour les parents?
3. A propos de collaboration avec le Gouvernement pour la régulation des naissances, le Groupe faisait remarquer que:
 - collaborer sous-entendait aussi juger et contester du point de vue Chrétien le système.
 - Le Gouvernement devrait, pour réduire la gravité de la situation, améliorer les conditions sociales, logement, travail etc...
4. A propos de l'Education sexuelle des jeunes célibataires dans les pays surpeuplés, on a remarqué que:-
 - Certains enfants sont mis au monde par des personnes non-mariées et surtout très jeunes. Elles ont commis un acte alors qu'elles n'étaient pas libres. Ces enfants seront plus tard des malheureux. Pour éviter ces désastres, ne pourrait-on pas les informer et leur conseiller d'utiliser les moyens techniques contraceptifs?
 - Par la suite, n'y aurait-il pas ainsi la possibilité de leur faire remarquer que ce qui devrait être un acte d'amour, n'est devenu tout simplement qu'un acte bestial; les aider à réfléchir sur leur situation et leur responsabilité?

HEALTH CONTACT - Report of Discussion Group 3 (English)

1. The group concurred in asking for a brief but clear presentation of:
 - a. The methods of birth control;
 - b. Those approved by the Church;
 - c. Efficacy of various methods;
 - d. Modifying circumstances concerning the method of birth control, e.g. the religion of the recipient. What about the religious beliefs of the person explaining the methods? For example, a Catholic doctor or nurse explaining methods to a Hindu? Is the problem of conscience different for a person explaining the various methods than for a person actually providing the method?
2. The group felt that our most important and efficacious task was to educate ourselves and then carry out our responsibility to pass on the information and documentation to the members of our various congregations. It was thought that the congregations, which publish a regular bulletin and documentary service, could well devote an issue to this entire matter of population facts and control, hunger in the world, responsible parenthood, etc. It was also suggested that the documentation provided to our Sisters could be followed up with a request for information on how the Sisters in the field react to this situation, what they are doing about it, etc.
3. Reference was made to the Freedom from Hunger March to be held soon in the month of May, in various countries throughout the world. Participation is encouraged.
4. Sisters can take advantage of writing to government officials and may take advantage of the press in order to make known their concerns and views on topics of such vital issues.
5. It was also suggested that wherever we have convents, it is possible for the Sisters to live in isolation and only concern themselves with the pupils in the schools, the patients in the hospitals, or it is possible for them to be concerned with the total community within which the school or hospital or convent is located. In this way, we will maintain a social consciousness, become aware of the problems confronted by the average family, and hopefully be able to do something to help them.
6. It was remarked that the current emphasis on social development, rural programs, community planning, credit unions, adult education and other types of involvement focused on people and their problems in the milieu in which they live, serves to involve us more readily in these world-wide problems than our previous inter-mural programs of teaching, nursing, etc.
7. It was also suggested that we show a greater concern in our various media of communications with such people-centered projects rather than

with prolonged discussions of "subsidiarity", "collegiality", "parousia", and similar self-centered or congregation-centered discussions. Emphasis on the critical needs of the peoples of the world will probably be much more meaningful to the missionaries in the field and probably more healthy for all religious.

8. Experiences of the Sisters indicate their awareness of the problems facing average parents of middle income in meeting all the needs of their children. For example, even if the parents succeed in providing for all the children materially, are they always able to provide for them spiritually and psychologically? Trying to respond to the human needs of several children (especially if they are close in age) is very draining psychologically for the mother, even if she does not realize it or at least does not complain about it. However, it is possible for her to fail one or another child, simply because she cannot extend herself beyond a certain point. If this situation exists even in a fairly stable family, how much more so, when the parents cannot even provide enough food?

9. With regard to the question of parents being justified in having many children, if they are able to provide for them physically and spiritually (given the extent of overpopulation), the group felt it difficult to answer this question, if consideration was not also given to a more equitable distribution of this earth's goods. In other words, if parents in well developed countries with a high per-capita income have less children, but there is no levelling off of wealth distribution between the poor countries and the wealthy countries, not much would be achieved, except a higher per-capita income for the wealthy country because the riches would be distributed over a smaller number of persons.

HEALTH GROUP - Report of Discussion Group 4 (Dutch)

The following observations were made:-

One sister knew from her experience in the Philippines that people like to have large families; one of the reasons is that it shows their wealth. The same holds for Indonesia, as one of the participants observed. The people have no global view. If they live in a kampong and only know the people in their own and the neighbouring village, they don't understand us when we tell them about the population explosion in the world. They have no concrete idea of all these billions we speak about, unless they are urban dwellers. Consequently it is not easy to give these people the right motivation for applying birth control.

Another sister knew from her experience in Africa that in the old African way of life a sort of family planning existed. People knew how to find and prepare certain herbs which made the women temporarily infertile (these were not harmless).

A question was: - Could more research be done in this field? It might then become possible to develop different methods from something people are already familiar with.

