

# The Church in Latin America

## Old-Fashioned Capitalism Assailed

By JAIMÉ FONSECA  
 NC News Service  
 Faced with massive problems of underdevelopment, Catholic leaders in Latin America — including bishops, sociologists, economists and statesmen — increasingly endorse the belief that old-fashioned capitalism in the hands of the powerful is neither willing nor able to solve the social and economic ills of their people.

And in this old-fashioned capitalism Latin America Catholics include the large U.S. corporations which do business in Latin America.

Father Gonzalo Arroyo, a Chilean sociologist, has said that "Latin America has no hope under the capitalist system today." He described two worlds, "one living in the bet-

ter part of cities, with ready access to sufficient resources for life and the peasants and slum-dwellers, perhaps 120 million, who have little to help them to survive."

He said bluntly: "The extraordinary and disproportionate development of the United States and (western) Europe controls the present structures in Latin America and prevents any possible solution."

A meeting of priests and lay leaders at Chimbote, Peru, declared that laissez-faire capitalism shows signs of being unable to cope with the population growth and the need to integrate the dispossessed into the social and economic mainstreams.

Bishop Miguel Balaguer of Tacuarembó, Uruguay, has

also rejected the "capitalism of the few" in which, he said, "man becomes a slave in a kind of laissez-faire system that controls production for higher profits." He said he favors instead the "capitalism of the many, like the cooperatives, in which all of us have a part, and production and earnings are for the people and for the people."

A group of Colombian priests headed by sociologist Father Rene Garcia feels that present "attempts at development have failed because, in spite of their planning, they adopt patterns valid only for foreign conditions. There is a better solution (than demographic control), that of changing the system of production, a revolution aimed at establishing new relations in production."

Such is the picture in Latin America. The conflict revolves around the concept of the "social-function" of private property, a term unknown to and dangerous for the rich, but which is now the current slogan of Christian reformers calling for the "socialization" of present structures.

The term "socialization" was used by Pope John XXIII in his encyclical Mater et Magistra to describe a fair way of securing better living conditions so that men can attain their own perfection.

While many attribute the reaction of the "haves" to

ignorance of the social teachings of the Church, the bishops themselves point to a deeper cause. The social action team of the Latin American Bishop's Council (CELAM) says that underdevelopment is not a disease only of the so-called Third World of underdeveloped nations, but of the whole world, because "only moral underdevelopment" can explain the indifference of the affluent toward the poor in their midst and of the powerful nations toward the weaker ones.

Some statesmen share their view also, and back it up with figures.

Gabriel Valdes, Chile's minister of foreign affairs, says that "everything seems to indicate that developed nations are viewing with growing indifference the fact of poverty; they are even losing interest in dialogue."

His complaint is that in the last 20 years conditions in underdeveloped countries have deteriorated, with little to show from foreign aid. Valdes quotes from international agencies to remind the United States and other rich nations that paying back the big loans is proving ruinous.

"The average amortization term is 23.5 years, which means for the debtor an accumulated cost of \$417 for each \$100 he received on loan," Valdes said.

# Church Ban Hits Mexico Center

Cuernavaca, Mexico—(NC) — The Vatican's Doctrinal Congregation has banned a controversial center here and forbidden priests, religious and nuns to take part in its activities. It was announced by the center's founder, Msgr. Ivan Illich, widely known as a critic of the Church's present role in Latin America.

The ban, contained in a letter from Fr. Cardinal Bepi, prefect of the congregation to Bishop Sergio Mendez Arceo of Cuernavaca, was made public by Msgr. Illich when he released a letter he had written (Jan. 19) to the bishop.

The Intercultural Center of Documentation (CIDOC), founded in 1960 as a secular, non-sectarian organization, publishes studies on social changes in Latin America, conducts courses and seminars and helps prepare technicians and other people going to work in Latin America.

Msgr. Illich has been a controversial figure for some time, especially since his criticisms of the U.S. bishops' aid program to Latin America in January 1967 in America magazine. Some conservatives in Mexico have claimed that CIDOC is a nerve-center for

Latin American leftist guerrilla activities.

Msgr. Illich wrote that he is distressed that the Roman Curia (the Church's central administrative offices) launched "a grave and global accusation against a non-sectarian institution of higher learning, without even mentioning a single charge."

He added that he regrets the possibility that his name and the name of the center may become "the focal point for still another tragic round of disruptive and uncreative uproar within the Church." He said, however, that those at CIDOC will not join the uproar but "leave it to others to express their indignation."

The 42-year-old Vienna-born Msgr. Illich is a priest of the New York archdiocese. From 1951 to 1956 he worked among Puerto Ricans in New York. He was then named vice rector of the Catholic University of Puerto Rico, where he started a center to train U.S. teachers, social workers and clergy to prepare for work among Puerto Ricans coming to the U.S.

