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"THE CHURCH AND THE ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS"

Address by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program
First Annual Conference

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The launching by the bishops of the United States of a ten-year program of assistance to Latin America, the Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program, is a recognition that the obligation to achieve social justice transcends national boundaries. It is recognition of an obligation to seek what that great and good man Pope John XXIII called the "International common good." I am honored to have the opportunity to participate in the launching of this program.

It is just under three years ago that Pope John in his encyclical Mater et Magistra spelled out in bold new language the obligation of nations that are rich and advanced toward those which are poor and underdeveloped. He stated:

The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members of the same family requires political communities enjoying an abundance of material goods not to remain indifferent to those political communities whose citizens suffer from poverty, misery, and hunger, and who lack even the elementary rights of the human person.

This is particularly true since, given the growing interdependence among the peoples of the earth, it is not possible to preserve lasting peace if glaring economic and social inequality among them persists.

He concluded:

We are all equally responsible for the undernourished peoples. Therefore, it is necessary to educate one's conscience to the sense of responsibility which weighs upon each and everyone, especially upon those who are more blessed with this world's goods.

It was in that same year, 1961, that President Kennedy sounded the call for a new Alliance for Progress in this hemisphere. After ignoring our neighbors in this hemisphere, President Kennedy recognized that we could no longer ignore the revolutionary challenge of an unjust social order in the Latin American continent, could no longer ignore the shocking social and economic inequality between privileged and impoverished, between glittering capitals and festering slums, between booming industrial regions and primitive rural areas.

(MORE)

It was later that same year at Punta del Este that the twenty American republics agreed in the Declaration of the Peoples of America "to unite in a common effort to bring our people accelerated economic progress and broader social justice within the framework of personal dignity and political liberty."

In the Alliance for Progress we have underway a program which can apply in a concrete way the obligation of the rich nations to aid the poor which Pope John spoke of in his encyclical. The accomplishment of the goals of the Alliance is a task for governments--and for non-governmental institutions like churches, labor unions, professional groups, business associations, educational institutions and cooperatives.

On this occasion it is appropriate to consider the role which the Catholic Church, which includes among its faithful the large majority of the peoples from the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego, might play in the Alliance for Progress.

During the first two years of the Alliance we have heard often the charge that the Alliance is exclusively a government to government program. We have heard the charge that the Alliance has not mobilized support of the important private groups and organizations which make up Latin societies. During the first few months of the Alliance this charge of overemphasis on government programs may have had some merit. But during the past year there has been a definite change in attitude toward voluntary associations on the part of Alliance officials, and of a new appreciation of the role which they can and must play if the Alliance is to succeed. As one who has long emphasized the importance of non-governmental bodies in our foreign aid program, I was of course delighted that President Johnson gave special emphasis to the role which they must play in the Alliance, in the letter which he sent in December to newly-appointed Alliance Coordinator Thomas Mann. He stated:

"I want you to work closely with private United States groups and institutions carrying out activities in Latin America. These include, but are not limited to, the AFL-CIO, religious and charitable groups, cooperatives and the private business sector, which can make the significant contribution envisaged in the Punta del Este Charter."

With this change in attitude has come a new appreciation of the role which the church might play in the Alliance. From my position in the Senate it appears to me that the Church might exert its influence in two principal ways:

1. forming public opinion and thereby indirectly influencing those who make decisions in the government sector.
2. by direct action through a vast network of schools, hospitals, and specialized institutions in the labor, charity and social fields.

A decade ago it could be said that the indifference and fatalism of the traditional ruling groups in Latin America was well-expressed in the remark of the late nineteenth century Chilean President Barros Luco "There are only two kinds of problems facing society: those that get solved by themselves--and those which defy solution." Today this is no longer true of all the ruling groups,

(MORE)

of the elite who make the key decisions in the governments of Latin America. To a significant extent, the change has been influenced by the renaissance of the Catholic Church in Latin America, by a new awakening on the part of Church leaders to the shocking social and economic problems of the continent, by a new determination to meet those problems now through fundamental reforms.

