

Rockefeller Report and Papal Encyclical

By JAIME FONSECA
(NC News Service)

Washington — The concern of the Rockefeller Mission to Latin America — whose report was released recently — was not simply a matter of dollars and cents to improve the life of the majority of the Latin American population. There was also a constant appeal for the rallying of spiritual resources.

The mission labored for eight months, and made four trips from May through July. It interviewed some 3,000 spokesmen in 20 countries and enlisted the active participation of some 100 U.S. leaders in politics, finance, education, communications, development and world affairs. From the mission's report, one point stands out:

"The United States should work with and for the people of this hemisphere to assist them in enhancing the quality of their lives and to provide moral leadership as a force for freedom and justice in the Americas."

In the words of the report, the "enhancing" of the existence of millions of Latin Americans means a fuller life:

"Opportunity for self-realization comes immediately to mind — the chance to grow spiritually, the respect for human dignity and justice, the right to hope that life will get better, not worse . . ."

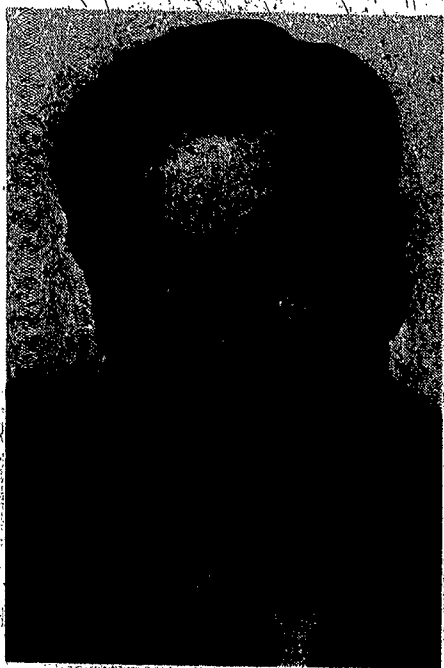
"Man is a social, learning, creative, responsible, and self-aware creature, and he needs much more (than material things) if he is to thrive, to become more fully himself."

Such remarks, stemming from an honest, comprehensive look at conditions in the countries bring to mind the basic tenets of Pope Paul VI's encyclical Populorum Progressio:

"In the design of God, every man is called upon to develop and fulfill himself . . . to seek to do more, know more and have more in order to be more."

The Rockefeller report recognizes that the aspirations of men everywhere "share one splendid bias: that no man be exploited or degraded to enrich another and that we work together so that each can grow."

Pope Paul stated that it is the duty of rich nations "to bring about a world that is more human toward all men, where all will be able to give



GOV. ROCKEFELLER

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and receive, without one group making progress at the expense of the other."

Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York, who headed the presidential mission, writes in his introduction to the report: "We went to visit neighbors and found brothers . . . It is urgent that we acknowledge in all peoples the same capacities for giving and sharing that we ascribe to ourselves."

Another concept that looms large in the Rockefeller Mission's report is the need for reform:

"Increasing frustration is evidenced over political instability, limited educational and economic opportunities, and the incapacity for slowness of existing government structures to solve the people's problems."

Pope Paul's Populorum Progressio, on this same point, said: "The present situation must be faced with courage and the injustices linked with it must be fought against and overcome. Development demands bold transformations, innovations that go deep. Urgent reforms should be undertaken without delay."

The superfluous wealth of rich countries, Pope Paul added in his



POPE PAUL VI

A duty "to bring about a world that is more human toward all men . . . without one group making progress at the expense of the other."

encyclical, "should be placed at the service of poor nations . . . otherwise, the continued greed (of the rich) will certainly call down upon them the judgment of God and the wrath of the poor. Such greed leads to the temptation of violence."

"When whole populations destitute of necessities live in a state of dependence," the encyclical said, "recourse to violence, as a means to right these wrongs to humanity, is a grave temptation."

The Rockefeller report is concerned also with subversion and violence:

"The restless yearning of individuals for a better life . . . is chipping away at the very order and institutions . . . the seeds of nihilism and anarchy are spreading throughout the hemisphere," the report warned. This gloomy passage is later balanced by concrete proposals to reform those institutions and open the way for a better life, all conditional upon the will and the present resources of our nations to effect such reform.

