

Synopsis of "Evaluation of the Leadership Training Course for the Youth of Central America, Panama, and Dominican Republic of the Inter-American Center, Loyola University, New Orleans, Louisiana."

Under AID/Washington contract, some 500 Central Americans, Panamanians and Dominicans have participated in the past two-and-one-half years in a Loyola University sponsored series of leadership training seminars. The general objective of these seminars has been to create a corps of leaders dedicated to the proposition that progress in their respective countries should and can be achieved only through the active and maximal participation of the people in the tasks of development. The most outstanding characteristic of the Loyola Training Program is its unconventionality of approach. It attempts to inculcate trainees with a commitment consistent with modernity. It is a "political therapy" designed to cure the participants of the self-defeating values of a traditional society, for example, lack of self-confidence, distrust, dependence upon the "patron" system, fear of change, disavowal of responsibility, and oligarchic mentality, etc. Rather than attempting to train the participants in the techniques and skills of leadership, Loyola focuses upon this basic attitudinal change. Instead of lecturing about democratic leadership, it conditions individuals to voluntarily seek and accept leadership responsibility with all that it entails in a developing democratic society. The Loyola premise is that the techniques employed by a leader not only depend on but grow out of his conception of his role as a leader. Loyola attempts to mold this conception by removing the ascriptive, particularistic, non-innovative, traditional values and substituting values of self-confidence, that is, confidence in oneself to change one's environment and life-style in a

progressive fashion. Loyola is a "how to be," not a "how to do it" course. During the six weeks, Loyola proceeds by involving the participants in an expedition of self-discovery; it challenges them intellectually and emotionally to assert themselves and find their own solutions. In this process, it builds self-confidence in the participants-- a sine qua non of qualities for all change agents in order that they become innovating and resolute entrepreneurs of political development.

Description

The Inter-American Center (IAC), a division of the Institute of Human Relations of Loyola University, New Orleans, began its training of Central American, Panamanian, and Dominican participants in October, 1964. Since that time, 18 six-week seminars for 500 participants have been conducted. The training is conducted and supervised by the staff of the IAC, by 25-30 professors and experts from five New Orleans based universities and governmental and private agencies, and qualified personnel from the National Training Laboratories (a division of the National Education Association which provides the services of Puerto Rican trainers to Loyola through a subcontract.)

The course is comprised of three distinct portions. The academic part provides the substantive instruction through lectures, seminars, and group discussion. It involves the participants in problem solving and decision-making in the framework of institutional change, increasing their capacity to analyze and evaluate ideologies, political problems and development trends. The instruction stresses the value of the participative leader in the modernization process and emphasizes the role of institutions

and group consensus in the decision-making process. The second part of the program is the NTL training in sensitivity and group dynamics. The participants study human relations and group interaction in order to develop skills for identifying and manipulating the forces of change and also to improve their individual and collective awareness of their own abilities. The third aspect of the training program consists of 5 days of field trips, including visits to educational institutions, urban renewal programs, agricultural development projects and meetings with political, civil rights and student leaders. This part of the program also involves some sightseeing and invitations to American families.

Salient Advantages

If there is one particular secret in Loyola's success, it is its originality of approach which has dispensed with the paralyzing effects of fashionable assumptions. Loyola does not assume that the desire for change is universally shared or that leadership training necessary for change is simply a matter of technical know-how and instruction. The program does not disclaim that its participants are already imbued with a commitment to progress, but neither does it take this for granted. For its purpose is not to make Latin Americans accept the need for an urgency of change or to reinforce their awareness of it, but rather to involve them personally in the idea and its process. It conditions people in how to be responsible members of society. Thus, the most outstanding characteristic of the Loyola program is the original nature

of its objective--it is an attempt to channel the participants' attitudes toward the environment in a manner consistent with progress through the popular participation of the people.

Certain operation problems in the field

Several problems exist which limit the usefulness of the Loyola program. For example, Loyola complies with Title IX in its design, but only conditionally in its actual performance. In its design, the Loyola projects concentrates upon upgrading the quality of human resources by focusing on leadership, not on leadership training for its own sake, but on leadership development for eliciting popular participation. That is, it is a bona fide training for the type of development Title IX envisions. However, the lack of integration of the Loyola project, itself, with the programs at the mission level has been, up to now, its greatest weakness. Of all the missions visited or which have responded to date to the Title IX inquiry, only USAID Guatemala has fully integrated the Loyola training with one of its priority programs, rural development. It is not that there is no AID-connected follow-up work on the part of the returnees, but rather that the follow-up work is coincidental; it is an ad hoc integration, not the result of deliberate choice. This lack of integration is due to several factors, one of which is the defective administration in the selection of the trainees. In three of the four countries visited, the Loyola program is the responsibility of the training officers, who are not familiar with the political development design and content of the Loyola course. Further, the training officers select the trainees on the basis of personal qualifications alone without considering the particular program needs of USAID. Since the

selection is not done in view of such considerations, it is left to chance whether there will or will not be a follow-up. In regard to the problem of using the ex-participants to serve USAID needs, a Loyola follow-up program does exist primarily because of the lack of built-in follow-up programs in USAID. This program financed by American business interests (United Fruit Company, Standard Fruit Company, etc.) provides a "minigrant" to service the immediate and justified needs of the ex-participants.