Today in Chile, Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, and Colombia members of the hierarchy are pushing actively the reforms stipulated under the Alliance charter. Whereas formerly the active espousal of progressive social and economic policies was largely confined to religious orders like the Maryknoll priests or to isolated pastors, today they are supported by occupants of metropolitan sees.

The farsighted social and economic philosophy of Pope John's recent social encyclicals "mater et Magistra" and "Pacem in Terris" is being strongly pushed by the Vatican. Men who once would have been promoted to mountain parishes for their advanced views are now being appointed bishops and cardinals.

From metropolitan sees in Rio de Janeiro and Santiago have come a series of pastoral letters scathingly criticizing existing social and economic abuses, deploring the inequality in distribution of incomes, and calling upon the Government to extend and speed up its reforms and social programs. In Chile, under the leadership of Cardinal Silva Enriquez, the Church is offering its own example in the field of land reform by distributing its own lands to the peasants. In all of these instances the Church has recognized that the State has a large role to play in reforming antiquated economic and social structures, that the State has a positive responsibility to act for the welfare of all its citizens. Through its teaching and its example, the Church has become a catalyst spurring governments to action.

Although the Church is of course not involved in political movements, its espousal of progressive social and economic policies is felt in the political sphere of Latin American societies. It is therefore not surprising that in countries like Chile, Venezuela, Brazil and Peru the fastest growing political parties are the Christian democratic parties. The Christian democratic movement is one of the principal reform-minded non-Communist movements in Latin America today--and one of the most hopeful signs to emerge in this decade. At a luncheon which I gave last week in the Senate for Dr. Rafael Caldera, leader of the Social Christian Party in Venezuela, we agreed that one major reason why this party has flourished among the impatient idealistic youth of Latin America is that it offers an ideological alternative to Marxism, an integrated approach to the political, economic and social problems of society. We pragmatic North Americans find it difficult to understand why Latin Americans consider the philosophy and ideology of a party as important as the specific practical measures recommended by the party. We are only now coming to realize that the ideological basis of communism is its principal attraction for students and educated groups in Latin America, not its economic critique. It is for that reason that communism captures the university before the slum.

Because the Christian democratic parties understand the nature of the problems confronting younger people in the revolutionary atmosphere prevailing in Latin America today, they are destined to play a large role in shaping the political future of Latin America in this decade and in the decades ahead.

(MORE)

I would like now to turn briefly to the area in which the Church's actions influence more directly the economic and social order. I do not have time to examine all the programs and institutions in which the Church is involved. They extend throughout most areas of society--health, education, cooperatives, housing, labor, agriculture and radio and television. I would like to comment on one program of special interest to me, a program in which the Church in the United States and the Church in Latin America has been intimately involved. I refer to the Food for Peace program--which will be ten years old this year. I was the principal author of this program--and nothing has given me greater satisfaction in my public life these past ten years than to see this program grow and grow so that today tens of millions of people throughout Latin America and throughout the world enjoy food--the blessings of America's agricultural miracle. When Pope Paul VI in his Christmas message in 1963 examined the problems of the underdeveloped world, he concluded that "the first is hunger." "Hunger can become a subversive force with incalculable results." Referring specifically to programs of food distribution the Pope stated:

"We are therefore openly in favor of everything that is being done today to help those who are devoid of the goods required for the elementary means of life. We see with admiration that in the years following the destruction of war great projects of international aid have been launched to give witness to a fresh flowering of human nobility and to offer generously to entire masses of unknown peoples the spontaneous and well organized gifts of indispensable food. We should like to encourage and bless this magnificent endeavor, at once manifold and providential. We are happy to note that Christian principles can rise to pervade and promote these praiseworthy and beneficial undertakings."

Through the Food for Peace program 92,000,000 people are now being fed throughout the world, 21,500,000 in Latin America alone. Much of the credit for the success of these programs in Latin America must go to the Catholic Relief Services which, with the World Church Service, has carried the principal responsibility for distribution of U.S. food in Latin America. As one who has followed this program carefully, I want to salute the outstanding leadership of Bishop Swanstrom and Msgr. Joseph Gremillion of the Catholic Relief Services in guiding and directing this worldwide program of feeding the hungry.

