

This year's Conference opened the morning of May 30 with addresses of welcome from the Rev. Wilhelm Flieger, S.V.D., secretary of the Conference, the Very Rev. Harold W. Rigney, S.V.D., Rector of the host university, and the Hon. Francisco E. F. Remontigue, Governor of the Province of Cebu.

In five sessions distributed over two days 15 papers were read and discussed, the subject matter being principally research and problems in the southern and central Philippines. Beyond this there was considerable attention to cultural, social, and economic change throughout the nation. The discussions made clear that knowledge of the various Philippine cultural-linguistic groups is uneven and deficient even among social science teachers and practitioners, a fact which may account in part for frequent failures in

programs of change involving these groups. Recurrent suggestions from experienced field workers centered around the need for education, and the desirability of intensified ethnographic activity. Interdisciplinary cooperation was also seen as a primary need.

This Conference, the first of its kind to be held in the area, served to bring many social scientists, teachers, and social workers together for the first time. The exchange of ideas that took place gave rise to new plans for research and teaching. When further organization has been completed and the participants and others have been united with colleagues from Luzon through the Philippine Sociological Society, there is good reason to believe that both research and teaching in social science will be notably improved.

Social and Cultural Change in Economic Development

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I. The Sociologist looks at Economic Development

An examination of the topics to be considered in this conference reveals that we are concerned here primarily with *applied* Sociology as we attempt to relate sociological knowledge and insight to current problems in education, minority groups, community development, and national economic growth. This paper has been conceived in the same general vein. It does not pretend to present new knowledge or the results of new research, nor does it pretend to set forth new sociological theory. Rather, in the sense of applied science,

it is the writer's intention to take a sociological look at what has ordinarily been considered a problem in economics, namely, *the process of economic development*.

We usually discuss economic development in such terms as increased productivity, gross national product, rate of savings and capital formation, increased employment, higher standards of living, etc. Practically, we look for the situation where a loan for a new industry, an improved transportation network, or new power resources will set off a new round of increased productivity. In countries where economic development is in its

initial stages, our goal is a condition where the economy will be capable of continuing its expansion on a self-sustaining basis — recently labeled the “take off stage.”

All this is correct and proper, of course. Our purpose here is to add to the picture by examining economic development from a sociological viewpoint. In broad perspective, economic development is really a process of social and cultural change. This means a change in the structure and operation of a society's institutions, a change in the normal working and consuming habits of a people, and undoubtedly a change in the values and thought patterns characteristic of the society in question.

The modern sociological viewpoint in this regard is essentially that changes in economic institutions can be properly studied only in the context of the whole society and culture in which these changes are taking place. The sociologist sees society and culture as a system of many parts, *functionally inter-related*. Because the parts are functionally inter-related, the exact nature of one item in the system, as for example the barrio council if we are studying community development, is a function of the exact nature of many other parts of that socio-cultural system. In this case, these “other parts” would include such social factors as the barrio family with its particular system of family loyalties, the level of education in the community, normal patterns of local leadership, the way national political institutions operate at the barrio level, church and religious practices, fiestas, economic activities, land ownership, and probably a host of others. For a society to operate satisfactorily, a certain amount of consistency is necessary among these functionally inter-related parts, and the total system must

be able to meet the conditions and needs of the people involved.

An economically developed society is not like an undeveloped one. It will necessarily contain certain complicated institutions of production, labor specialization, capital use and formation, etc., which will not be found in a society living on a subsistence economy. Or, looking at the difference from another angle, people living in an industrialized community do not face the same conditions and problems as those living in a peasant village. Correspondingly, different social and cultural practices will be needed to help the society's members adapt to industrialization.

Below we will consider some of the social and cultural developments which seem to be associated with societies which are economically highly developed. This exercise may suggest social and cultural changes which may either be necessary to achieve economic development, or which may take place in the process of economic development.

Actually, we do not know all the social and cultural prerequisites for an economically-developed society. But we can point out certain social and cultural features apparently associated with, and functionally related to economic development. The countries of western Europe and North America will serve as the frame of reference for discussion. The factors discussed do not necessarily *cause* economic development, but their relationship with the process of economic development is too close to ignore.