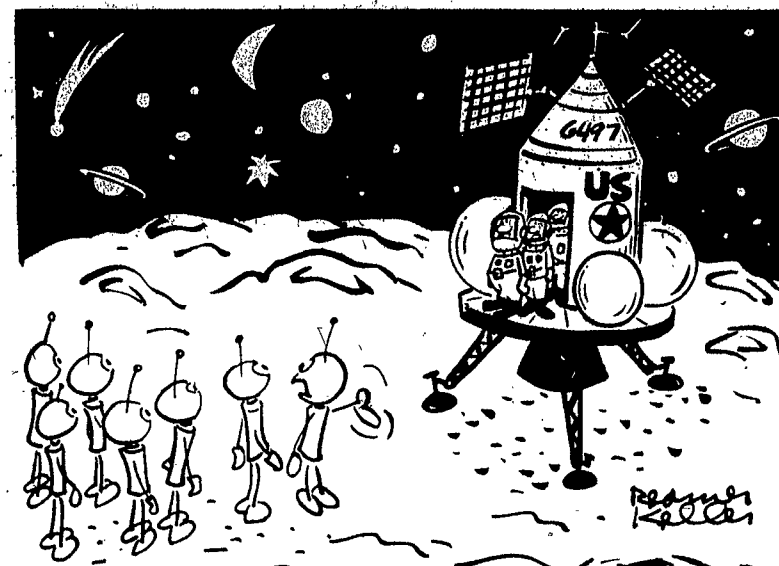
That condition points to the need for enlightened capitalism to solve development problems. "No one is justified," Pope Paul's encyclical said, "in keeping for his exclusive use

what he does not need, when others lack necessities."

In presenting his report to President Richard M. Nixon, Gov. Rockefeller stated: "Only through consultation in the development of common objectives is it possible for the nation-states today to work out common policies and joint programs that will truly represent the best interests of all."

"No man has ever lived and felt worthy of the gift of life who has not also felt tested by his own times," Rockefeller and his aides wrote.

It is an echo of the closing words of Pope Paul's encyclical: "All of you who have heard the appeal of suffering peoples, all of you who are working to answer their cries, you are the apostles of a development which is good and genuine."



"What can we do to entertain them? They spent millions just to visit us!"

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

A Post Chaplain's Memories

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

In autumn of 1956 I was stationed as post chaplain with two Protestant conferees at Nouasseur Air Depot, 15 miles south of Casablanca, Morocco.

One morning a clean cut, 22 year old airman named Bob W. came to my office off the Chapel. He was very blond, had close cut tight curly hair. His blue eyes were full of intelligence and good humor. In order to dispatch the Lord's business most efficiently I used to get the point of an interview promptly. So I said to Bob: "Sit down. What's on your mind?"

He replied: "I want to take instructions to become a Catholic." To test him I replied rather curtly: "We've got enough bad Catholics as it is without adding you to the list. If you should become a Catholic you'd have to be a good one." Quite undisturbed he replied: "But that's what I want, to be a good Catholic. If I didn't I wouldn't be here."

"Whatever gave you the idea of becoming a Catholic, anyway?"

He answered: "The Protestant Mis-

sion which I made a couple of weeks ago."

Puzzled, I commented: "I sure don't get the connection."

Bob relaxed into comfortable casualness and grinned. "Probably you don't remember, but shortly after you came to NAD my friend Don S. and I were in the hospital in adjoining beds. One afternoon you were visiting the sick, and when you talked with Don you asked: 'Did you get to Mass last Sunday?' He was embarrassed and he flushed. 'No, I didn't Father.' 'Why not?' you pressed him. He said 'Neglect. I should have gone. I could have. I always went at home.' Then you lifted a newspaper, the SUNDAY VISITOR I think, and banged him on the head and growled: 'You ought to be hanged! Our Lord's Day — and you didn't think it important enough to go to Mass! We knew you weren't really mad, but I thought to myself, 'He really cares whether his people go to Mass or not.' And I liked that."

"Don and I are good buddies. From



then on he went to Mass every Sunday, and I went to our own services regularly. Then we had the Mission for the Protestant personnel. I've always been a regular church goer and so started the Mission.

"On the third night I sat in the Chapel and looked at all the other fellows there. All of a sudden it hit me like a ton of bricks: 'Here I am a Lutheran, sitting with men of every shade of belief, listening to a Baptist preacher — and all of us with different religious convictions. This doesn't make sense. From my history I know when and where all these denominations originated, and from history I know that the one Church which historically goes back to Christ and the Apostles is the Catholic Church! It was then that I decided to ask for instructions."

The results will be unfolded next week in this same column — along with some thoughts on genuine ecumenism and on the Apostolate of the Laity.

COMMENTARY

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Thoughts on a Worldly Christmas

By Sarah Child

I started our Christmas shopping a little earlier this year precipitating the annual discussion (argument?) my husband and I have on the subject every holiday season.