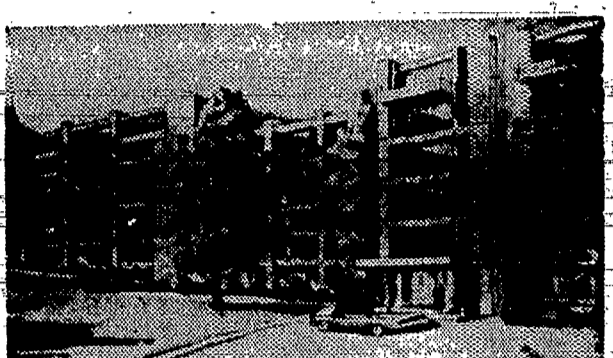
CIDOC is a Mexican membership corporation under a five-man board, which includes four professors from

the National University of Mexico. Msgr. Illich is the fifth board member.

Msgr. Illich's office said that no more than 15 percent of the student body at CIDOC are Catholic priests or nuns

and that the ban against the center, therefore, is not expected to affect the center's operation adversely. About 5 percent of the students are Protestant ministers.

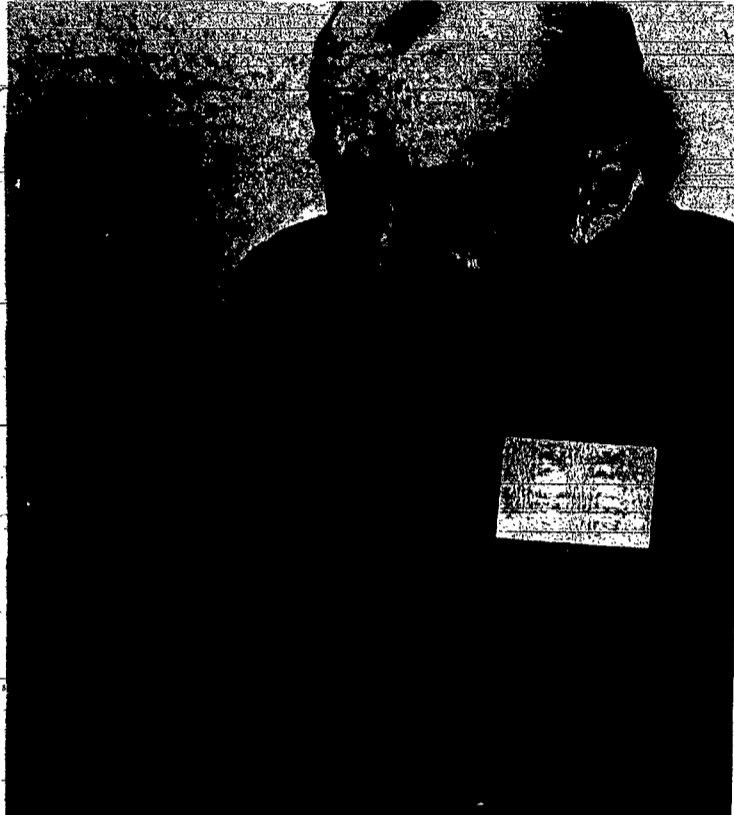
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Diplomatic recognition of Cuba has been urged by Archbishop Helder Pessoa Camara of Olinda and Recife, Brazil. (RNS)

## Latin Prelate Assails Isolation of Cuba

(from Courier-Journal sources)  
 New York—The Most Rev. Helder Camara, Archbishop of Recife and Olinda, Brazil, called on Roman Catholics in the United States to seek an end to the "continental excommunication" of Cuba.

Archbishop Camara, a leading spokesman for progressive Roman Catholics, said the economic blockade of Cuba under Premier Fidel Castro, led by the United States, "condemned a whole sister nation to live in a ghetto."

The Archbishop, a frail figure wearing a small wooden cross on his black cassock, was the closing speaker at the sixth annual conference of the Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program at the New Yorker Hotel.

Archbishop Camara's appeal for a new inter-American policy of seeking reconciliation with Cuba reflected opinions that have been voiced during the conference on a wide range of topics dealing with relationships between Latin America and the United States.

There has been strong criticism of Latin-American military regimes, economic and social injustice and the lack of sufficient United States aid for Latin America.

Archbishop Camara received a standing ovation from more than 700 people when he rose to speak on a rostrum backed by the flags of 23 American republics, including those of the United States and Cuba.

