

**THE IMPACT OF TOURISM: ITS CHALLENGE
TO THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN ASIA**

- I. Tourism as a Religious Issue, by Desmond de Sousa, C.Ss.R.
- II. Humanity on Pilgrimage
- III. The Impact of Tourism: Final Reflections of the Joint Ecumenical Workshop
- IV. A Vision for the Future, by Ron O'Grady

I. TOURISM AS A RELIGIOUS ISSUE*

by

Desmond de Sousa, C.Ss.R.

After a lapse of five years, I spent Christmas 1987 at home in Goa. Standing on the hill overlooking a part of Goa's 104 km.-coastline, I watched the broad, silver-sanded beach washed by the Arabian Sea.

A few mechanized trawlers were ploughing the ocean bed in search of shrimps for export. On the beach, the boats of the traditional fishermen lay idle. Ten years earlier, I had joined the militant stir of the 80,000 traditional fishermen along Goa's coastline to prevent trawlers from encroaching within 5 kilometers of the shore which was reserved for traditional fishing. I had explained to the Archbishop and the priests of Goa that according to Catholic teaching from the 1971 Synod of Bishops on Justice in the World, "action on behalf of justice ... is constitutive to the preaching of the Gospel."

Now ten years later, a new social problem has arisen: mass tourism in general and Five Star tourism in particular. To my right below me was the sprawling Fort Aguada Five Star hotel. Like a creeping, crawling octopus, it had spread its tentacles over the last ten years. The hotel had added a Hermitage and an imitation Village. The local people had stopped the construction of a golf course for the Commonwealth heads of State before they arrived for their weekend relaxation after their meeting in Delhi.

How was I to convince the forthcoming meeting of priests in one month that the Church should now support the people's struggle against

* This paper in an abridged form was presented at the Redemptorists' Justice and Peace Consultation in Goa, India, February 1-10, 1989.

Five Star tourism? The insight came in a flash — “because tourism is a religious issue.”

From February 1-10, 1989, a group of eleven Redemptorist priests representing their Provinces — Philippines, Malaysia-Singapore, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India — of the Asia region where Redemptorists are working, gathered at the Jesuit Retreat House, Baga, Goa. They were joined by a Redemptorist priest from Holland, six religious sisters and six lay men and women activists involved in tourism and other justice issues in their reflection on the theme “tourism as a religious issue.” The consultation was organized by me as the Redemptorist coordinator of Justice and Peace for the Asia-Oceania region, on behalf of the Justice and Peace Secretariat of the Redemptorist Generalate in Rome.

I. “THICK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY”

The orientation of the whole consultation was summed up in the phrase, “Think globally, act locally.” Communities of Redemptorists are constituted into different provinces scattered in countries of the Asia-Oceania region — India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Japan, Australia, New Zealand. These communities have to act locally. But the Redemptorist Congregation is a transnational organization like the Catholic Church, with its general government in Rome. There are communities of Redemptorists in Latin America, North America, Canada, Europe, Africa. Like so many cells, Redemptorist communities form one global organism that sustains each other in their religious life. The Redemptorist Congregation forms a global community in a globally interdependent world.

So while Redemptorists act locally in Goa on the negative effects of tourism, they are conscious that tourists come from all over the world where Redemptorist communities exist. As the Redemptorist Justice and Peace coordinator for the Canada region, Fr. Paul Hansen, wrote in his greetings to the consultation: “We North Americans know well, at least those of us in Justice and Peace work, the effects of tourism on so-called Third World countries. Our people think it is their right and privilege to spend two or three weeks in the ‘sun,’ taking advantage of your geographical and cultural beauty, not realizing the destruction that often ensues. We North American church people are just beginning to understand the ramifications of tourism on local populations, elites and government economic planning. We are doing our best to listen to your voices and bring the message to our people here in Canada and North America.”

II. THE REFLECTION PROCESS OF THE CONSULTATION

The consultation took place in four interconnected phases: A. Exposure-immersion, B. Social analysis, C. Theological reflection, and D. Pastoral planning.

A. Exposure-Immersion

The participants of the consultation divided into five groups and spread out to five different villages along the whole coastline of Bardez taluka (province) in which the Redemptorist house (community) is situated. The groups spent four full days in the area in an exposure-immersion experience of how tourism actually operates in each of the areas. Each area presented a somewhat different profile of tourism. The group in Sinquerim village at one end of the coast was faced with the predominance of Five Star tourism (luxury tourism). Calangute village had a predominance of domestic tourism. The Baga village group faced a situation of the backpack, often called "hippie" tourists, side by side with growing luxury tourism of the Two or Three Star kind. Anjuna village is totally dominated by "hippie" tourists living in local people's houses. Vagator-Chapora are two villages at the opposite end of the coastline from Sinquerim. They are totally dominated by hippie tourism, but the first luxury tourist hotel, called the Vagator Beach Resort, has just opened.

The Goa Diocesan Pastoral Council subcommittee on tourism has already produced a devastating report on the negative effects of tourism in terms of ecological destruction, and the socio-cultural and moral erosion of religious values, particularly among the youth.

Our participants, during their exposure-immersion experience, were asked to look at the effects of tourism on the poor of society. What is the impact of mass tourism as it actually operates from the perspective of the victims of society?

B. Social Analysis

The five group reports, depicting in drawings the situation in the five villages, were hung up side by side, to get a picture of what the participants saw. A pattern of tourism development along the coastline of Bardez taluka and its impact, from the perspective of the victims of society, began to emerge.

There are basically three categories of tourists and therefore three types of tourism that we are dealing with.

(1) The domestic tourists. These are Indians who come from outside Goa. They constitute the vast majority — nearly 85% — of the tourists in Goa. But since they come for only a short sight-seeing trip of 1-4 days, their financial contribution to tourism development is minimal. Except for a few Goan middle-class tourists, who live in the tourist hostel accommodation provided on Calangute beach, the vast majority of domestic tourists come in bus loads to Goa out of curiosity about the nude, white women sprawled out on the beaches. This is the way Goa is presented to the rest of India.

(2) The foreign backpack tourists, often referred to as “hippies.” They consist mainly of working-class Europeans — predominantly Germans, Scandinavians, Italians and English — who look for a cheap holiday to “freak out” on drugs, nudity and free sex. They are no longer the flower children of the early 70s protesting against the Vietnam War and the rat race of capitalist society from which they deliberately dropped out. The present breed of hippies are mainly lower-class Europeans whose decadent life-style can have uninhibited reign in Goa rather than in Europe, because of the foreign money they bring. They mix freely with the lower class of the villagers — renting cheap accommodation in their houses, institutionalizing their ‘hippie’ subculture in the Flea Market and the night parties.

