

World's Problems to be Vatican Council Topic

By FATHER EDWARD DUFF, S.J.

Brussels—(RNS)—One of the results of the Second Vatican Council will be to give Catholics an explicit and official theology of the temporal order. Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, President of Belgium and one of the leading personalities of the Council, declared in an interview here.

Cardinal Suenens is supervising the work of the commission in Rome preparing what has been termed "Schema 17." This is the agenda item covering the relations of the Church to the world. It will deal with contemporary issues, among them international peace, international justice, industrial relations, duties to underdeveloped countries and population problems.

The cardinal explained that the schema will have two parts, the first, explicitly theoretical, will elaborate the role of the Church as continuing the incarnation of Christ in sanctifying human work and social institutions. It is only this treatise, long desired by Catholics engaged in social action, that will be presented to the Council for discussion, amendment and, ultimately, for adoption.

The concrete positions on contemporary problems, material much like questions treated in the recent encyclicals Mater et Magistra and Pacem

in India, or underlined in Africa—that the vast majority of Christians are to work their way to heaven, the cardinal insists. Obviously, such a clarification involves a profounder understanding of the role of the laity in the Church, conceived as the People of God on pilgrimage. In preparing Schema 17 the Commission on the Laity of Vatican II had participated fully.

Moreover, outstanding Catholic laymen have been called in as consultants.

In the interview Cardinal Suenens conceded that he had forwarded the new Pope to delay the Council until next spring, since the agenda prepared for the first session had been found radically unsatisfactory and has had to be fundamentally revised—a task far from complete. The suggestion was rejected on the grounds that any delay would be interpreted as a break with the policies of Pope John XXIII and a slowing up of the movement of the aggiornamento, the modernizing and making relevant of the Church of Rome.

Cardinal Suenens now acknowledges the wisdom of the decision to reconvene the Council on September 29 but expects that the second session will probably confine itself to completing discussions of the topics begun last fall. The new schemas, including Schema 17, may not come before the Council then, until 1964.

It was natural that Cardinal Suenens should find himself charged with supervising the preparations for the Council's declaration on the role of the Church in the world.

Apart from his brilliant career as a Resistance leader during the war, he was seized as a hostage and almost executed, as professor, author and tactician of apostolic action. His intervention in the closing days of the Council drew widespread attention, reminding the bishops of the world of an allocation of Pope John XXIII in September 13, a full month before the opening of the Council, therefore, the Belgian cardinal argued that there was no reason to postpone the already firmly held, now to condemn movements known to be false but, rather, clarify the Church's understanding of her own nature and mission.

At bottom, the cardinal insisted, the agenda was decided before the Council, the considerations of the Church "ad extra," i.e., the Church's larger life and her work in the world. Much of the material of the topic of the Council, "ad extra," has been allocated to Schema 17.

Cardinal Suenens envisages the possibility of changes in procedure when the Council reconvenes and even of the selection of a new membership

for the Council commissions. It is unusual in governments, he points out, for Cabinet ministers to be presidents of parliamentary committees.

At the first session of Vatican II, the Council Commissions were commonly presided over by the chief of the corresponding congregations of the Roman Curia.

The cardinal closed the interview by recalling an incident of special interest to Americans.

Two days after the election of Pope Paul, on a Sunday morning, the cardinal had an appointment with the new Pope. As they were talking the doghouse bell rang and the Holy Father appeared at his window in the Vatican to lead the crowds in St. Peter's Square below, with the Belgian cardinal at his side.

What had they been talking about? Cardinal Suenens told me that Pope Paul VI was exchanging with him memories of a trip to the United States and, recalling that the cardinal had gone to Notre Dame for an honorary degree after his address in New York in May before the United States Committee for the encyclical Pacem in Terris, remarked that he, too, had earlier received an honorary degree, along with General Eisenhower. "We are both Notre Dame men," the Pope observed.



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At CFM National Convention

South Bend—(RNS)—Speakers at the 13th national meeting of the Christian Family Movement included (from left): Dr. George N. Shuster, assistant to the president of Notre Dame; Pietro Pavan, professor at the Lateran University in Rome; and Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand, Hubbard Woods, Ill., national CFM chaplain. Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Crowley (right) of Chicago, are members of the CFM national coordinating committee. Pope Paul VI sent his greetings to the 1,200 couples and 300 chaplains attending the meeting on the University of Notre Dame campus. "The Parish — Leaven in the Community" was the convention theme.

Veterans Warned On Red Inroads

Miami Beach—(NC)—A state supreme court justice charged here that there has been too much concern for an atheistic minority that seeks to expunge from all public pronouncement any reference to a supreme being.

Justice Edward T. McCaffrey told the convention (Aug. 20-25) of the Catholic War Veterans that this nation's religious heritage is being undermined by "inroads of atheistic thought."

Obviously referring to the U.S. Supreme Court decision June 17 outlawing Bible reading and recitation of the Lord's Prayer in public schools, Justice McCaffrey said: "Every school child has been told that our forefathers acknowledged God as the source of authority. Our coins bear the proud motto 'In God we trust.' Our national anthem mentions the deity. The laws of the land require oaths with the hand on the Bible."

"WE HAVE been insistent," he continued, "that priest, minister and rabbi chaplains minister to the needs of our sons and daughters when in the service. No session of Congress opens with a recital of prayer in commendation. Threading the course of our entire history has been the guidance, the consolation and the program.