It starts when I show him the first toy purchases I have made for our children.

"That's enough toys," he says and adds that if I feel compelled to spend more then let it be on clothes or something other than toys.

The basement he points out in irrefutable argument is carpeted in wall-to-wall toys.

"I know," I concede, "but I didn't buy nine-tenths of them. These toys are from overindulgent grandparents, doing aunts and uncles and the people next door whose children are now teenagers and quite obviously never broke a thing in their lives."

"Think of all the children who have nothing," he starts again with the implication that our kids are going to be spoiled.

I return with an unthought-out answer, but as honest as I've yet made.

"But, I'm not buying toys for them," I plead, "I'm buying them for me!"

I stop aghast, not a little shocked at the truth. But, there it is.

Buying toys for the kids does please me — immensely.

I try to analyze the situation further. It isn't because I wasn't indulged as a child. Quite the reverse.

Why, then, this determination to lavish play things, fanciful things on our kids?

Am I trying in some way to recapture the kind of Christmases I experienced when the magic and suspense were embodied in items such as red and white, furry scarves, a pair of figure skates, a tiny clock its movements visible encased in aquamarine glass, the latest girl detective mystery book in the series I was reading?

Am I really so reluctant to give up childhood? Apparently so. At my advanced age I had hoped that concentrating on the true meaning of Christmas would be enough for me: the full significance of the dear Babe in the tiny creche, the grandeur and beauty of Midnight Mass, the love flowing from person to person.

But no, I must embroil myself in a marathon that almost threatens the spiritual.

The shopping, the silver paper and blue ribbons, the miniature fruit cakes, the cutting and painting of a few new ornaments, learning a new hors d'oeuvre, the holiday records, the tree, the cards, the cookies and the Christmas breads, the parties, etc., etc.

Have I really fallen prey to commercialism as those gloomy, guilt-producing sermons proclaim:

Well, maybe just a little . . .

Then the revolt. "No," I shout to my fast, musty serious self. What I'm doing is communicating love and joy of the season to my husband and children as it was communicated to me throughout my childhood.

The cooking, the decorating of the house, the gifts — these are acts of joy, signs of love to re-welcome the Christ Child.

Would I do them if I did not receive such pleasure from the whole proceedings?

Probably not, but that is my humanness and I am not about to deny it.

For I am very much of this world and Christmas still happens to be one of my very favorite pleasures.



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COMMENT FROM ROME

More Freedom of Dialogue Predicted

By Father Robert Graham

Vatican City — (RNS) — A controversial theologian, top adviser to the Dutch bishops, looks for more freedom in dialogue between theologians and the bishops and also among the theologians themselves.

Father Edward Schillebeeckx of Nijmegen University, the Netherlands, gave his views on the mission of the theologian today only a few days after taking part in an informal exchange organized by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Present at the exchange were the heads of six episcopal conferences, including the United States, accompanied by their theological experts. The main topic dealt with the so-called doctrinal commissions of the national conferences and their work.

The Belgian-born Dominican was in Rome throughout the bishops' synod, living at the Dutch College with Bernard Cardinal Alfrink whom he served as chief consultant.

What the confidential adviser of Cardinal Alfrink thinks about the Synod he did not reveal to the interviewer. His thinking on the role of theology and the theologian today are of perhaps more significance as reflecting the intimate discussions of the previous days in the former Holy Office.

He hoped that the two-fold dialogue, that is, between the theologians and between the theologians and the bishops, will develop further through these commissions. "The theologians," he said, "ought to have the possibility of debating their hypotheses in full liberty, and to express the problems that they sense at work at the Church's grass roots. But the bishops remain the judges of the faith."

As he put it: "It is necessary to institutionalize in some way the dialogue between hierarchy and the theologians and for this reason I am very much in favor of the doctrinal commissions of the episcopal conferences providing they do not become the expression of one sole ten-

ency or of one sole group of theologians."

Schillebeeckx does not entirely agree with those who complain that too many theologians confuse the simple faithful by voicing their opinions in the mass media. On the contrary, he argued, the faithful are really disturbed when modern science puts in doubt one or other historical form of belief which went by the name of faith, through mixing the accidental with the essential.

He thought that vast publicity given to theological debates has a positive aspect in that it puts theological questions at the service of all the faithful and of all men, inviting them to share in the problem.

"Theology," declared the Dominican, "is the reflection of the people of God on the faith and in this sense all the faithful in a certain degree, are theologians whenever they search into what they believe and when they deepen their knowledge of the faith. But what the individual believer does occasionally, the theologian does by systematic and methodical research."