II. Social and Cultural Characteristics of Economically Developed Countries

1. Certain population and demographic features go along with economic development. In most cases the population has become more mobile as labor moves to changing areas of employment, in-

cluding the shift from rural to urban centers. Population composition changes in the direction of a higher proportion of economically productive people to dependents. For one thing, life expectancy is increased, so adults increase the number of productive years in relation to the number of their unproductive childhood years. If average life expectancy is increased from 35 to 50 years, the productive years beyond, let us say age 18, would increase from 17 to 32 years. (This is only illustrative; the mathematics of averages is not that simple.) There is also a trend toward smaller families. The combined result is a population with a smaller percentage in age groups below an economically productive level. Women's employment outside the home further adds to the part of the population that is economically productive. Thus a smaller percentage of the society's productive effort goes simply to sustain non-productive dependents. The effort so saved can go to production for higher standards of living.

2. With economic development as known in the Western World, has gone a change in *social structure*, usually with an increase in what are thought of as middle class elements in the society. Or conversely, there has been a breakdown of the traditional two-class society, with the peasantry becoming more mobile in status, and the elite groups losing their ascribed status. To a large degree the criteria for upper social status has shifted away from the fact of membership in a traditional, family-perpetuated aristocracy, to recognition of an achieved position in the society's economic institutions. Of course, in many cases part of the old elite has become the new economic elite. Many traditional relationships between members of upper and lower status groups have broken down as a more productive economy

draws people away from a "servant" status, forcing those who can afford services done for them to turn to more efficient, if less flattering, mechanical devices and commercialized service from laundries and taxi companies.

3. Countries with highly developed economies usually have stable, well-established governmental institutions and a highly organized, skilled, and generally non-political civil service bureaucracy. This is necessarily so, because, if such an aggregate of people, special interest groups, and potentially conflicting social institutions, are to hang together as an organized society, efficient public authority seems essential. For a complex economy to operate, such items as transportation, power, financial institutions, and communication must be dependable. Rules regulating contractual relations, ownership and property, and commerce and trade must not be capricious. Thus the efficiency of a government's regulatory departments, its civil service, its laws, courts, and legal procedures, are all highly important when their functional inter-relationship with the various aspects of economic life are considered. Some political scientists point out that France was able to weather the series of political crises of the 1950's largely because of its stable, responsible French civil service.

4. With economic development one universally finds extensive elaboration of educational institutions. A high degree of public literacy is almost a prerequisite for economic development. But more than literacy is needed. As an economy develops, a greater diversity of specializations develops and forces educational institutions to supply the corresponding varied and specialized training. The percentage of people in the society engaged in the educational process expands greatly, as students in-

crease their years of education, and teachers, professors, administrators, textbook writers, educational equipment suppliers, examining boards, etc. multiply. As a higher percentage of the population enjoys advanced education and achieves higher degrees, the degrees themselves bring less prestige to the individual. Instead, quality of education received and academic achievement bring prestige. For an economically developed society has little use for degrees *per se*, but education related to job and professional performance is vital.

5. The economic development process has often been associated with changes in family institutions. For example, the extended family system seems to lose its vitality in a more mobile, urbanized, professionalized, and industrialized society. In a less complex, more traditional society, the extended family is of great importance to its members. It gives the individual his social position and status; it provides, along with his local community, his universe of primary or face-to-face relationships. It is his economic security. With economic development, the individual finds more of his life taken up with secondary groups — business and professional groups, labor unions, schools, and clubs. His own ability to gain employment also becomes more a matter of technical competence. The basis of the individual's economic security shifts from membership in an extended family to less personalized dependency on wages, pensions, or insurance policies. Because the family is so basic an element in society, such social changes have far reaching effects. If changes in family institutions are rapid and severe, the resulting social dislocation and disorganization can present acute problems.

6. Economic development and the social diversification which seems to go

with it gives rise to many special social or professional interests, and this in turn gives rise to a proliferation of organized groups. For example, countries like England, Canada, and the United States are said to have more clubs, organizations, committees, and associations than any other countries in the world.

7. The social status of various sex and age categories change with economic development. Women generally have higher, and more independent status. Advanced age loses some of its high status in favor of the vitality and productivity of youth. As children and teenagers work less and study more, a whole new set of adolescence status positions are created.

III. Changes in Beliefs and Attitudes

Certainly many more aspects of social change than those listed above are associated with economic development and could be added. But let us also call attention to changes at another level of human culture — the mental customs of a people, or the ideas, beliefs, values, anxieties, etc. which tend to be characteristic for a given society, — the "national character." In final analysis, economic development is a direct function of the collective personality of a society. Below are listed samples of attitudes and values which seem to be characteristically held in economically-developed societies.

