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Communism Seminar in Cebu

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of the Philippines, even though living abroad. It is also in accordance with Art. 17 of the Civil Code which provides that prohibitive laws concerning persons, their acts, and those which have for their object public order, public policy and good customs shall not be rendered ineffective by laws or judgments promulgated, or by determinations or conventions agreed upon, in a foreign country.

Even on the question of valid legislation, there is grave doubt as to whether the proposed uniform divorce law advocated by the FIDA may find acceptance among states. The very nature of marriage itself is that it is indissoluble and perpetual. As a sacrament, there is grave doubt as to whether the State may validly legislate for its dissolution. It is needless to state here the stand of the Church on the indissolubility of marriage as originally expressed in the Book of Genesis where the Lord created man and woman and united them in marriage so that "they shall be two in one flesh" (Genesis, 2). In Mark 10, 2-10, Luke 16, 18 and I Corinthians 7, 1-16 where the question of divorce is dealt with, the same statements, viz., that "everyone who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries a woman who has been put away from her husband commits adultery" appear.

In explaining and buttressing the natural-law viewpoint on the question of divorce, a well-known author has written: "The possibility of breaking the marriage bond tends to weaken it; marriage would be treated with less seriousness if it were known to be dissoluble; human passion would not take long to burst the dike once a breach has been started. When the indissolubility of marriage has been given up, there will be no halting on the steep slope that leads to marriage instability, and the inevitable outcome will be freedom of passion and destruction of the family" (Leclercq, *MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY*, p. 82).

The Filipino women lawyers of FIDA could have ably represented their country in this international convention by objecting to the resolution, citing all these historical antecedents, the statute law and the case law, all of which express a firm public policy against divorce in the Philippines.

JORGE R. COQUILA

Communism Seminar in Cebu

San Carlos University, Cebu City, was the scene of a seminar on Communism held from May 9-11, 1960, under the direction of

Father Enrique Victoriano, S.J., business manager of PHILIPPINE STUDIES and assistant director of La Ignaciana, a Jesuit retreat house in Manila. This was the second of a series; the first was held in Baguio City from April 26-May 6, 1960. The seminar in Cebu had the full support of His Excellency, Archbishop Julio Rosales, and was attended by almost two hundred priests, teachers and other religious and lay leaders from Cebu and the nearby island of Leyte.

The purpose of the seminar was "to acquaint persons who are in a position of leadership and influence with the dangers of Communism, to instruct them in its principles, aims and tactics, and to propose some means of combating it..." In his introduction, Father Victoriano defined a Communist as a "person who is a deluded humanitarian and who seeks to solve the social problems of the world by means of dialectical materialism." He then gave a brief outline of the Communist philosophy and showed how the social problem revolves around the approach to private property. There is the liberal approach, which calls for unrestricted use of private property and places no limits to the power of big business; there is the communist approach, which is a reaction to the liberals and wants private property, at least in the case of productive goods, abolished; and finally, there is the approach of the Catholic Church, as expressed in the encyclical letters of the popes, especially those of Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius XI. This approach adopts a "middle of the road" policy and while defending man's right to private property, emphasizes the fact that private property brings with it certain obligations in justice and charity.

The program of the seminar can be divided into three parts: first, the fact of Communism and its present status in the Philippines; second, the nature of Communism and, finally, the answer to Communism.

The fact of Communism and its present status in the Philippines were explained by Mr. Eliseo Cardenas, former Army Intelligence Officer, and Capt. Carlos Albert, P.N. (ret.), former Chief of Intelligence of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and now a city councilor in Quezon City. Mr. Cardenas outlined the history of Communism in the Philippines, showing the strategies and tactics it has employed over the years. Captain Albert showed from various incidents which had happened recently that Communism was still present in the country and was not abolished with the defeat of the Huks.

The nature of Communism was developed by Father Harold W. Rigney, S.V.D., Rector of San Carlos University, and Father Daniel Clifford, S.J., a member of the exiled China mission who is presently teaching at the Kuang Chi School in Manila. Father Rigney, whose book, *FOUR YEARS IN A RED HELL*, describes his captivity under the Communists in China, spoke on the tactics of the Communists as he

experienced them in China and the present status of the Church there. Father Clifford explained the Communist philosophy, showing how Karl Marx took Feuerbach's materialism and Hegel's dialectic and combined them into a new philosophy of dialectical materialism. He then indicated the errors in the Communist philosophy and refuted them one by one. Father Clifford also brought out the fact that the Free World needs a greater unity in its fight against Communism and that it is making the mistake of combating atheism and materialism with materialism. This "failure of the West" has been well brought out by Dr. Charles Malik, Chairman of the Delegation of Lebanon to the Fourth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, in a speech delivered before the Political Committee of the General Assembly, November 23, 1949. In this address, Dr. Malik stressed the need of a deeper realization in the Western world of its spiritual roots and the ideals which have been part of its tradition, a tradition rooted in "the glorious Graeco-Roman-Hebrew-Christian-Western-European-humane outlook."

Father Horacio de la Costa, S.J., professor of history at the Ateneo de Manila and editor of PHILIPPINE STUDIES, explained that the answer to Communism can be found in the program for social reconstruction developed by the Catholic Church in the papal encyclicals.

