

CRS Described as Agent of U.S. Government

Kansas City, Mo. (RNS) — The bishop who heads the U.S. Catholic Church's overseas relief and development agency, Catholic Relief Services, was described here as "acting basically as an agent of the U.S. government" in distributing food to needy nations abroad and CRS itself was labeled a "handmaiden" of U.S. foreign policy interests.

According to the National Catholic Reporter (NCR), CRS and its executive director, Bishop Edwin B. Broderick, are "meshing more closely with U.S. foreign policy" through their association with the U.S. Agency for In-

ternational Development (AID) at a time when, it said, other voluntary agencies are "pulling back" and selecting their own relief targets.

(A spokesman at CRS headquarters in New York, James O'Neil, said that Bishop Broderick and CRS officials there had not yet seen the NCR article and would not comment.

(He acknowledged that Bishop Broderick had turned down repeated requests for an interview by the NCR, saying the bishop had been "extremely busy" and "overseas quite a lot.")

The NCR charged that CRS "primarily" helps only

those the U.S. government decides to help rather than providing aid on the basis of need.

In holding that there are close ties between CRS and AID, the NCR quoted the State Department agency's administrator, John J. Gilligan, as stating that "CRS people enable us to do certain things overseas that we can't do as well through government operations. Volunteers from Catholic Relief Services are acceptable, while American government officials would be seen as interfering in the internal affairs of a country. CRS gives us a certain kind of flexibility."

An article by William Reddig in the independent lay-edited Catholic weekly said CRS expects to increase its dependence on the U.S. government's Food for Peace program in 1978 by 27 per cent, and observed that the CRS already receives more than 65 per cent of its total \$240 million budget from the government.

The NCR said that "increasingly, where AID moves, CRS goes too — often as the advance guard of further U.S. programs, and often providing the butter, or peanut oil, when guns are also coming." The lay-edited newspaper claimed that CRS is setting

up programs in countries like Egypt and Jamaica, where U.S. foreign policy interests are intensive.

It said that in the Philippines last year AID provided \$44 million, "much of that for weapons supporting the regime of President Ferdinand Marcos," and that CRS brought in supplies valued at \$11.4 million. The article cited similar efforts in Indonesia, Peru, Chile, Morocco and Ghana, all countries where the U.S. has foreign policy interests.

A Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee staff member was quoted as saying that CRS "goes beyond just cooperating with the government. CRS reflects almost exactly what our key foreign policy aims are now, and what they probably will be."

Gilligan told the NCR: "... CRS helps us tell our story in the U.S. It helps get the word around what we are up to."

According to John Ulinski Jr., director of AID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, — which the article said "directs many of CRS' activities overseas in some 85 nations" — Catholics "command great numbers of people, and they can obtain results when they

want to. The priests ask the followers to give, and they cough up."

The NCR said that among critics of the "cozy" relations between CRS and AID is the Brookings Institution in Washington, which suggests that private voluntary agencies would be "better off" taking an independent course. In a new foreign aid study, the institution said groups like CRS "appear to compromise their independence" because AID support has been accompanied by "political constraints on operating within certain countries, and on conducting projects which appear to be politically sensitive."

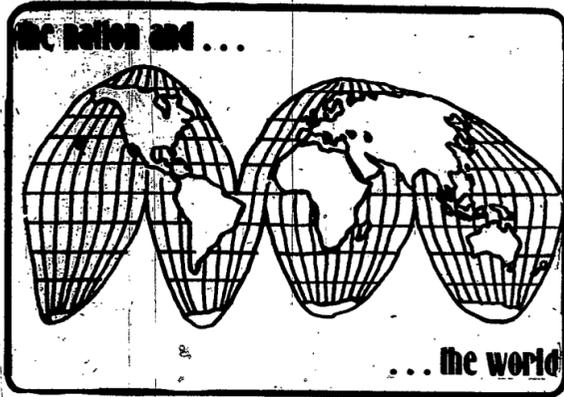
The NCR said that CRS is "not completely insensitive" to the criticism of its relationship with AID in short-term relief efforts and has "worked up a number of small, long-term development programs," taking into account the needs of the "poor majority" in nations where it is establishing programs.

In an accompanying editorial, the NCR said "there is nothing wrong with the CRS helping those who need help." But, it added, "there is something wrong when CRS primarily helps

those the U.S. government decides to help. The U.S. government decides not on the basis of need, but on the basis of usefulness to U.S. aims."