We visited these two institutions of the hippies. This is where they congregate, get to know one another, establish their drug contracts and supplies. They exhibit their life-style by smoking marijuana, initiating new arrivals to LSD, heroin and free sex. This life-style of the hippies has the most devastating influence on the youth of the area. The lower class of the local people in particular receive obvious economic gains, but the social costs in terms of socio-cultural impact, erosion of moral values and gradual loss of political power to determine their own lives, are prohibitive. When an irate, local citizens’ protest to the Flea Market brought strict police control over the proceedings, a riot ensued and the Flea Market stopped. But the foreigners were able to organize a group of local citizens who financially profit by the Flea Market to pressure the government to issue a no objection notice to the Flea Market and have the police back off to a safe distance.

It is these European hippie tourists that constitute the bulk of the foreign tourists. They provide direct financial profit to the poor class while they undermine the moral fabric of local society and, in collusion with the poor class, have a political clout with the government much more than due their numbers. Some of them have lived without visas and passports for years, made Goa a haven for international drug traffickers and flaunt the laws of the land and cultural norms of behavior with im-

punity, because of the political patronage their money power can buy.

(3) The luxury tourists. They are a tiny minority who are the market that the Goa Tourist Master Plan is geared to. These are rich tourists who come on package tours and charter flights — at present from Germany and England. They live cocooned in the Three or Five Star luxury hotels in splendid isolation from the local people whose scarce land, water, food and electricity resources they monopolize. This is the tourism model of development contrary to industrialization, that is trumpeted by the World Tourism Organization, transnational hotel chains, international airlines and tour operators in collusion with pliant local government officials and rapacious, local business elites. This is the sort of tourism development model that is supposed to bring valuable foreign exchange into the Third World, provide jobs for local youth, while being a “home away from home” for the foreign tourists. Who profits from the foreign exchange earnings? Certainly not the local people! What jobs are available to the local people? How secure are the jobs, given the limited period of the year the foreign tourists come to Goa? Ultimately, who determines the agenda for tourism development? The foreign tourists who demand all the services and amenities they have at home, at the expense of the local people’s needs? Or the local people whose scarce resources are monopolized, whose cultural heritage is eroded with impunity, and whose lives have been severely disrupted? In such cases, the frustration and desperation of the people who are “victims” of tourism development erupt in blind violence. Such incidents have already occurred around the monopolization of water and public beach by luxury hotels.

Impact

What is the impact of these three categories of tourists and tourism development on the local people in Goa?

(1) The massive influx of domestic tourists, often in bus loads from North and South India, has created deep resentment among local people, sometimes leading to sporadic violence. The lodging and toilet facilities for these domestic tourists, who come on a shoestring budget, are woefully inadequate. The tourism development authority is totally unconcerned about adequate facilities for the development of domestic tourism.

(2) The impact of backpack, “hippie” tourism, has undoubtedly profited the poor class of people in the villages financially. But the impact of their decadent Western life-style on the local people, particularly the youth, has been disastrous. The Catholic youth, both through Westernized educational institutions and Church services, are highly susceptible

to Western influence and slavish imitation of Western life-styles.

The rapid increase in money to the poorer class in the villages of Anjuna, Vagator, Chapora, has hastened the political polarization between the rich and poor classes in the village for political power. The well-off class are almost totally Catholics who have ancestral wealth or Gulf money, as they have worked in the Middle East. The poorer class who have worked as tenants on the land, masons, construction workers, etc. are mostly Hindus. The lower-class Catholics were usually small liquor-bar owners. The men of both these groups of the lower class are rapidly making money on renting motorcycles, driving taxis, etc. While their women are making money from hippies by washing clothes, selling fruit and vegetables, etc. The accelerating class conflict between the richer middle class and poorer working class is appearing as a religious conflict between Catholics and Hindus for political power. But within the Church, the richer-class Catholics who have held power in the Church are being challenged by the poorer-class Catholics who are rapidly making money. The class conflict within society is becoming evident within the Church itself and Catholic educational institutions. Often enough the priests are unable to comprehend or to cope with the sharpening of this class conflict.

(3) The most dangerous and insidious effects of tourism development are coming from the local Three Star and transnational Five Star tourism that is in the main thrust of the Goan government's Tourism Development Plan. Their complete monopoly of all the resources, both natural and human, in collusion with the local political elites, will reduce everyone else to becoming cogs in the tourism wheel. The cutthroat competition between them for the luxury tourist market will force them to offer more enticing perks — usually male, women and child prostitution — to attract the foreign tourists. The reports from our confreres in the Philippines and Sri Lanka, and the video film "Foreign Bodies" on Thailand, make this trend amply clear. The Catholic Church, whose adherents are the vast majority of the local inhabitants of this whole area of the Bardez coastline, is woefully oblivious and totally unprepared to face this rapidly emerging trend that could undermine all religious values and erode the foundation of faith. In fact, a few priests in the area have themselves entered into the tourism industry by catering to backpack tourists. Despite the Archbishop of Goa's admonition against luxury tourism, and specifically against Five Star tourism, a few local priests have been duped into supporting Five Star hotels because of financial gifts to the churches and sponsorship of Church functions. Once again the famous phrase of Jesuit theologian Fr. Bernard Lonergan will be apt, "The Church arrives on the scene a little late and breathless."

This social analysis is neither comprehensive nor final. It is the beginning of an ongoing process of observation and reflection. It presents a partial framework that enables commitment to action.

But how does this reality challenge our faith as religious people? This question initiated the next stage of theological reflection.

Theological Reflection*

Tourism as a religious issue can be understood in different ways. One way is to view modern tourism within the context of leisure, recreation, hedonism and consumerism that often leads to the absence of God from the tourists' life. This view is inadequate.

A more adequate view of tourism as a religious issue involves folklore and religious mythology and symbols like "road, travel, journey, pilgrimage." One of the most fascinating themes in folklore all over the world is the story of the hero, usually a young prince, who needs to travel for a few years, either to avoid boredom or to search for a wife. On the journey he meets all kinds of people, experiences all kinds of joys and sorrows, until he finally discovers a learned *rishi* (holy man) and becomes his disciple. There he learns the religious wisdom necessary to govern a country. So he returns home, maybe with a foreign bride, to govern the country with wisdom and moral rectitude.

