

# philippine studies

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## Comments

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justice triumphs. A theology of urban-industrial man will bring greater clarity to this approach. If moreover, the Church can set the example of using its wealth positively by helping the poor, few will begrudge it the power it now holds. For it will stand in the service of man, a role which Christ embraced many centuries ago.

### COMMENTS

#### MR. QUINTIN S. DOROMAL

On the subject of the urban-industrial development of our country I would like to underscore three notions. These relate really to the observation made in the paper read in Tokyo that people tend to flock to the cities because of insecurity and the lack of opportunity in the rural areas. People go to the cities because of the promise of better wages, opportunities for employment, social security, better educational facilities for their children, and because of the fascination of town life.

First: should we not accelerate the development of regions throughout the country other than those in the area of the bigger cities? Lest the excuse of lack of government funds be given, perhaps we should be encouraging, not government, but the business community to assume responsibility for this development? The government could then lend support through some incentive provisions, e.g., some form of tax incentives. Perhaps too, laymen involved in government councils of decision or associated with pressure groups or vested interests should be encouraged to steer development planning and action toward areas beyond such large urban complexes as are found in the Greater Manila area.

Second: The Churches should expand their reach in their search for funding and for other forms of support for projects of development. Perhaps there are many still who want to help but who have not been asked.

Third: If people tend to flock to the cities, maybe the Churches have also been partly responsible. We have established many of our best facilities here in the Manila area, e.g., schools. Some among us have even closed down their smaller schools in the provinces supposedly because they could not afford these anymore. People will naturally go to those places where they are likely to find the best facilities, e.g., in education, for their own needs and for those of their children.

As a parting remark, I would like to make the observation that industrialization need not mean "high-faluting" pieces of machinery; it also means modernization, e.g., in farming or in fishing methods.

REV. JOSE C. BLANCO, S.J.

As I read the report, three assertions struck me as significant and noteworthy. The first states: "The efforts of the Church in the field of urban development have been few and often undertaken hesitantly, without full conviction." The second makes the observation that "in their desire to improve the cities, civic authorities have concentrated far more on physical measures and overlooked human needs and aspirations." The third underscores the "greater need of participation by the ordinary citizen in bringing about his own development and that of the city."

Apropos the first, i.e., the hesitancy characteristic of the Church's efforts in urban and industrial development, the problem is basically the lack of real theological direction. A seminar held in San Pablo city sometime in 1970 reached the consensus that what is needed is a renewal in Theology. I think a passage from Jürgen Moltmann is appropriate here:

The Christian salvation for which we hope is not only a personal salvation of one's soul or a mere rescuing of the individual from the evil world; nor is it just a consolation for the personal conscience in temptation. It is also the achieving of an eschatological order of justice, the humanizing of man, and the establishing of a universal peace. This aspect of our reconciliation with God has not been given sufficient prominence in the history of Christianity because Christians have no longer seen themselves in their true eschatological horizon, but have left terrestrial, eschatological expectations to the fanatics and enthusiasts.

In the Philippines, a change away from the sort of theological thinking pointed out by Moltmann as characteristic of our past is necessary. Our faith must direct us to grapple with the problems of the world. Our Christianity should give us the dynamism with which to tackle social, political and economic problems.

The second and the third are inter-related, and so I shall treat them together. Where there has been neglect of the human element, let there be a coming to consciousness on the part of the people, consciousness especially of their rights and of the need for power in groupings in order that they may be able to demand for their rights and exert pressure to gain those goods needed for development. In the Philippines, our efforts should perhaps be directed toward organizing the scattered and powerless poor so that they may positively and energetically participate in bringing about development and the realization of their rights.

A case in point is the community organization we [the Institute of Social Order] started in early October (1970), in the area of the Tondo foreshoreland. If anything gets people to participate, it is this: getting them to articulate their problems, getting them to want to solve these, and

to organize themselves in a community so that they may assert their rights. Thus it was in Tondo. When, for example, the Presidential Urban Housing Commission tried to push through what seemed to be a good project in the North Harbor area, one that would have "bulldozed" the people out to make room for parks, school houses and hospitals and perhaps "relocated" them in Carmona, the people organized and resisted. "We are more important than parks," they said. In that way they succeeded in having others take them into account. The people themselves should assert that they be paid attention to.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that our training programs on all levels should underscore the need for us all to keep a watchful eye for new methods and approaches toward organization, toward getting the people to participate in their own development.