The Food for Peace program has also contributed to strengthen the programs of voluntary agencies themselves--in relation to the over-all U.S. foreign aid program. It is in many ways the best thing that ever happened to the U.S. voluntary agencies. This year, the Food for Peace program, under Public Law 480, is up for review before the Congress. Congress must decide whether to continue it, whether to cut it back or to expand it. A few would eliminate it--and many would cut it back. I believe it should not be cut back--but expanded. And those of us in the Congress who established it, who believe in it, and who wish to strengthen it--need your help. We need your help in convincing the Congress and the American people that food is one of our greatest assets in the struggle for world peace. Instead of concentrating exclusively on the problem of the world's growing population--and I agree that it is a major problem, we should also be equally concerned about improving production of food through modernization of agriculture, providing purified water and health facilities for the people who

(MORE)

already inhabit the world. Although the problems facing Latin American countries cannot easily be solved, the provision of food--either through production at home or distribution from abroad--will make their solution easier. That is why I intend to fight in the Congress for the continuation and expansion of the Food for Peace program.

To provide adequate food to feed its people, Latin American countries cannot rely on outside assistance permanently and must modernize their own agricultural structure to increase production of food. Indeed, this is only one of the many reasons why more emphasis must be placed on rural development under the Alliance for Progress.

It is of utmost importance that we have a more rapid implementation of the new extensive Alliance programs in the rural areas of the Continent. I have long believed that the explosive political and social situation in many countries is due to continued neglect of the rural areas, where even today over half the population lives.

The Church has long recognized the importance of rural development. Many of the pioneering programs underway today have been initiated by groups affiliated with the Church. I refer to the expanding network of radio schools designed to reduce illiteracy and instruct adults in the fundamentals of agriculture and hygiene. The Institute of Rural Education in Chile is a model of the type of institution needed to train rural leaders. The cooperative movement, spurred by imaginative leaders like Father Dan McClellan, has already done much to make credit available to rural people. These are but a few examples of the forward-looking-program of the Church in the rural areas.

In my view Alliance officials were far too slow in recognizing this imbalance between urban and rural areas. Today much is being done to develop these areas and integrate the long neglected masses into the political and social life of the country.

Progress is being made in extending credit for agriculture and half of the countries of the Continent have received sizable Alliance loans for agricultural credit. Cooperatives are being formed in some areas. Programs are underway to open up new areas by building penetration roads. Land distribution under agrarian reform programs is proceeding in Venezuela, Colombia, and Chile.

The importance of rural development can hardly be overstated. Over half of the countries of Latin America continue to spend sizable amounts of precious foreign exchange reserves to import food to feed their populations. This occurs in countries that are primarily agricultural. For the common man in half of Latin America, the key to a higher standard of living in the near future is still an increase in agricultural productivity. In this field the United States has a record of proven performance. We abound in technical expertise in the field of agriculture and the key to success appears to be our ability to secure the widespread adoption of known and proven techniques.

Another reason for increasing our emphasis on agrarian reform and rural development has been stated by President Lleras Camargo: the imbalanced growth of population in Latin America places an increasingly heavy burden on cities. "For there is no sort of economic expansion, however swift or successful, that can assimilate both the rural masses

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who cease to live by agriculture and the new surplus hands, whether in the town or in the country, who come year by year to glut the labor market." To the extent that rural modernization slows down the exodus to the city, it alleviates the problem engendered by rapid population growth.

The economic development of the rural sector is intimately linked to the progress of the industrial sector, for industrialization can flourish only if it has available progressively widening markets. The purchasing power of a modernized rural sector is of great potential stimulus here.

I am not disturbed by the criticisms that the Alliance is now focusing too much attention on rural areas and too little on Latin America's troubled cities. I would sustain this new emphasis on rural development and in many countries increase it. I am not suggesting that we attempt to reverse the long-range secular trend toward urbanization which is characteristic of our modern technological world. Nor am I suggesting that we attempt to discourage industrialization and encourage concentration on production of raw materials through a predominantly agricultural economy.