Another version is the Hermann Hesse's classic *Siddhartha*. The motive for travel is to search for something of eternal value in this transitory world.

Enlightenment, the discovery of Absolute Truth, is the ultimate liberating discovery. Such a journey of search or discovery is called pilgrimage. The Bible is replete with such stories. By itself, the Bible is the account of the Jewish people's journey of discovery of their God. It was on their journey that they discovered that Yahweh, their God, was unique. He was not restricted to a particular shrine or temple, a mountain or a holy place. Yahweh was a God who traveled with his people as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Jesus was a man on the move. He was born on a journey. His whole life was characterized by travel to meet all types of people, to heal them, teach them, bless them. In fact, the framework of St. John's Gospel is that Jesus' life was a journey from his opening ministry in Judea to his death in Jerusalem. It is understandable why the Christian life is depicted as a journey, especially in the last chapter

* This part of the original paper has been expanded.

of St. Luke's Gospel, of the two disciples meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus. The Church is called a "pilgrim Church."

Motivation to Travel

Even today, there is one category of foreign tourists who come to India in search of religious wisdom and spiritual enrichment. The content of what many receive leaves much to be desired but the nature of the journey is a kind of pilgrimage.

The vast majority of tourists from the First World, however, come to Third World countries for recreation and holiday, attracted by the three S's — sea, sun, and sand. Survey shows they are also curious about places described as "lost paradise," "exotic," "excitingly primitive heaven," — so written about, to "let themselves go."

Interest in the culture, religion, history and life of local people is not high on the list of tourists' motives for travel. Yet it is precisely this aspect that makes tourism a religious issue. For just as the road is a symbol of religious discovery, to travel a new road is to expose oneself to the unexpected, the unknown, the mysterious. On the road we have the opportunity to discover the human face of God and his wonderful works in the people and cultures of the host countries.

Modern Tourism as Perversion

Yet the way modern tourism is organized insulates the traveler from the host, serving as an obstacle in meeting God in each other. In fact, tourists are encouraged to take a holiday from God. Furthermore, as one of the largest global industries, challenging the manufacture of armaments for the number one spot, the present form of tourism has an increasingly negative impact on individuals, communities, societies and Church.

It has been well stated by Japanese professor Kosuke Koyama. "Modern tourism is not a pilgrimage. The pilgrim treads sensitively on the holy ground, the pilgrim travels with humility and patience; the tourist with arrogance and haste."

In short, modern tourism as it exists today has reached a dangerous degree of perversion of the true meaning of travel, let alone pilgrimage. It has become the growth of widespread travel solely for pleasure by relatively rich people to the land of predominantly poor people. The inherent hedonism of such travel in countries where poverty is rampant makes a mockery of the poor and is an insult to God. The Rev. Peter Holden, an

authority on tourism, views "modern tourism as a new and perverted religion, with its own system of beliefs, code of behavior, accepted ritual and symbol, and a professional priesthood."

In a penetrating analysis at the Stockholm Conference on Tourism, Bernardo Avalos of Mexico said that leisure encompasses rest and free time and as such contains two dimensions: "compensatory" and "emancipatory" interests and needs which are inherently somewhat self-contradictory. To be authentic, a person needs to juxtapose these two interests and needs. But modern tourism, like industrial planning, has exploited the compensatory needs of the entire population at the expense of the emancipatory needs. Pilgrimage and the discovery of truth as a source of emancipation can help "salvage" modern tourism.

The Vatican Commission on Tourism reinforces this analysis. "Tourism has become a mass of polyvalent phenomena which the mechanism of the recreation industry tries to convert, once again, into a consumer product. It occupies a very important place in the sale of priorities of modern man, but is viewed by its promoter chiefly as an economic reality; a view that does not give sufficient importance to the deep underlying human values."

Pope John Paul II warned the Spanish bishops, on 26th June 1982, that "tourism can also be depersonalizing, a source of hedonism or exaggerated consumerism, the occasion of economic abuses at the expense of the tourist, exploitation of those employed in the various services offered by tourism."

The Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT)

Modern tourism is not some impersonal system that does negative things to people. TOURISM IS PEOPLE. Tourism is peoples' travel organized by people for the benefit of people. Just as economics is people organized into interrelationships around money and authority, tourism is people interrelating with people around organized travel. This raises some crucial questions that make tourism a religious issue, as much as economic or politics do. The quality of human relationships is a religious issue.

Thus, we ask: First, what is the type or quality of the interrelationships? Second, who organizes the system of interrelationships, and for what purpose? Who are the genuine beneficiaries of this system of organized relationships and who are the victims? We ask the same basic questions around human development which includes economic, political and cultural development. Ultimately, who profits and at whose expense?

Just as the Churches — both Catholic and Protestant — have involved themselves deeply in human development as a human issue and therefore as a religious issue, so also the Catholic and Protestant Churches have involved themselves in tourism as religious issue. What the American bishops said in their recent pastoral letter on “Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy” (Nov. 1986) sums up the stance of the Churches on every social issue whether economics or tourism: “All human beings are ends to be served by the institutions that make up the economy, not means to be exploited for more narrowly defined goals ... Whenever our economic arrangements fail to conform to the demands of human dignity lived in community, they must be questioned and transformed” (Ch. 2. 170).

The Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT) is a response of the Churches to the Third World Tourism. In 1974, in Penang, a group of Asians recognizing the dilemma of tourism tried to identify the positive and negative aspects of tourism in Asia. In 1980, the International Workshop on Third World Tourism, held in Manila, articulated the strong condemnation of tourism and asked whether tourism can be salvaged at all.

The ECTWT was formed mid-1981. Its founding members include the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) and the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC). Later on, the Council of Churches in Latin American (CLAI) and the All-African Conference of Churches (AACC), the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) and the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC) also joined as full members.

In 1984, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, discussions shifted to a more positive approach and there was a talk of alternative tourism. In 1986, in Bad Boll, Germany, some “still have a dilemma” (as in Penang), “still have to expose injustice” (as in Manila), still have to create new forms of appropriate tourism (as in Chiang Mai). But the real question at Bad Boll was: “Is the new vision of tourism emerging?”

Perhaps the best statement that sums up the vision of the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism was expressed in the first issue of its magazine *Contours* (Nov. 1982): “For several years now, Churches and other groups throughout the Third World have become increasingly aware of the profound effects of tourism on their economy, culture and life-style. Recent conferences have indicated urgency of united action if the negative consequences of tourism are to be turned into opportunities for people's development.”