The pill as a method of contraception was considered too expensive for poor people. In the Philippines they are donated by American agencies, but after some time these donations will cease. Once people are used to getting them donated, they will not or won't be able to pay for them subsequently.

A natural aid for the regulating of births could be the raising of the legal age for marriage in certain countries.

One-sided health care without birth control makes the population growth accelerate. Consequently if comprehensive health care along with humane living conditions for all persons born into the world is to be provided, education as regards responsible parenthood and family planning should also be included. The Churches and Christians cannot stand on one side and do nothing. We know that it is neither sufficient nor possible to use the methods approved by the Catholic Church in every case. Governments may take measures without us, and it is not so sure that all the compulsory methods are morally right. Even if they were right, the fact they are compulsory is against the personal freedom of the individuals.

It would be far better for human dignity if we could educate people in such a way that they can choose freely from the advised methods. Education in this sense means:- teaching students in schools, engaged and young married couples about love and respect for each other, making them conscious and aware (if possible) of the problems of population and their consequences, giving them sex education, and telling them the pro's and con's of all the ways and methods of family planning and birth regulation, so that a couple can then

Summary of Dutch Discussion Group continued

make a free decision, based on love and respect. However, much guidance is needed before people can really act responsibly on their own, and for this reason it is almost impossible to do it for large numbers.

Some Suggestions made by the group regarding Sr. Jane's question: "What are we going to do, you and I?"

1. Campaigns for decent living conditions are very important, both to bring joy and dignity to the already existing population and to serve as a means of birth control. (It is known that people confined in a dark shack have no other means of diversion or amusement than sexual relationships, and their children who are witnesses of this, will assume it is natural to live in the same way). Support should be given to demonstrations against rich countries' investments (so called development aid) in the Third World, which the rich countries find very profitable. We should make use of such international organizations as FAO, UNESCO, WHO etc.
2. We can and should stimulate the interest of the general councils of our congregations on these population problems. Those in charge of internal communications among our congregations should stimulate the interest of all their members on this subject through their news and opinion bulletins. We ourselves have been enriched during this meeting by sharing our convictions and our opinions.

The proposal was made that the information from the meeting and the convictions voiced during it should be shared with the sisters working in the actual field. The group therefore asked for Sr. Jane's talk plus the reports of the discussion groups to be made available to all SEDOS congregations (not only to the members present at the meeting), and for all the congregations to be encouraged to send this to the sisters in the field.

HEALTH CONTACT GROUP

A meeting of the (small) Contact Group for Health Services will be held on MAY 18, 1971, 3:30 p.m. at the house of the White Sisters, 15 Via XXX Aprile.

AGENDA:

1. Review of report of last meeting, April 13, 1971
2. Evaluation of the large meeting held on April 27, 1971:
 - participation
 - content and discussions
3. Function and Membership of:
 - a. Contact Group (for Group members - see enclosure)
 - b. Large Medical Group (for Group members - see enclosure)
4. Program for the next year, September 1971 - June 1972

Possible subjects for next year's meetings:

- follow-up of the meetings held on "Implications of Population Growth for the Missions"
- nationalization of hospitals: goal or threat?
- re-training and re-adjustment of sisters who are used to institutional work only
- how to make the General Councils here in Rome aware of the problems regarding the health services in the missions, especially those that have no professional medical sisters on the council, yet whose function it is to make or approve policies regarding the congregation's health work .
- sharing of information about the meetings of CMC by those who were present at these meetings
- explanation of the work of the Christian Medical Commission, the work done so far and future hopes for further cooperation.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Executive Committee of SEDOS will be held on May 13 at 09.00 at the Secretariate with the following agenda.

Item:

1. The Assembly of Generals of June 15, 1971: agenda.
2. Statement on Sedos position on cooperation in the Health Services.
3. Development:
 - a) conclusions of the Group on Sedos participation in the Working Group for Development through Credit Union;
 - b) report of Bro. Th. More's participation in the Geneva consultation convened by the Division of Inter Church Aid Welfare and Refugee Service.
4. Other matters.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION WORKING GROUP

There will be a meeting of the Social Communications Working Group on MAY 14, 1971, at 16.00, at the Generalate of the Missionary Oblates (290 Via Aurelia, Tel.: 63-70-251).

The meeting will precede the presentation ceremony of the Social Communication Directory, organized by SEDOS -- to be held at the same place.

PROPOSED AGENDA

1. Bro. Basterrechea to report on the panel organized for the Union of Major Superiors (April 15, 1971).
2. Fr. Bamberger to brief the meeting on the project of a course on religious information. First draft of the curriculum to be discussed.
3. Sr. Dolorina: follow-up on the Vienna Congress (June 14-19) on the "Image of the Woman in the Mass Media".
4. Fr. Tonna, Executive Secretary of SEDOS to report on requests interesting the Group.
5. Project submitted by Sr. Marilyn Tully on the organization of a 3-day seminar on Mass Communication to be discussed.