Indeed, today we are witnessing one of the ironies of Marxist determinism. Today we see the Soviet Union, which has for decades assailed the United States for preventing industrialization and keeping Latin American economies confined to producing raw materials, imposing upon Cuba a modern day mercantile system in which Cuba is the raw-material-producing colony for Russia, and the captive market for the Soviet Union's manufactured goods.

I insist that the Alliance programs must give special consideration to rural and agricultural development because it is necessary that someone redress the balance which events have tilted heavily in favor of urban development. Modern societies are governed by urban men, and financed by urban-oriented financial institutions. The whole complex of international lending institutions--the World Bank, the Export-Import Bank, the International Monetary Fund, private banking houses--is heavily geared toward urban and industrial development. Most of these institutions do not find it possible to channel substantial capital into agricultural programs. And yet the basis of the modern agricultural revolution--which we have experienced in the United States--is heavy capital investment.

If agricultural and rural development is to flourish in Latin America, large amounts of capital will be required. In the absence of other sources, the Alliance agencies such as AID and the Inter-American Development Bank must be principal sources for this capital.

But once again it is not only the economic consequences of rural underdevelopment that is of importance. The glaring gap between booming industrial urban regions and primitive rural areas is social and political dynamite. We are rapidly learning that the situation most susceptible to violent revolution is the existence of vast differences within a country. To the oppressed peasant of northeast Brazil, the dazzling splendor of Sao Paulo is more of an incitement to revolution than the faraway places of the rich United States. Political and social stability demands that the gap between rich regions and poor be narrowed.

The growth of stable political and social institutions requires that the bulk of the citizens be integrated

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into the political and social life of the society. Today in most Latin American countries the mass of the rural people remain utterly cut off from the political life of the nation. Political democracy is the province of the few. It is not valued by the many who are hungry, impoverished and illiterate. Indeed, it is often viewed as a luxury for the few at the expense of the many.

If political democracy is to survive and flourish in Latin America it must be proven that the neglected masses can enjoy the benefits which we associate with it. This presupposes a decent standard of living, of education and of health as an essential prerequisite to active participation in the political processes of society. Rural development and modernization is therefore a requirement in the path to the goal of first-class citizenship for all.

In the area of non-governmental activity, I would like to mention one area where the Catholic Church in the United States can be of immense help to Latin America--the area of institution building. We have discovered that the modernization of society requires the establishment of indigenous specialized institutions to deal with the complex problems which arise. The Church in this country has been the first to recognize this--and it has developed a truly amazing network of universities, schools, labor institutes, radio and television schools, hospitals and nursing schools, agrarian associations and social welfare institutions. Today in Latin America similar institutions must be established or strengthened--and Latin Americans need your help--both in terms of technical assistance and money. They need your help in building institutions devoted to training labor leaders; to preparing project applications and feasibility studies, for submission to international lending agencies; to training cooperative leaders; to preparing special programs for the hundreds of thousands of slum dwellers that ring Santiago and Lima, Rio de Janeiro and Caracas; still others to educating businessmen, managers, and financiers on the role they must play in achieving social and economic justice in their societies.

Your help is needed now to establish such institutions which will in time be able to stand on their own, well prepared to deal with the complex and highly specialized social and economic problems confronting a modern society.

From what has been said here it is clear that the Church can play a major role in the Alliance for Progress:

1. by being a catalyst for heightened social responsibility;
2. by direct involvement in such programs as Food for Peace;
3. by encouraging the establishment of specialized institutions.

In conclusion I would just note two final contributions which the church might be called upon to make in the revolutionary atmosphere of Latin America of the next decade.

The building of a just economic and social order requires the rapid modification--sometimes the destruction of old institutions. In a revolutionary era, the temptation is great for the state to absorb total responsibility in the social and economic order, to eliminate all institutions which it cannot directly control itself, to create an atomized society. History teaches us--and the recent

(MORE)

example of Cuba reminds us once again -- that it is the atomized society that is easy prey for totalitarian government. In one of the best capsule definitions of totalitarian government, Hannah Arendt once defined it as the elimination of all subgroups between the individual and the state. During the next decade, when revolutionary change will be the order of the day in many countries, there may be times when a brake is needed in the action of the state, if social pluralism and individual political liberty are to be preserved. In some Latin American countries, it may be the Church that will be called upon to play that role.