The Negative Consequences of Modern Tourism

The ECTWT-sponsored meeting in Bad Boll, Germany, on Third World People and Tourism in March 1986, was significant in terms of its perspective and aims. It adopted a Third World perspective. Its aim was to create a forum and to stimulate action that would allow maximum participation in the creation of a more beneficial tourism. Its major objectives were: (1) to hear at first hand the voices of representative "victims" of Third World tourism speak about their experiences related to access to land and water, loss of cultural identity, racial and cultural genocide, prostitution tourism, working conditions, ethnic discrimination and life-style changes; (2) to enable an unambiguous public exposure of the effects of tourism of Third World people; and (3) to create a dialogue between some of the victims of Third World Tourism and some of those who have power to move towards a tourism that may be beneficial to all.

Insights from some of the participants highlight the negative aspects of tourism. A Filipino bartender who started a union of hotel workers, says, "Since hotels cannot reduce the cost of maintenance to be able to be very competitive, they resort instead to keeping the workers' wages at the minimum starvation level." The present minimum wage per day of US\$3.05 is very much below the poverty rate for a family of six which is \$6 per day. He also says: "With the increase of the number of resorts, the native inhabitants of the land suddenly lose their right to share from the bountiful sea, automatically they are deprived of what used to be the source of livelihood ... The tendency is for those families to migrate to the cities, only to end up as unemployed, living in the slum area." Further, although publicized as a money-earner of foreign exchange, tourism is actually a money-drainer. Much needed funds for basic needs of local people are diverted to activities that cater to foreign tourists. On top of this, the whole tourism industry is in the hands of foreign transnational cartels — Western International Hotels, Intercon International, Japan Airlines, All Nippon Airways, Hyatt International, Holiday Inn International and many others. These corporations, in connivance with local big business, corner local funds for tourism infrastructural development, like roads, travel facilities, etc. They not only divert much-needed funds away from the priority of local peoples' needs, but also drive out small business and local tourist enterprises.

Tourism also demands that workers possess a servile attitude towards tourists. No matter how uncouth the foreign tourist or how coarse their behavior, the rule is "the customer is always right." The life-styles of foreign tourists are looked up to and imitated. Women are used as "tourist attractions," and now even children. The tourism industry promotes prostitution; pedophilia has risen at an alarming rate. He con-

concluded: "The tourist industry being an exploitative undertaking is only reflective of the whole Philippines economic set up, characterized by import dependency and foreign domination."

Experts at the meeting agreed with the testimonies. One of them stated: "It is important to note right from the beginning that the initiatives in tourism come from the North. The North continually defines and reshapes the industry. The South plays very much the role of receiver and reactor. If this is the case, who are the real beneficiaries of the tourist industry?"

Governments who support tourism as a development strategy claim it will increase foreign exchange earnings, generate much needed employment, and reduce the problem of poverty.

Fr. Derick Mendis, a Jesuit economist working in a fishing village in Sri Lanka, presents an opposing view. In a research paper on the economic, social and cultural impact of tourism in Sri Lanka, he contradicted what government presented. *Contours* describes Fr. Mendis' paper: "The economic analysis is well-documented and explodes the myth that tourism earns foreign exchange for poor countries and provides employment for many people. Fr. Mendis looked at the economic impact and also showed great concern for the cultural, religious and physical environment of Sri Lanka. He concludes that possibly the most serious charge that can be laid against tourism development over the last decade or so is not that many countries are selling their birthright, but that they are doing so for a mess of very inferior pottage."

Another participant reinforced Fr. Derick Mendis' thesis that modern tourism does not produce development in the economy in a Third World country, but rather the opposite to development. In a masterly analysis, he pointed out that an economic, social or cultural system is generally a coherent system. It is a group of structures and each system is based on three fundamental structures — the primary sector agriculture; the secondary sector, industry; and the tertiary sector, services. In a developed country the three sectors work quite well. So a hotel in a developed country sets off a positive social and economic dynamic. By contrast the same hotel in an underdeveloped country, where the sectors are not coherent with one another, will only further disrupt the sectors, leading to scarcities of foodstuffs, inflation and greater underdevelopment through international debt.

In the talk on prostitution tourism in the Philippines, the speaker divides the culprits into five groups:

- (1) the government and its agencies which promote, regulate, maintain, and by graft and corruption, protect prostitution-tourism and the entities that profit from it for the sake of earning foreign exchange.
- (2) the aid and lending institutions that protect the multinational and free world interests of market prerogatives, raw material supply and territorial rights for military bases, which continue to keep a stranglehold on Third World economics and politics, determining the thrust and projects of "development" that actually hamper progress and industrialization.
- (3) the companies and agencies of the tourist industry, such as airlines, hotels, advertising and travel agencies, whose profits come from the wider attractions offered by prostitution-tourism, and whose outright complicity in many cases cannot be taken as mere exceptions.
- (4) the local and foreign brothel and bar owners and pimps, who organize the traffic of persons for prostitution-tourism and directly exploit and live off the earning of prostitutes.
- (5) the men, most of whom flock to take exotic and even perverse "pleasures," without recognition that these pleasures degrade and debase other human beings.

The speaker from the Dominican Republic raised the issue of the international traffic in women: "Analyzing this problem demands a global perspective. International traffic in women originates from a conception which is very racist and imperialistic."

There is the myth of the sexual power of the Caribbean women who are made available to males from the First World who can afford to buy tickets to the "paradise of the homosexuals and the prostitutes," as one North American travel agency has recently named the Dominican Republic. This offers the possibility of cheaper sexual pleasures to the men. The women who are sold abroad are mostly from the lowest social classes. Their economic status makes them most vulnerable.

However, prostitution for tourists in the Dominican Republic also comes in the majority of cases from the middle classes of society, who feel obliged to meet social expectations which they could not fulfill by other means. "A combination of the pressure exercised by consumerism and the impossibility of satisfying the needs it suggests can explain the arising of the different forms of prostitution serving tourists."

Two negative aspects of modern tourism that also need to be highlighted because they are little realized are: (1) the prostitution of culture; (2) the ecologically destructive aspects of tourism.

Prostitution of Culture

This destructive aspect of tourism was emphasized by the Filipino and the Hawaiian "victims."

"Just to attract and entertain tourists, sacred practices of our cultural minorities are desecrated. This in effect robs what is supposed to be the sovereign right of our people to gain control of their survival and their own affairs" (Filipino victim).

