

Straight Thinking

By MSGR. L. G. LIGUTTI

MONSIGNOR L. G. LIGUTTI of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, Iowa, speaking at the June rally in New York, said, "there is no panacea for human ills. We might as well quit looking for anything like that in this world." He believed only one thing is possible—an alleviation—a making lighter of the ills that are human by their very nature.

Referring to his belief in the doctrine of original sin and its consequences, or tendencies to evil, the speaker made clear that this does not sink humanity into a pit of hopelessness. By individual effort, and with the help of God, improvement is possible. It ought to be sought and directed.

While it is not possible to cure all human ills by any one formula, the Monsignor suggested that "we should try first of all to use the power of logic. There are certain premises and certain conclusions to be drawn from those premises," he said. "Certain causes will produce certain effects. Certain fundamental principles are to be stated over and over again. Almighty God, in creating the world, intended that the world should be used by all of mankind for the purpose of achieving the end for which man was created. Man has a right to have access to the goods of creation as well as the goods of redemption—to the natural and to the supernatural goods."

The Development of Man

Monsignor Ligutti said the main purpose behind access to the natural resources was the development of man's personality, carrying over into the development of the family and the development of society.

"Society has a right to what it earns." He emphasized this by repeating it.

Then came a warning. Not everything which is legal is thereby morally or socially right. Communist laws against freedom are laws. Nazi laws establishing genocide were laws. Sometimes things produced as a result of the work or contribution of society are taken over by individuals, just because the law permits it. That does not mean that the action is morally and socially right.

Referring to the recent Rural Life Congress in Colombia in which practically every Latin American country participated, the Monsignor told how only fundamental rights, not details, were discussed and acknowledged. Later in visiting other parts of South America he was reminded of the injustice of holding land just to "sit on it and wait until thousands of people pass by, and then sell it at a higher price. The man holding that land has done nothing to improve it and yet it is legal for him to take the profit that belongs to society."

The school's director was congratulated and termed "a real missionary." The school also was complimented for the great opportunity it gives. "But let's continue, in season and out

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of season, to preach fundamentals. Eventually the principles will be accepted. Later they will be implemented."

Father Ligutti's interest in Henry George dates back to his seminary days when a beloved teacher of Moral Theology, Father Charles Boone, S.S., at St. Mary's, Baltimore, explained and supported many of Henry George's tenets. Two books written by Catholic authors were named by the Monsignor in his address. He said he would like to see books of this type in libraries whether or not the doctrines of Henry George are questioned.

These are: *The Life of Cardinal Gibbons* by Dr. Tracy Ellis of the Catholic University of America; and *The Life of Archbishop Ireland*, by Monsignor Moynahan of St. Paul, Minnesota.