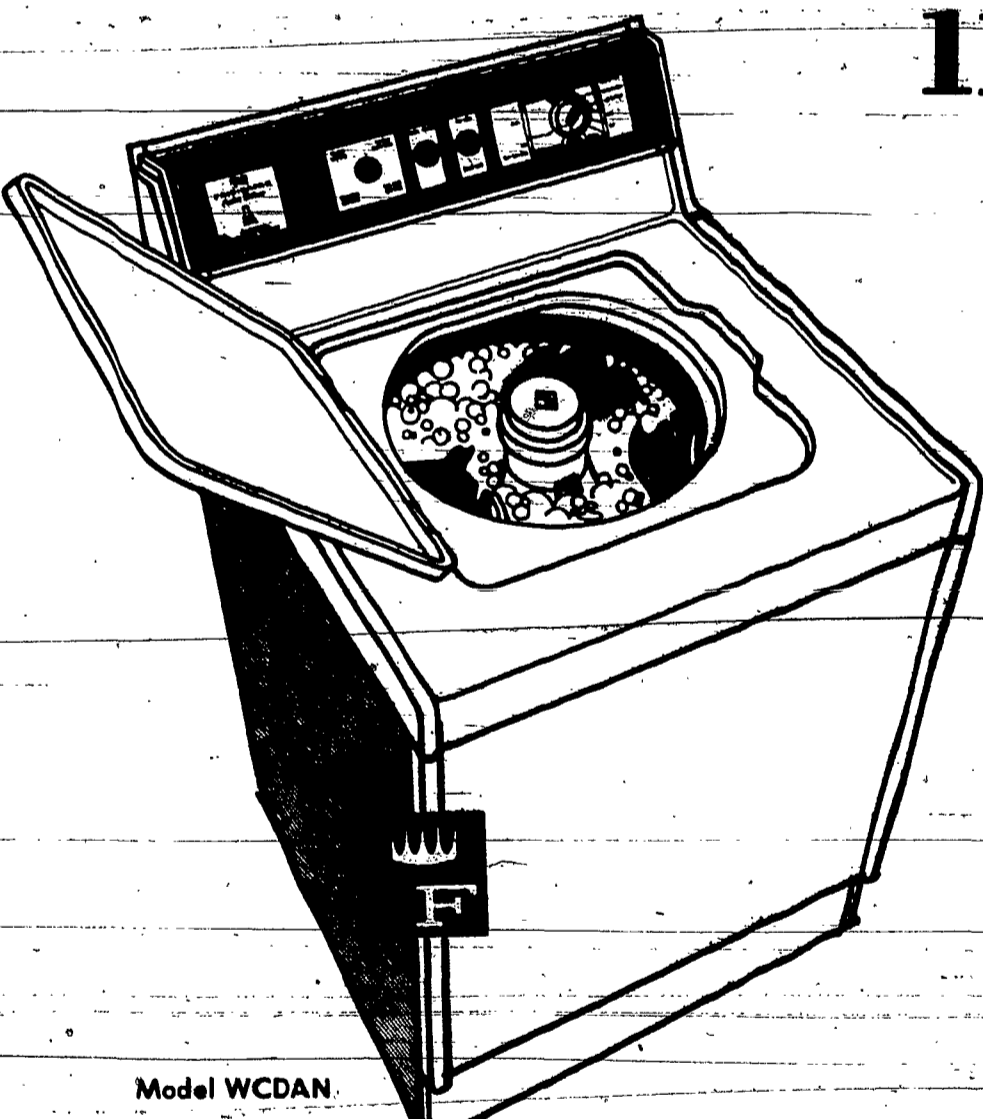
Archbishop Camara said that the continued political ostracism of Cuba under its Communist leadership was based on "sterile hate." Cuba has been banned from inter-American organizations since 1962 after Castro established Cuba's military and economic dependence on the Soviet Union.

Archbishop Camara said that "the re-integration of Cuba in the Latin-American community would have to be sought 'with due respect for her political opinion and acceptance of her autonomy as a sovereign nation.'"

The appeal for a revision of existing inter-American policy toward Cuba reflected the view, expressed by a number of participants in the conference discussion groups, that Castro's programs in mass education, agrarian reform and rural development were valuable experiences in social and political change in Latin America.

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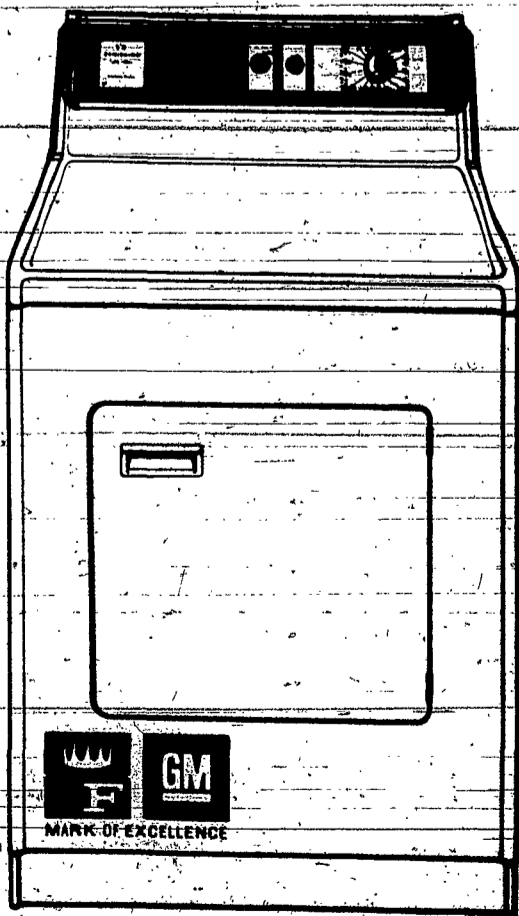
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