The Hawaiian "victim" was more specific. "Cultural prostitution is stupid, ignorant people saying 'Aloha, mahalo.' It is people taking your language and making it into something to make money. ... I went to a hotel because I was giving a speech against tourism on the island of Kanai. Among the 600 people present I was the only one with dark skin. The waitress asked, 'Are you Hawaiian?' That is what cultural prostitution is. It makes you alienated in your mind. You sit there and think something is wrong. Cultural prostitution is when the local culture is commercialized, sacred places and holy shrines are desecrated by insensitive tourists, when local dance and customs are uprooted from their normal milieu and staged like a circus performance for foreign tourists."

Ecological Destruction

The participant from India said about 2.5 million domestic tourists visit Delhi every year. "About 30% have to live on railway stations, under trees and in the open air. We can see the stress of all this extra pressure on the environment, on the condition of the Yamuna river, which has largely become a sewer. The chopping of trees, the destruction of sand dunes to make room for monstrous hotels not only destroy the aesthetic beauty, but also disrupts the ecological balance producing unimaginable damage to the delicate ecosystems. The much needed infrastructure of roads, electricity, water supply are strained to the limit as they are usually diverted to hotels for foreign tourists at the expense of the needs of local people."

Conclusion

The negative effects of tourism grow like an insidious cancer that is soon out of control. The government and the business sectors who profit from mass tourism are lax in controlling the negative effects and are

lethargic in reorienting mass tourism towards a positive direction. The victims of "tourism development" are the majority of the local people who begin to realize the full impact of the negative effects when it is too late to save the socio-cultural, the moral and the economic fabric of society.

These negative effects of tourism are admirably summed up by Malaysian poet Cecil Rajendra, a participant:

When the Tourist Flew in

The Finance Minister said

"It will boost the economy
the dollars will flow in."

The Minister of Interior said

"It will provide full
and varied employment
for the indigents.

The Ministry of Culture said

"It will enrich our lives ...
contact with other cultures
most surely improve
the texture of living."

The man from the Hilton said

"We will make you
a second paradise;
for you, it is the dawn
of a glorious new beginning!"

When the tourist flew in
our island people
metamorphosed into
a grotesque carnival
— a two-week sideshow.

When the tourist flew in
our men put aside
their fishing nets
to become waiters
Our women became whores.

When the tourist flew in
what culture we had
flew out of the window;
we traded our customs
for sunglasses and pop;
we turned sacred ceremonies
into ten-cent peep shows.

When the tourist flew in

local food became scarce
prices went up
but our wages stayed low.

When the tourist flew in

we could no longer
go down to our beaches;
the hotel manager said.
"Natives defile the seashore."

When the tourist flew in
the hunger and the squalor
were preserved

as a passing pageant
for clicking cameras
— a chic eyesore!

When the tourist flew in
we were asked

to be "sidewalk ambassadors"
to stay smiling and polite
to always guide the lost visitor.
Hell, if we could only tell them
where we really want them to go!

D. PASTORAL PLANNING

The presence of our involved lay participants challenged us as priests to move from our prevalent Church-institution approach to serving people towards an approach of actually accompanying these people in their struggle for justice.

Faced with the obvious manifestations of human selfishness and the flaunting of wealth at global, national and local levels, which is as disconcerting as it is scandalous (SRS, 31.7), we felt the Lord question us (Mt 25:31-46) about our preaching the word of God to the people without first committing ourselves in solidarity with the struggle of the people for justice and dignity.

Furthermore, given the global dimensions of social issues like mass tourism, we felt challenged as a global Congregation to listen attentively to the cry of the poor, to be called by them to enter their struggle and to hear the Good News from them that victory is possible.

(1) Each participant decided to make tourism as a religious issue, a topic for organized study by the Justice and Peace Commission of his/her Province as well as in their seminary formation. The global-local linkages and possible solidarity actions should be studied in depth.

(2) The Justice and Peace Secretariate of the Generalate in Rome, through their regional representatives, should facilitate Redemptorists from First World countries coming to Third World countries to experience the impact of tourists from their own countries — particularly, Europe, North America, Japan and Australia — on Third World countries. Thus they can raise these issues in their own countries and be in solidarity at global level with the struggles of the victims of tourism at local level.

(3) There should be continual interchange of information regarding how the Third World countries are advertised in the First World. Protests, delegations, representations should be organized against lascivious and provocative tourism promotion in the First World, and lewd, wanton behaviors of First World tourists in the Third World.

Tourism as a religious issue provoked in us many spiritual insights to sustain our involvement. Throughout history, in Jesus Christ, God acts on the side of the oppressed. For when the God-given uniqueness of created human beings is crushed under the unjust structure of mass tourism God's creation is desecrated. The cry of the poor assuredly reaches God who we believe will one day "cast down the mighty from

their thrones and raise up the poor and lowly" (Lk 1:46-56). Just as Pharaoh could not see God's intervention in the liberation struggle of the Israelites, we too may lack the faith to see God at work in the struggles of the victims of mass tourism for freedom, respect and human dignity. But their struggle for a more human system of organized relationships makes them God's pre-eminent instruments for accomplishing the Kingdom.

II. HUMANITY ON PILGRIMAGE*

A Biblical-Theological Foundation

Humanity was created in God's image. The Creator made them, male and female, to live in equality and partnership, complementing each other in a life of community, sharing and solidarity. God endowed them with freedom to love and decide. With intrinsic dignity and worth, they are to be God's partners in a continuing process of Creation.

The Gift of Creation

The process of created reality which God saw as good was entrusted to humanity to be governed responsibly, nurtured carefully, and loved gratefully. People and the rest of creation are not meant to be exploited nor destroyed. Rather, the created world and its resources are God-given gifts to the whole human family for their sustenance, and are not to be expropriated by the privileged for their own benefit. They are meant to be shared in the community.

In the story of Creation, we see a harmonious relationship existing between man and woman, humankind and God, humankind and nature. But these harmonious relationships were broken and the reflection of God's image tarnished because of sin. This sin is born of humankind's pride, greed and disobedience. The element of sin, found in every sphere of human activity, also manifests itself in diverse forms in the realm of modern tourism.

Pilgrimage and Discovery

But created in God's image, human beings are bound to seek God. In search of God and God's Kingdom, all humankind is on a pilgrimage. Such a pilgrimage — searching for the ultimate truth — is an essential experience, common to all religious traditions. As a matter of fact, history

* The text which follows is the statement of the Asian Workshop on "Theology of Tourism," held at Khonkaen, Thailand: December, 1985.

has shown that it was such a yearning, such a pilgrimage, that led to epoch-making spiritual discoveries.