DEVELOPMENT

SPOTLIGHTS ON DARK CORNERS No. 9

"POSITION OF COLOMBIAN BISHOPS ON NATIONAL STRIKE" (8 March 1971)

(summary of document given in CELAM 4 (Mar. '71) n..43 pp.6-7)

A series of events - strikes, paralysis of agrarian reform, student unrest, etc. - created the climate for a general strike on 8 March 1971. Three days earlier the Permanent Committee of Colombian Bishops issued a 15-point document describing their stand on various points affecting the socio-economic life of Colombia.

- (1) Underlying the tensions is a just grievance on the part of the people who are in anxiety and misery and ask for progress.
- (2) At the same time, there are those who promote agitation with a view to destroying institutions and means of wealth, as if this were a solution to economic problems: and this is unjust.
- (3) The bishops share the view of the Colombian people that change is necessary for development in justice and peace; to this end, it is a moral and social duty to sacrifice personal interests.
- (4) The right to property in true economic democracy will only be possible when the structures make it really possible for all to have access to property.
- (5) The present distribution of property and income is one of the factors of underdevelopment and mass unemployment.
- (6) But re-distribution of goods alone is not enough: they must be put to good use. Here peasants and students can help by making a responsible contribution to the common good and greater production.
- (7) With Paul VI we censure the unjust economic differences between rich and poor, abuses of administrative authority...
- (8) We hope agrarian reform will be speeded up, even if this will imply limiting the amount of land that can be held by individuals and groups. This has to be done honestly, with financial and technical help so that redistributed land suffices for family subsistence.
- (9) Urban reform is also necessary, to give all a decent house.

- (10) A change in structures is also necessary to give workers some share in the property and in the decisions of the company, so that the fruit of common endeavor benefits all and not just a few.
- (11) Right of association must be recognized for all citizens, in unions, cooperatives, etc, so that they can defend their just interests and take part in the nation's economic and political life; such groups must serve the common good and not particular interests.
- (12) We regard with hope the interest shown by youth in the social problems of the country. We trust that they will see their responsibility to prepare themselves to build up the structures which they themselves desire for their country.
- (13) We find it unchristian and dangerous for the stability of society that those who hold in their hands both property and socio-economic decisions do not accept these principles, and do not want to make the sacrifices necessary for social equilibrium.
- (14) No less anti-christian and dangerous is the attitude of those who seek solutions in violence.
- (15) Our position is not based on purely temporal principles, but on the Gospel; we are ministers of Christ in the service of men. Charity and justice is the essence of Christ's message.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. INODEP - RENCONTRE FORMATION POUR MISSIONAIRES: "pour une nouvelle action" du 20 Septembre au 12 Novembre 1971 à Paris, pour missionnaires qui "reviennent" ou qui vont "repartir", pour religieux, religieuses, laïcs . . .Lieu: INODEP, 32, 34, Avenue Reille - Paris 14ème Métro: Gliacière, Alésia ou Cité Universitaire.

Pour renseignements: INODEP, 7, Impasse Reille, PARIS 14ème.

2. OCIC - International meeting on FILMS, FILM STRIPS AND SLIDES AT THE SERVICE OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE. Organized jointly by INTERFILM, OCIC and GWATT (Switzerland) from May 17th to 20th, 1971. Languages: English, French and German. The meeting is intended mainly for specialists or people directly interested in the use of films and other material.

Information from: INTERFILM - Rev. H. Töns, AVA Committee, Gelsenkirchen

OCIC: E. Becker, S.A.V./OCIC, ROTTENBURG/Neckar

3. OCIC - FILMIS, 117, Via Quattro Fontane, 00184 ROMA (Tel. 47.41.18).

Negotiations are successfully concluding for obtaining rights on the films THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES and the VISIT OF POPE PAUL TO UGANDA. It is important to know the number of persons interested in buying copies of either film: in French, Italian or German, format, colour, etc.

An English version of the VISIT OF POPE PAUL TO UGANDA is also circulated by AMECEA, c/o Rev. J.G. Healey, P.O. Box 21191, NAIROBI.

4. SMA - "For This Cause" - The life of M. de Marion Brésillac by Patrick Gantly, SMA § Ellen Thorp, 273 pp.

5. WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES - CATALOGUE of documents available at the DOCUMENTATION SERVICE ON DEVELOPMENT of the WCC 1 February - 31 March 1971. Copy for consultation at SEDOS Secretariate.

DIARY

Tuesday, April 27	Health Services Session at OSU Generalate, via Nomentana 236.
Friday, April 30	Bishop Somé and Fr. Deletoille wf, of Upper Volta visit the Secretariat. Issues raised: how to present development projects; the pastoral situation.
Wednesday, May 5	Sr. J. Burke, new Mission Secretary of the SNDN explores the Secretariat. Issues raised: an information system to help field missionaries.
Thursday, May 6	The Superior General of the Religious of St. Vincent de Paul visits the Secretariat.