"How then the concern for an atheistic minority that seeks to expunge from all public pronouncement any reference to a supreme being? If the rights of such minority are to be sedulously observed, what about the rights of each of the religious minorities, no one of which can claim to be a dominant majority? Are the rights of only certain minorities to be protected?"

"While we do not despair," Judge McCaffrey concluded, "it is for us a cause of real concern that in a nation founded under and dedicated to God, there should be such successful inroads of atheistic thought. But, treated by the considered declarations of men of the caliber constituting our Supreme Court."

In resolutions adopted at the convention, the CWV urged adoption of a constitutional amendment permitting prayer in public schools, support of controlled Cuba and support of President Kennedy's civil rights program.

Laymen Strengthen Church in Latin America

Lima—(NC)—U.S. Catholic laymen have shown a real desire to help the Church strengthen itself in Latin America, but they need more popular assistance to make their desire effective, the U.S. national director of Papal Volunteers for Latin America said in an interview here.

Father Victor R. Fernandez, S.J., of Chicago was in Lima during a two-month tour of the continent to inspect the work being done by his organization.

"With two and a half years' experience of working directly with the lay volunteers," he said, "I can detect among our laity their real desire to become more personally involved in the work of the Church in Latin America. They have been stirred into action by the appeals of the late Pope John and the continued enthusiasm for this mission work evidenced by Pope Paul VI."

Father Fernandez added: "But preparing them for Latin American assignments is a project that needs much more cooperation from their conferees of the laity, to finance these voluntary efforts through diocesan sending plans."

"What has been accomplished thus far represents a good beginning. Much remains to be desired in certain areas."

Father Fernandez said that more than 200 PAVLA are now assigned to posts in various countries, working as teachers, nurses, credit union workers, journalists, radio technicians and youth workers. By the end of the year, he stated, the number will grow to more than 250. Some are now in training in Mexico

and Brazil. Others will begin training at the new center opening in August at the Catholic University in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

The Chicago priest noted that recently the Apostolic Nuncio to Peru, Archbishop Romulo Carboni, requested 50 to 100 more Papal Volunteers for this nation to help strengthen Church programs of religious, social and economic development. Commenting on this, Father Fernandez said:

"By all means, qualified, skilled, apostolic workers should be absorbed in the current Church program in this nation and in other Latin American nations as well. The continent is so huge and the needs of the people so great that all qualified people coming down here as lay workers could be placed."

Father Fernandez said that in various areas people have come forward to express their

Their experiences have contributed to the development of many areas. After visiting these people at their assigned posts, I see the new progress. True, there are recommendations to be taken back to further improve the program, but by and large the volunteers are fitting into their work assignments with reasonable success. One young lady told me her only problems was the weather and there was nothing she could really do about that."

Father Fernandez said that in various areas people have come forward to express their

deep appreciation for the Papal Volunteers that have been assigned to their communities.

He was asked if Papal Volunteers and others are extending their terms of service beyond their original commitments. Father Fernandez answered that one couple in Mexico has just begun its tenth year of labor. A nurse signed up for another three years. Indications from his recent interviews, he said, are that more will remain to help bolster the ranks of this newly arriving for their duty periods.

In Peru work is being done by U.S. and other nations' volunteers to build a Peruvian lay volunteer movement. Father Fernandez said he is highly enthusiastic about these progressive efforts.

In Peruvian jungles, mountain villages and along the coast 75 Peruvians are already volunteering talents to help their own people. This growing program, in addition to Mexicans helping their own people in Tulancingo, are signs of progress in this call to the laity to help the Church's work in Latin America, Father Fernandez stated.

Contacts with Communists Prudence to be Guide

Dayton—(NC)—One of Rome's top Catholic social theorists said here that the late Pope John XXIII made Catholic dialogue with communists a "question of prudence" in his encyclical Pacem in Terris.

Catholics must not become "prisoners of a word" in their attitude toward communism, added Msgr. Pietro Pavan, professor of Catholic social philosophy at the Lateran University in Rome.

Msgr. Pavan replied to queries about Pope John's social encyclical Mater et Magistra and his peace encyclical Pacem in Terris at a question-and-answer session during August's seventh annual convention of the National Catholic Social Action Conference. The meeting was held at the University of Dayton and attended by some 300 delegates.

The Italian social philosopher was introduced by Msgr. George G. Higgins, director of the Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference, as a man with unique qualifications to give an "authoritative" interpretation of the two encyclicals.

Much of the questioning centered on a section in Pacem in Terris which speaks of the possibility of Catholic collaboration with individuals and movements whose ideology is opposed to Catholic teaching.

Msgr. Pavan stressed the encyclical's distinction between a "doctrine" which is always the same, and a "movement" which is inspired by the doctrine.

He said it is "almost impossible" that a "movement" should not undergo change, because it is "inserted in history."

In considering the possibility of collaboration with movements arising from hostile doctrines, he said, Catholics must examine the movements as they actually exist today and make their decision on the basis of prudence.

Executions Up Five

Washington—(RNS)—Forty-seven prisoners were executed under civil law in 1962, an increase of five over 1961, but still the second lowest total in 20 years, the U.S. Bureau of Prisons reported here.

Executions were carried out in only 18 of the 4 jurisdictions of the United States which have laws providing for capital punishment, it disclosed.