But modern tourism has lost this element of pilgrimage. Instead, the flow of pleasure-seeking tourists from the industrialized countries to the Third World countries has brought pernicious effects. In our own Asian experience, mass tourism, which purports to benefit and develop Third World people, has, on the contrary, prostituted people, especially women and children, trivialized cultures, despoiled environments and distorted human values.

Sin in Modern Tourism

Together with other types of relationships between the Third World and the rest of the world, tourism depends upon imperialist and racist structures and stereotyped images for its commercial success. And further, Third World tourism serves to perpetuate and strengthen such structures and images, thus denying full humaneness and participation to the people of the Third World. All this is part of the reality of sin.

The reality of sin today permeates every sphere of human activity and is embodied in various structures of society — economic, social, political and religious. The exploitative nature of tourism in the Third World countries is but a reflection of the structures of domination operating at various levels — national and international. The rich and powerful of the world exploit the poor nations, and the elite of these poor nations in their turn exploit the poor and powerless of their own countries. Women and children are the most vulnerable in this chain of exploitation.

Against the Will of God

This chain of exploitation results in the enslavement and injustice which goes against the will of God who calls humankind to freedom and life in its fullness. The God who intervenes when the poor are affected will not turn a deaf ear to the cry of the victims of today's tourism industry — those rendered homeless through eviction, the underpaid employees, the prostitutes who are forced to sell their bodies to survive in the ocean of misery and deprivation, etc.

Such degrading and dehumanizing conditions beckon us to resolve commitment and persistent involvement in the work of liberation. For such is the level of importance and urgency of the issue of Third World tourism. And in this task of liberation, we are inspired by the example of Jesus, who by his words and action denounces injustice and announces the Reign of God.

The values of the Reign of God — justice, peace, wholeness, freedom, truth, participation, love, dignity and community — which are to be found in all religions — provide us with the criteria to assess human realities. They not only demand our own conversion but also challenge us to transform existing structures, customs and perceptions. These values are already present in seminal form. We need to help them grow so that we can be co-creators with God in building the Kingdom on earth. In order to establish it, we also need to search for new frontiers beyond the Judaic-Christian traditions, as God is also present and active in other religions and cultures.

Liberation: Self-Respect and Equality

Within Asia's religio-cultural heritage, there are negative and oppressive elements which need to be identified and denounced. At the same time, there are also positive and liberating elements which need to be rediscovered and appreciated, so that we may regain our self-identity and rootedness and thus withstand the onslaught of patriarchal and imperialistic structures which shape the present form of exploitative tourism.

Authentic Tourism

In the pilgrimage of human history towards the Reign of God, the goal is total liberation from all sinful manifestations at both personal and structural levels. Thus liberated, the new human community will be characterized by truly egalitarian relationships between nations, among people, and between women and men. Authentic tourism in the sense of humanity on a pilgrimage can be positive instrument towards such goals.

An Ethical Thrust

Moved by the Biblical imperative for justice, enriched by the insights from the sharing of our experiences and reflections, and inspired by our encounter with the villagers of the Northeast of Thailand, we feel obliged to affirm the following ethical thrust with regard to the issues of Third World tourism.

- (1) The prevailing reality of Third World tourism today is a form of oppression. As such, it is a manifestation of a global oppressive society.
- (2) Turning to the Bible for clues about overcoming this oppression, we see the visions of hope, the strength in pilgrimage, and the possibility of both personal conversions and social transformations. This

is so because of the power of the liberating God who hears the cries of afflictions of the poor and oppressed.

(3) Following God in Jesus Christ, we are called to identify with the suffering and to challenge the oppressors. That means, among other things, we are called to encounter the principalities and powers in the existing structures of Third World tourism.

(4) In order for such an encounter to be meaningful and effective, the Biblical paradigms help us to realize that we must: (a) recognize the relation of domination and dependence; (b) develop the style of resistance and liberation; and (c) participate in the raising of peoples' consciousness as well as in the building of people's organizations.

(5) Positively and more concretely, it is incumbent upon all concerned: (a) to work for change in the present structures of tourism through the networks of peoples' organizations and their action in ecumenical solidarity; and (b) to integrate new forms and new contents into existing tourism, among other things.

(6) And finally, Christians and the Churches in the ecumenical movement need to work in close collaboration with people of good will, especially people of other faiths, in order to bring their spiritual or theological insights to bear on matters of policy-making in the tourist industry. The primary question here is: How to redeem and transform tourism so that people, especially the poor and oppressed, are treated as people, created in the image of God? In other words, what makes tourism authentic and thereby contributive to making society more just, more participatory and more sustainable?

III. OUR FINAL REFLECTIONS*

"I asked the almond tree
Sister, speak to me about God.
And it blossomed."

* This Workshop, held in Sri Racha, Thailand, July 20-29, 1989, was sponsored by the Office for Human Development (OHD) of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences (FABC), the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism (ECTWT), whose membership includes Roman Catholic and Protestant regional bodies in the Third World. The participants came from: Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Papua New Guinea, Australia, West Germany and Italy.

I. Introduction

We, the 55 participants of the Asian Ecumenical Workshop on the theme, "The Impact of Tourism: Its Challenge to the Mission of the Churches in Asia," met at Sri Racha, Thailand in July 1989, and shared our experiences, visions and hopes. We came from 18 countries, women and men from very diverse backgrounds. We are united in our deep concern for the impact of tourism on the people and societies of the Third World. We did not attempt any comprehensive study of tourism, but we looked at it from the perspective of the poor, the oppressed and the victimized.

We were exposed to Thai tourism realities and some possibilities of alternative tourism by the visits to Chiang Mai, Bangkok and Pattaya, guided by Thai friends who have been directly involved in the issues of tourism and its impact. We were also confronted with the impact of tourism in Goa (India), and the issues of some Third World "tourists" in Japan. This exposure and sharing of experiences formed the basis of our social analysis and theological reflection. A Buddhist and a Muslim also reflected with us their own religious perspectives on the impact of Third World tourism on the lives of people.

II. Analysis of our Experiences

We were deeply disturbed, even disgusted, by our sad experiences of the nefarious and destructive effects of mass tourism on the most vulnerable groups: women, children and tribals. We tried to discover the inter-connection and linkages between the forces that unleash and maintain these evils.