1. General patterns of putting ideas and concepts together, or habits of logic, must be consistent with the demands of modern technology and science. Thus in English and related languages, the linguistic scientist notes a type of logic which stresses time sequence, cause and effect reasoning, and an actor-action-result perception of events. Knowledge itself is valued, and especially applied

knowledge. Intellectual curiosity seems to be a factor. And certainly a facility in abstract thinking and in using abstractions is necessary to participate in science and technology, mathematics, and architecture. In simpler societies and cultures, people can deal more with a tangible world at their fingertips.

2. A productive society, unless producing under duress, is one in which people place a high value on achievement *per se*, on creating, on producing, and on work itself.

3. The productive society has a basically optimistic outlook as contrasted with fatalism. Its people, or at least its leaders, must believe that their own efforts will achieve results, and that future conditions will be influenced by action taken in the interim.

4. In a developed economy where savings and capital formation play an important role, a significant proportion of the people must derive some satisfaction from anticipation of a future reward, that is, they must be willing to sacrifice in the present to enjoy an improved situation in the future. In some societies, frugality and thrift are considered virtues in themselves, and savings are the basis for personal security.

5. An economically developed society stresses a concept of the "public good" or "public welfare," and individual members of the society feel both a vested interest in, and a responsibility toward this concept. This is the psychological basis for effective government. One of the barriers to development is a general sense of responsibility confined to local or family groups.

6. Following the previous point, the complex developed economy calls for a series of attitudes and values conducive to cooperative effort, as much that is to be accomplished in such a society

is far beyond the capabilities of individuals working alone, or even in small groups. Perhaps this reaches the extreme in David Reisman's "other-directed personality", or in William H. Whyte's "the organization man", but something of this personality pattern is consistent with at least some parts of an economically-developed society.

7. People must possess the drives and appetites for goods and services which motivate productive effort. Economic development has gone along with "rising expectations."

IV. SUMMARY:

The above discussion is more illustrative than definitive, but some of the more important social and psychological factors which seem to functionally support economic development have been included. The important point is that economic development is a condition involving many factors, and that these are social and psychological as well as narrowly economic. And because all these factors are closely inter-related, economic development means some degree of social change. In fact, some social change may be necessary before changes in the economic area can be made at all.

All this involves problems which soon turn the sociologist into social philosopher. Many societies before starting down the road toward economic development, have held social systems and patterns of culture which were the products of many generations of social life. Their culture had often achieved a high degree of integration and internal consistency. Introducing modern technology has often broken this integration, and considerable time will be required before the various patterns of life settle into new, integrated, satisfy-

ing patterns of culture. In the meantime the members of these changing societies are subjected to many strains. Old ways of doing things no longer work; that which was familiar and predictable now appears capricious. New ways of doing things are still in experimental stages, and not always satisfying. This is easily seen in societies developing a middle class for the first time. The old social structure supplies no set of values or status symbols, or patterns of relationships for these middle level, socially mobile groups. These groups

are faced with the task of adopting and learning to live with a completely new pattern of social relationships, values, work activities, etc. There is much at stake in this process, for experience shows that economic development rests heavily on this element of the society. Some analysts point out that one of the great advantages which the United States enjoyed in its economic development process was the fact that it was essentially a middle class society from the beginning of its development period.

Some Notes on the Process of Economic Development

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Meaningful analysis of the process of economic development is made easier by differentiating *economic development* from *economic change*. Economic development, can be defined in terms of fundamental structural changes in both the means and the ends of purposeful economic activities in a society. Invariably, it involves changes in a society's incentive-reward mechanism, shifts in the bases and distribution of power in a community, and the emergence of new organizational forms for economic, social and political action. Economic change, on the other hand, can be defined to include superficial change that is largely the result of the passage of time. This limits the term to the constant change of individuals, goods or services, playing a role in a society and economy — changes that take place without a major impact on the basic structure of the society and economy. Economic development invariably involves change; econo-

mic change, however does not necessarily have any direct relationship to development within our definition of the terms.

Economic development is usually defined in terms and values that are external to cultures undergoing development. It is, therefore, essential to recognize that economic development, *per se*, does not necessarily cause increased happiness or an improvement in the general welfare as traditionally measured within a given society. As a matter of fact, both the means and the ends of economic development frequently appear irrational when judged in terms of values associated with many underdeveloped countries. Thus, the large scale manufacture of exercise machines in the Philippines by a labor force which must accept rigorous time and work discipline involves disvalues in the traditional cultural value matrix, despite the "added value" it might represent in a modern