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Mobilizing Community Resources

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these techniques should be used. For example, psychological techniques can be used to heal mental illness; they can also be used for brain-washing. Scientific inventions can give a new fulness to human living; they can also be used to keep a totalitarian state in power. Industrialization should not be an end in itself but a means to the realization of higher values. A too impulsive carrying out of plans for industrialization can harm the very people for whose good industry is being introduced. Besides technological planning, therefore, there must be socio-economic and cultural planning.

The unifying principle in the new cultural synthesis is seen to be a humanism basic to both Asian and western cultures. This humanism is presented as rich and deep, allowing diversity even while it unifies.

This has been a rather disconnected sketch of themes that appear often in the pages of the first volume of *Asian Culture*. We do not mean to suggest that the quarterly hews to a party line; each contributor is responsible for his own article and individual viewpoints are presented. But it seems to us that many contributors tend to agree on the points we have sketched above.

The quarterly refuses to accept—or, rather, completely disregards—a dilemma often presented to “backward” countries by a certain segment of Western opinion. The dilemma can be expressed thus: A country must either give up its Asian culture or else remain perpetually unindustrialized. With true Asian all-inclusiveness, the quarterly takes it for granted that industrialization and acceptance of Western influences are not incompatible with an intensification of one’s Asian sense of values and Asian patterns of thought and feeling. But may we suggest that it is not all-inclusive enough? The ideological articles seem exclusively man-centered. The stress on humanism is indeed welcome, but if one delves deeply enough into man, he will find that the core of man is a reaching out for the transcendent and the infinite. This reaching out is not denied, but it is not mentioned; it is only hinted at once or twice. This seems strange since this restlessness after the infinite has always been part of the Asian consciousness.

On the whole, *Asian Culture* is interesting, at times absorbing.

ROQUE FERRIOLS

Mobilizing Community Resources

The second national conference sponsored by the Philippine Association of Social Workers (PASW), held recently, had for its theme “The Role of the Social Worker in Mobilizing Community Resources”.

The opening address of President Garcia, read by Secretary of Health Elpidio Valencia, restated the Administration's determination to encourage and support social work and enumerated the Administration's achievements in this sector.

The President recalled that since the first Conference (which he also addressed) two years ago, significant developments have taken place, notably the appointment of two of the Association's past presidents as technical consultants to the United Nations on social work. This, he said, was international recognition of the competence and ability of Filipino social workers, a badge of merit transcending mere personalities.

The President mentioned as a continuing project agrarian reform "aimed at safeguarding the economy of our rural population", an expanding program of community development, a more vitalized social security system, increased promotion of self-help projects and the encouragement of popular initiative for social development. Each of these are producing tangible benefits which enable more and more people to be self-maintaining.

One of the significant achievements of the government, the President mentioned, was Reorganization Plan 50 which will reorganize the SWA and decentralize its services in order to serve more people. The important features of this Plan are: to provide material aid to the indigent, physically handicapped and unemployed; assistance in initiating self-help projects; social work and counseling services to adults and children; extension of guidance and counseling to youth on probation and parole; to provide a training program for the physically handicapped to enable them to become self-supporting; and to provide for the institutional care and supervision of children.

Dr. Paul Edwards of the UNICEF who delivered the keynote speech urged social workers to participate actively in the fight against poverty in this part of the world. Poverty in Asia according to Dr. Edwards is the kind that feeds on itself, stupefies and paralyzes the mind, distorts the body and produces a resignation to, and an acceptance of, its inevitability. This crippling poverty begins at the physical levels of life and moves on to blight and distort the mind and spirit. "In this wretched condition, great segments of Asia's population have already chosen bread in this unequal contest, only to find it bitter and of little satisfaction, and not enough such as it is to sustain either life or hope." The whole continent of Asia, he said, staggers under the burden of this choice. However it is fortunate that several agencies of the UN are hard at work studying and assessing the scope of the problem.

Dr. Edwards also stressed the responsibility of people and nations who have resources to help in solving the problem of poverty. He singled out his own country as an example of a "have" country which could easily do many things towards helping the people of Asia.

Atty. Ramon Binamira, technical assistant to the President on community development and speaker at the Third Plenary Session, gave a detailed account of how the PACD mobilized community resources in keeping with its mission to bring social justice to the rural areas. The PACD, according to Mr. Binamira, is deeply concerned with the elimination of the social and political factors which hinder progress and aggravate rural poverty. Among these are archaic land tenure systems, the pressure of the rural population upon the presently available land base, the absence of adequate public administration, and the lack of progressive leadership at top government levels.

The PACD uses the total or coordinated approach to the solution of rural poverty, designed to awaken in the barrio people a desire to improve their living standards and to develop in them the confidence that improvements are attainable. The government through the PACD furnishes assistance on a first-aid-technician basis in matters of improved farm practices, road construction, water supply, local government and other barrio problems. One of its outstanding features is the so-called grants-in-aid program. The government makes available funds in the form of materials to barrio projects on a first-come-first-served basis. Among the conditions are that the people contribute at least 50% of the cost of the project in the form of cash, materials, land or labor and that the people bind themselves to maintain a project after it is completed. The effectiveness of this approach can be seen from the record ₱25-million worth of projects completed during 1956-1959, ₱13 million of this amount coming from the people directly.

The PACD strengthens local governments by delegating the responsibility for development projects to the people themselves. They come in close contact with their governments and are thus encouraged to take an active interest in its affairs. This is conducive to better citizenship.

The conference was divided into four study groups holding discussions on health, employment, minimum standard of living, welfare of children, and rehabilitation of the handicapped. The opening day of the conference was attended by dignitaries and representatives of agencies whose functions are closely related to social services.

DORIS F. CALLEJA

Recent Reviews of a Life Of Christ

About the *Life of Christ* of Andrés Fernández Truyols, S.J., the publisher proudly quoted a statement of Msgr. John S. Kennedy: "A tremendous abundance of learning is comprehensively presented so as