Our analysis led us to affirm that massive Third World tourism as it is practiced today epitomizes the unjust situation of the world at global, national and local levels.

We are concerned about the dominant involvement of the transnational corporations and foreign firms in the tourism industry of our countries, which invariably drains the profits out of our countries and exercises a controlling role in our national tourism policies. Yet we are told that the tourism industry contributes to our national economic growth. We ask: Who in our nations grow economically through tourism? It is quite evident that the beneficiaries are not the poor majority but the rich in our countries who own hotels and other tourist facilities. This process of enriching the rich in our countries reinforces the existing imbalance in our countries and further widens the gap between the rich and the poor. Besides, even if there is any economic gain, we are paying a very heavy cultural and social price. This same process degrades our culture, exploits

our environment and dehumanizes our people.

The modern economic system, characterized by the priority of capital investment and profit maximization, intrudes upon and destroys the traditional village economy based on human relationships, community feeling and harmony with nature. Mass tourism, as a part of the modern economy, in collaboration with the rich and powerful in Third World countries, subverts human relationships with economic values that undermine traditional family and communal values.

Vulnerable groups in our societies are displaced and basic necessities, such as land, water, and food, are denied them in order to build luxury hotels and amenities for tourists.

Women and children are being prostituted on a massive scale. Human relationships are commercialized to satisfy the greed and lust of the powerful.

Tribal people and their cultures are commercialized and vandalized by commercialized tourism. The tribal people are being deprived of their land, even their sacred ancestral land. Their children are being deceived into becoming prostitutes.

We are distressed by the trend in our political system which continuously disregards the rights of the people to participate in making decisions which affect their lives and destiny. The policy of tourism development illustrates and reinforces this adverse trend. Besides, many of our governments, which should have protected the interests of their own people, often allow themselves to be manipulated by the powerful multinational bodies and other institutions in the First World, that are involved in tourism-related industries.

We strongly reiterate the rights of the people of the Third World countries to be consulted and allowed to participate in decisions on such a serious issue affecting their very existence. Failure to do this could be considered neocolonialism at its worst.

The policy of tourism development has tended to destroy our natural beauty and plunder our natural resources for immediate economic returns of doubtful quality.

We recognize that our Churches and other religious bodies have not been awakened to the challenges of tourism. Nevertheless, we are convinced that they still have the potential to unmask the forces that make victims of Third World people. We see it in their action and cooperation,

both within the Third World and globally, a way to challenge the present injustices in society. They could help people find "the new" that they seem to be searching for.

III. Theological Reflection

We sense that there is a powerful, creative, liberating and empowering force in Asian history that agonizes with victims of exploitation and injustice, and is seeking to incarnate itself in all struggles for justice and freedom in our societies. This powerful, creative force calls us to uphold the dignity and rights of human persons, who are all created in the image of God. We therefore protest against all attempts to degrade human persons to objects, such as in racism, sexism, economic exploitation and political domination.

Women in our societies have suffered much discrimination and exploitation at the hands of men and of male-dominated cultures in general. Fundamental changes in attitudes and practice are absolutely necessary. We affirm and uphold the dignity of women and stand unequivocally opposed to any act of discrimination against them, whether done in the name of religion, ideology, culture or of naked, male chauvinism.

We believe that human sexuality is an integral part of God's design for humanity. And, therefore, all forces that debase human sexuality for mere pleasure and money are affronts to God's design. In many societies of the Third World, tourism has contributed to the expansion of prostitution. We also believe that prostitution is a symptom of a much deeper evil — the quest for power and domination of the weak and the poor by the rich and the powerful. Third World tourism reflects this fundamental evil as well. Therefore, we oppose forces and structures of tourism that coerce both men and women to treat sex as merely a commercial commodity. We are firmly committed to expose and root them out from our societies.

Culture mirrors the community experience of a people and glows with the spark of the human spirit. We are convinced, therefore, that the mystery that makes human persons into a people by giving them their sense of identity as a community ought to be fostered and not debased by consumerist and hedonistic values fomented by tourism.

Nature is a living reality with which human beings relate, interact develop and cultivate. We ought to grow together in mutual harmony towards the ultimate fulfillment of God's will both in our own personal lives and in the whole of creation; it is not a mere instrument for human self-glorification. We are appalled at the irresponsible plunder and unscrupulous rape of God's creation in the name of tourism. This terrible

damage inflicted upon nature mirrors the ugly state of our spiritual condition.

In spite of all these negative realities, we recognize the potential of tourism to contribute to the enrichment of human life and community. The tourism which we welcome should be based on people's aspiration and decision. It should benefit the poor and improve their living conditions; it should contribute to the growth of our cultures and promote inter-cultural understanding; it should avoid sexual exploitation, economic domination and environmental deterioration.

Among the deep spiritual truths of our Asian religions is the revelation of profound compassion and a deliberate bias for the poor, the weak and the oppressed. As Christians, we are impelled today by the Spirit of God to follow more closely than ever the path of Jesus of Nazareth, who identified himself with the poor and the oppressed, took up their cause, and by his death revealed the truth and justice of their cause. His resurrection is an irruption of God's justice and truth in history. We believe that those who truly hunger for God's truth and righteousness are infused with the same historical power that brought Jesus back from the grave. This is the faith that we hold, as we grapple with the powers and structures that are responsible for the ugly expressions of Third World tourism. Through this faith, we attempt to subvert the evil structures of the powerful through a sincere and unfeigned identification with the struggles of the poor and the victims.

IV. VISION FOR THE FUTURE

by
Ron O'Grady

In some parts of the world the tourism industry seems to have launched off like a space shuttle. Enquiring recently about a flight to Brisbane, I was told that all seats were fully booked for the next six months! Any traveller who has been in the United States recently will know the terrible congestion in the skies as planes, which are often inadequately serviced, struggle to keep up with transporting the lines of waiting passengers. By the time most new airports at tourist destinations are completed they are already too small and require immediate expansion. All those predictions of growth that we spoke about in ECTWT conferences years ago appear to be coming true at an even faster rate than we anticipated.

Not even a crash on Wall Street is able to halt the growth of the tourist industry.

For people working at the level of travel agents or tour operators the continued expansion of their empire means more hours, more stress, more profits. The work is so competitive that there is little time for reflection on the direction in which their work is taking them.

I recently attended a consultation which was associated with the establishment of a government research unit on tourism. The many questions which the travel agents at the conference wanted researched were all related to projections of arrivals, regions to be developed, statistical details of nationality, sex, language, etc.