Asking "why" CRS is "willing to play handmaiden to U.S. foreign policy interests," the editorial said it tried to elicit the views of Bishop Broderick and was repeatedly rebuffed. The journal said it had held up publication of the article three weeks in an unsuccessful effort to include the prelate's views, which, it claimed, were promised.

"NCR still wants to interview the bishop," the editorial stated. "CRS is simply too big, too important, too involved with the U.S. government, and too omni-present on U.S. Catholics' behalf globally, to operate as a fieldom answerable only to a few. It should take its mission, its views and answers, to those who 'cough up' the \$7 million each year — U.S. Catholics."



FATHER GARCICH

A special grand jury investigating the fund-raising activities of the Pallottine Fathers in Baltimore has indicted Father Guido J. Garcich, SAC, the ousted fund-raising director, on 60 counts of misappropriating the order's funds and on one count of obstructing justice. The 54-year-old priest, whose whereabouts for the past year have been a mystery, surfaced recently to ask his "good brothers in the priesthood and good sisters of the Catholic Church and countless laity" to pray for him. He promised that his innocence would be established.

In Argentina, Cardinal Raul Francisco Primatesta, president of the nation's bishops, has denounced the celebration of the Tridentine Mass by a growing number of priests in the country. Such priests, he said in a special pastoral letter, are guilty of "serious disobedience" and "outrage" against the unity of the Church. Amnesty International (AI) has expressed concern at continuing torture and disappearances in Chile, despite the Chilean government's agreement to allow a United Nations investigation. AI characterized the human rights situation in Chile as "alarming." More than 300 people were detained for political reasons in 1977, and during the same period at least 14 people were reported to have disappeared after arrest, AI said.

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches, the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, and their joint ecumenical agency, the Pennsylvania Conference on Interchurch Cooperation, have joined in urging the state Supreme Court to maintain the current laws against Sunday sales. The agencies whose church membership totals 6.7 million Pennsylvanians have filed a friend of the court brief in a case brought against three townships by two supermarket chains, Kroger and A & P, which are seeking to have the state's Sunday laws declared unconstitutional.

Diaconate Grows 'Dramatically'

Washington, D. C. (RNS) — A survey shows that the Permanent Diaconate program of the U. S. Catholic Church, launched in 1968, is now conducted in 106 of the nation's 170 dioceses.

There were 2,387 permanent Catholic deacons in the U.S. as of Oct. 31, according to the annual survey by the Committee on the Permanent Diaconate of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB).

The new total reflects an increase of 640 or 36.6 per cent over the 1976 number. In 1971, U. S. Catholicism had only 58 permanent deacons.

Candidates in training for the permanent Diaconate numbered 2,610 in the latest survey, compared with 529 in 1971. The new total represents an increase of 103 over 1976.

Msgr. Ernest J. Fiedler, staff director of the NCCB permanent Diaconate Committee, observed that the figures showed continuing and "dramatic" growth in the program.

Responding to a decision of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI restored the ancient office of permanent deacon in 1967. Organization of the program in the U.S. began with the establishment in 1968 of the NCCB committee.

Deacons are authorized to baptize, reserve and distribute the Eucharist, witness marriages, officiate at funerals, read the Scriptures, preach and perform various liturgical functions, carry out works of charity, guide "remote Christian communities" and promote and sustain the apostolic works of lay persons.

The NCCB's survey found that 93 per cent of deacons and 95 per cent of deacon candidates are married, and

following ordination is required in the diaconate programs of 50 dioceses responding to the NCCB survey and optional in 17 other dioceses. In the remaining dioceses, continuing education has not yet been included as a formal part of the program.

There are 70 "full-time" deacons of whom 50 are salaried. The majority of salaried deacons work in parishes as directors of ministers of religious education, on the faculties of schools including colleges, and perform services in chancery offices. Five are engaged in ministry at correctional facilities.

The racial and ethnic origins of the deacons are: 78 per cent Anglo, 5 per cent Black, 16 per cent Hispanic and 1 per cent "other," which includes American Indian, Eskimo, Chinese American, Japanese American, Filipino and Vietnamese. Of the candidates, 80 per cent are Anglo, 4 per cent Black, 14 per cent Hispanic and 1 per cent "other."

The three largest diaconate programs maintained by dioceses are in Chicago (311 deacons, 138 candidates), Newark (127 deacons, 102 candidates) and Hartford (99 deacons, 78 candidates).

Msgr. Fiedler said the subject of continuing education for deacons "holds a very high priority" for his office and for directors of diocesan programs in 1978.

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