Father de la Costa began by showing that the Catholic Church ought to have a social program from her very nature, because man's status in the next life is determined by how he lives this life and the way he lives this life is greatly influenced by the society in which he lives. Therefore, the Church must be concerned with the problems of this life, in order to bring men to their final end, happiness in the next life. This position is in strong contrast with the Communist conception of the Church's mission. The Church, according to them, is a tool of the capitalists, which offers a palliative to the exploited proletariat by promising them happiness only in the next life, "pie in the sky." Besides, the Church's mission to save souls means the salvation of the whole man, body and soul; for this reason, the Church must "Christianize the whole of life." The precedent for all this was established by Christ Himself, who showed a profound interest in the conditions of life provided by the society of His time.

With this foundation, Father de la Costa then developed the characteristics, sources and principal points of the Church's social program. The program of the Church is: 1) based on unchangeable principles, the principles of Christ which are founded on man's unchangeable nature; 2) a realistic program, because it is based on an adequate view of that nature and of the society in which man lives; 3) highly flexible in its application to the practical order, although the principles remain unchanged; and 4) always ready to take ad-

vantage of advances in human knowledge. This is shown, for instance, in recent discussions of the family living wage.

The sources of the Church's teaching on the social question are, first, revelation and, second, statements of the papacy and hierarchy. Among the latter are the famous social encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI. These encyclicals, it should be noted, are according to the principles of sound philosophy and should be acceptable to Catholic and non-Catholic alike. They are based on natural truths attainable by the human reason.

This social program of the Church is in strong opposition to that of the modern secularistic state. Father de la Costa showed how this state is the product of many historical trends which have had profound influence on modern thinking: liberalism, rationalism, the enlightenment and the concept of the totalitarian state in which the individual has no rights. Because liberalism has infiltrated modern economic thought, the growth of capitalism has often been at the expense of the laboring class in many countries. This kind of capitalism has been a powerful factor in the extension of imperialism in Asia and Africa.

The present social problem in the Philippines is acute. The majority of the workers and farmers in the country are, according to Father de la Costa, living on a subsistence income. There is a very unequal distribution of land and most agricultural workers do not own their own farms, but are tenants. This condition has brought many evil consequences in its train. First of all, the democratic foundations are weakened. To have a true democracy, the people must be able to vote freely and intelligently, but in the Philippines many are so poor as to be unable to do this. Secondly, this poverty has a social effect, because people are unable to educate their children. The average Filipino does not go beyond the fourth grade. Finally, this poverty affects even the religious life of the people.

After this discussion, Father de la Costa suggested that the country may be approaching the point where the people could begin to lose confidence in their present religious and political leaders and turn to others like the Communists. This, according to him, is the challenge of our day and it is up to the religious, lay and political leaders to meet it and show the people that the confidence they have placed in them is not in vain.

After Father de la Costa, Father George Willmann, S.J., Territorial Deputy of the Knights of Columbus in the Philippines, explained some of the work of the Columbian Farmers Aid Association as a specific instance of the Church's program for social reconstruction, while Mr. Lindy C. Morrell, representative of Ramon P. Binamira, Presidential Assistant on Community Development, spoke on the work

of that office as an instance of the government's plan for improving social conditions.

The seminar closed with an address by Archbishop Rosales and the reading of a part of the statement of the Philippine Hierarchy on "Social Justice," May, 1949. Included in this letter is the following significant statement:

We know full well that men and women who make an outward show of piety while they refuse justice and charity to the worker bring discredit on the religion they profess. But this discredit is undeserved. When Catholics fail to fulfill what the church plainly declares to be their grave duty, it is not their religion that is to be blamed, but the gross neglect of their religion.

Much of what was said during this seminar is not new to anyone familiar with the Church's social teaching especially as it is expressed in Pius XI's encyclical, *Divini Redemptoris*. Here the Pope makes it very clear that the answer to Communism is found in the principles set down in *Quadragesimo Anno* and *Rerum Novarum*. Nevertheless, the matter discussed in this seminar had for many reasons a "newness" all its own. First of all, it was the first time many of the people there had heard that the Church had a social program or, if they had heard of it, it was the first time many of them learned what it contained and how important it was in the fight against Communism.

Second, for those who knew the content of the Church's social teaching, the seminar had a "newness" about it, because the Philippines is a very concrete example and striking verification of the teaching of the Popes. I once had the good fortune to read the captured manuscript of the autobiography of Luis Taruc, former Communist leader of the *Hukbalahap*. It was very clear in Taruc's autobiography that it was discontent with the social injustices he saw and experienced all around him that drove him to Communism and that he was very sincere in his desire to help the masses. In his own words: "I never had theories to guide me in my antipathy toward class differences, but I had my own eyes. The conclusions I drew were unerring, because I came to them by instinct as well as by experience."

After Taruc's capture, Douglas Hyde, another man who turned Communist in search of social justice, spent many weeks talking with him, living with him in prison. When Hyde told Taruc that the Church also had a program for social justice, Taruc was amazed. He had never heard of it before. In a short time, Taruc was converted to Catholicism and Mr. Hyde, among others, has no doubt of his sincerity.

There are many others like Taruc in the Philippines today and, as was brought out in the first two lectures of the seminar, Communism is still very strong and active in the country. It can only

be defeated by a reform of the social order and all Catholics must do their part, but especially the rich, who are the employers and land owners. Filipinos will never accept atheism, but Communism can adapt to that difficulty, as it has done in Hungary and other places. The social message of Communism will have a strong appeal in this country, unless conditions are changed. The message which Douglas Hyde has tried to bring to the Catholic world since his conversion must be heard and followed. "If Catholics really seriously set about the job of applying the Church's social teaching to the society in which they lived, there would be nothing left for the Communists to exploit."

JOHN M. DOUGHERTY