At times, it seemed to me that the conference could well have been dealing with the import of varieties of oranges. The issues were quantitative. The only qualitative question was whether the tourist was having a good time. How or where or what was the effect of that good time were questions which did not occur.

If we want to talk about our vision for the future, we have to begin with the reality that rapid growth creates such pressure that organizers of that growth are restricted to a narrow statistical vision of the future, with little comprehension of the human factor in the midst of the growth.

In this situation, the future work of the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism will increase in importance in proportion to the growth in tourism.

The Churches' Coalition is one of the few voices in the world today which is consistently asking basic questions not only about the quality of life in the countries which receive tourists but also about the quality of the tourist experience.

What are the questions for the future?

Tourism is For People

Firstly, we must have tourism that is for the people and not the reverse. People are central and people are important. They are not pawns to be moved around a giant world chess board. They are not digits to be manipulated on a computer printout.

There are still too many situations in the tourism world where people are made into objects. People in Third World countries continue to remind us of those powerless communities where ordinary people are forcibly moved off their land, or barred from the use of beaches or fishing

grounds, in order to serve the interests of a new tourist development.

The Coalition has never been afraid to expose such situations and local Churches have often been the only strong voice speaking for the people.

But the growth in number of tourists means the tourists themselves will increasingly be manipulated by a system they cannot control.

With the growing numbers of economy-class tourists, people are herded together like sheep and moved en masse through airports and hotels. When they want to change their bookings, they suffer the dehumanizing effects of being just another digit on the computer.

There is a Maori proverb which says, "He aha tee mea nui i te ao? Maku e ki atu, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata," which means: "What is the most important thing in the world? I will tell you, it is people, it is people, it is people." This is very fundamental Christian approach to all of life, including tourism.

Despite all the pressures working against such a concept, we must continue to affirm emphatically that people are central to the tourism experience.

Alternative Tourism

In terms of visions, the most promising future area for Coalition influence is what we are loosely calling "alternative tourism." As we have discovered, this is a very difficult term to define. The Chiang Mai workshop run by ECTWT defined it as:

"A process which promotes a just form of travel between members of different communities, which seek to achieve mutual understanding, solidarity and equality amongst participants."

The definition speaks of a "just form of travel."

We still live in a world where every minute 20 children die from malnutrition or lack of appropriate medicine. While this situation remains, we are forced to evaluate most of our activities in the light of the basic inequalities and injustices of society.

This is not an argument against tourism. Indeed, it is quite the reverse. Tourism to Third World countries does have the capacity to inject money and employment into a stagnant economy, and it can be the means

of lifting the quality of life of a whole community. But for this to happen, the people in the community have to be recipients of the benefits of tourism, which is rarely the case at the present. When tourism traffic is used simply as a means of further exploitation, it serves to make the inequalities of a society more obvious and more dangerous.

There are many Third World organizations now looking at the possibility of an alternative tourism which benefits people rather than international cartels. This is a sign of hope and one which the Coalition will certainly be eager to support.

The definition of alternative tourism also speaks of "mutual understanding, solidarity and equality." These are good words but they are far from being the present reality.

Any sensitive person who has had direct experience with group travel will understand how difficult it is to have a genuine encounter with people in the country visited. The whole experience of being in a large group works against any possibility of expressing mutual understanding with people from the host country. The geography of tourism is such that tourists are isolated from the daily life of the people in the place they visit, and are placed in the role of spectators.

For a person from a tourist-sending country to have any chance of feeling solidarity with people in a Third World situation, the time spent in the host country must provide space for genuine human encounter between people and leave time for reflection on the meaning of that encounter.

One of the most encouraging developments in this area is the way in which countries which have been under oppressive rule, such as some parts of Central America, the Philippines and Southern Africa, have developed their own well-organized forms of alternative tourism which they call exposure tours or solidarity visits. The aim of such tourism is to expose visitors to the injustices in the system under which people are living, so that the visitors will become allies in that country's struggle when they return home.

Although many of these programs now involve very large numbers of people, they will always be just a small sample of the total number of tourists to any country.

The vast majority of people who travel only for enjoyment or escapism will never make such a visit. Even so, it may be possible to take some of the lessons learned in the exposure tours and find small ways of providing opportunity for those who travel to have a deeper encounter

with their host community.

Educating the Tourist

This brings us to the final vision that we have for tourism. It is the educational possibilities of tourism.

The German Churches have done some notable pioneering work in this area and one could wish that other countries had the resources and the will to follow their example.

The basic reality is that almost all people are ill-equipped to travel to a foreign culture. There is little understanding of what it means to be sensitive to different ways of eating, greeting, talking, praying, or any of the multitude of cultural differences which divide us.

When you book for a tour, you are given a pile of advertising garbage which serves no purpose in dealing with the real questions of tourism. It assumes that the total point of your visit is to know where to get a good hamburger and buy the cheapest jewelry. When most tourist brochures begin to describe the local people, they enter into flights of fancy which are remote from the daily reality of the people in the host country. If the local people are so angry with tourists that they stone tourist buses, this will never be told. If it is a poor country where some people live in hovels and paper shacks, the colorful brochures will instead picture idyllic beaches and Five Star hotels. When 80% of the people live in grinding poverty, photos will show smiling waiters and happy dancers.

The need for a better orientation of tourists before they leave their own country has never been more urgent. It is encouraging to know that the Coalition is putting a major effort into the preparation of resource kits to be used by Churches or other local groups preparing to travel.

There is much evidence to show that people about to become tourists will welcome such an action. The way in which the German Church films and booklets have been used by both churches and tour operators is a sign that good, professionally-prepared materials will be used, and they will be of great benefit in educating people.

One of the first tourism seminars in 1975 produced a small "Code of Ethics for Tourists." It still amazes me to see how widely that little piece continues to be printed by tourism groups and by Churches.

This is further proof that when the issues which brought the Coalition into existence are presented in a simple way, they are understood by the

people and may well lead to positive action.

The last word of encouragement is to note how widely concerns for tourism have spread around the world. What was just the part-time interest of a few people 10 years ago has now become an international movement, with groups in many countries relating to ECTWT, and exploring local issues related to the growth of tourism.

This is a very positive sign for the future. As life becomes more complex in affluent countries, increasing numbers of people look to travel as a way of escape or adventure. This enormous movement of people around the planet has consequences which none of us can fully foresee.

It is reassuring to know that we have the Coalition and, behind it, the large network of individuals and groups monitoring events and suggesting alternatives for the future.

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