Finally, the Catholic Church -- together with Roman law and the Spanish language -- is one of the principal unifying forces in this vast continent. In an age of rampant nationalism, the common bond which the Church provides may have a powerful impact in overcoming the separatist tendencies of the age and in achieving hemispheric unity.

I have spoken tonight of "The Church and the Alliance for Progress." I will conclude with a brief comment on the Alliance for Progress and the new administration in Washington. As you know, the organization of the Alliance has undergone some major changes in recent weeks. This has occasioned much speculation in the news media -- some of it ill-informed. It has produced once again predictions of pessimism and despair about the Alliance. Much of the premature pessimism about the Alliance results from an underestimation of the magnitude of the task and from false expectations about what could be achieved in a brief period of time. The reform and modification of social and economic traditions that have persisted for 2 centuries are not going to be accomplished in 2 years -- and probably not in a decade. It should be understood by now that the Alliance for Progress has just begun. It is premature to pronounce any definitive judgments on its success or failure.

The U.S. Government's position today on the Alliance for Progress is the same as it was under President Kennedy. President Johnson knows that the choice today in Latin America is between peaceful evolution leading to social progress and violent revolution leading to tyranny. Because he attaches great importance to United States relations with Latin America, President Johnson has taken what I believe is a long-overdue action in giving the entire range of our relations with Latin America a place of increased priority in the structure of our government. The new Assistant Secretary, Thomas Mann, has been placed in charge of both our political and economic relationship with our Latin American neighbors, and in that capacity administers the United States contribution to the Alliance. He also enjoys special status as Special Assistant to the President, again reflecting the increased concern this government has with Latin America, and the supreme importance attached to our responsibilities in our own hemisphere.

The new U.S. Coordinator, Thomas Mann, is committed to the Alliance program. Mr. Mann's distinguished record in inter-American affairs includes his initiative to stabilize coffee prices through an international coffee agreement, and his constructive role in the drafting of the Act of Bogota -- a milestone on the road to the Alliance for Progress.

Within this upgraded administrative establishment, the highly competent and dedicated Teodoro Moscoso, who was Alliance Coordinator in the difficult first two years of the program, will play a key role, as Special Advisor to Mr. Mann, and as our representative in the newly created Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress.

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Despite ill informed accounts in some of our news media, there is no conclusive evidence that we are about to engage in a return to the less enlightened policies of a bygone past. The Johnson Administration is as determined as was the Kennedy Administration to advance the principles underlying the Alliance for Progress. President Johnson, in one of the first acts after taking over as Chief Executive, re-dedicated himself to this creative and imaginative program launched two and a half years ago. Everything he has done since he made this pledge has borne out his determination to make good on it. His actions indicate his understanding of a remark by President Betancourt that President Kennedy was fond of quoting "If we cannot help the many who are poor, we cannot save the few who are rich."

Tactics may change and methods may vary, but our purpose remains steadfast: to press on with the task of modernizing the political, economic and social structures of our sister republics; to do so in a cooperative effort of the twenty Alliance member nations; and to accomplish it by programs best suited to meet the differing needs and problems of each country.

There has been no retreat from the goals and the principles of the Charter of Punta del Este. Two years of experience have demonstrated the validity of these goals and principles. The question is how to move ahead most effectively and efficiently.

This is not an issue of liberalism versus conservatism, of state enterprise versus private enterprise, or of reform versus dollars. Rather, it is a question of each country's gathering together its best brains, marshalling all its resources, and applying them in such a way as to benefit ever growing numbers of people in Latin America as soon as humanly and prudently feasible.

This is the purpose of the President, of his key advisors in the administration responsible for Latin American affairs, of those of us in the Congress who believe in the Alliance for Progress. Together we are determined that it will succeed!

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