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Social Service Conferences

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The *Report* carries many "annexes." The Federation wants everyone to know where its money is going (the little there is of it!) and therefore attaches a detailed financial statement. It has also a list of members, almost 4,200. The spiritual advisers, in addition to Father Ortiz, are Fathers Basilio David and Norberto Coronel of the San Fernando Diocese, and Fathers José de Haes, Raphael van Nieuwenhove and Herman Martens of the "Belgian Fathers."

The assistance of these men is rightly stressed in the *Report*. First of all they have a certain sales value. The farmers are not likely to think that the priest is trying to sell them a gold brick, and the landlord will feel pretty sure that the Federation is not Communist inspired. But this sales value is only a consequence and outward manifestation of their real worth to the Federation, namely in "maintaining" as the *Report* says, "the purity of the organization, promoting the spiritual welfare of the members, choosing the best local leaders, raising funds, convincing landlords, etc."

In other words the Federation depends on its ideals for its success, and on these advisers to help preserve these ideals. Without the ideals the Federation is just another movement of self-interest, which can easily deteriorate into selfish interest. The freedom of the Free Farmers is a freedom that could easily degenerate into a new slavery, if those ideals are lost. Hence the wisdom of Mr. Montemayor and his associates in stressing this element.

Those who wish to know more about the Federation or to swell its slim financial resources can find it at the Ateneo compound on Padre Faura, Manila.

L.A.C.

Social Service Conferences

The Eighth Catholic International Conference of Social Service, meeting this year in Cologne, directed its attention to the "Human Person and Social Service in the Modern World." This theme was based on respect for the dignity and the freedom of the human person and the need to ensure their recognition in a changing world.

The use of psychological and sociological methods in social service, the appeal made to the fundamental resources of the individual and the community, the use of self-help programs and methods in countries undergoing social and economic development, all point to the importance of bringing the light of a Christian philosophy of the human person and of society to social work.

In his address to the conference the Papal Nuncio to Germany, Archbishop Aloysius J. Muensch, explained that social life without charity is doomed to die. Although secularists attempt to dismiss social charity as an outmoded thing, he continued, the fact remains that failures in family, economic and social life have been caused by lack of charity. Charity must be the life-giving force and the foundation of all social work.

Miss Jane Hoey, former directress of the United States Bureau of Public Assistance, encouraged the delegates present to attend to the general social and economic factors as well as to the condition immediately affecting those under their care. In no instance may the sanctity of the human person be disregarded; rather, she noted, it should be one of the basic principles from which social work stems. Self-confidence, self-respect and a sense of responsibility—guiding principles of all social measures—are meaningless when not referred to the sanctity of the human person.

The Seventh International Conference of Social Work holds its usual meetings this year in Toronto, Canada. The theme of this conference touches on an idea which is recognized as a basic need in the Philippine field of social work: "Promoting Social Welfare through Self-help and Cooperative Action."

Two delegates of the Philippine Association of Social Workers will be present at this conference, Mrs. Felicidad Silva and Mrs. Juana Silverio. The latter is to make a contribution toward the understanding of how the principles of group work and community organization contribute to self-help.

THOMAS A. MITCHELL