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## A Descriptive Analysis of the Aims and Methods of the Young Christian Students Movement as an Agency of Social Control Over High School Students

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A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE AIMS AND METHODS OF THE YOUNG  
CHRISTIAN STUDENTS MOVEMENT AS AN AGENCY OF SOCIAL  
CONTROL OVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

by

Brother Lewis Theodore Drahmann, F.S.C.

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Institute of Social and  
Industrial Relations of Loyola University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Social and Industrial Relations

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## LIFE

Brother Lewis Theodore, F.S.C. (Robert Joseph Drahmann) was born on June 7, 1926, in Perham, Minnesota.

He was graduated from Perham High School, Perham, Minnesota, in June, 1944, attended St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1944-1945, and St. Mary's College, Winona, Minnesota, 1947-1949. He graduated from the latter institution, June, 1949, with the degree of Bachelor of Social Science.

In 1949, he began teaching at De La Salle High School, Chicago, Illinois, where he has held the posts of instructor in religion, English, and sociology, assistant principal, director of guidance, and principal. Summer courses were taken at St. Mary's College, Winona, Minnesota, until the beginning of graduate work in sociology in the Institute of Social and Industrial Relations of Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois, in September, 1950.

The writer has published three articles in the field of high school Catholic action: "Action for Christ," La Salle Catechist, XVIII, Winter, 1952, 30-32; "Operation YCS," La Salle Catechist, XIX, Summer, 1953, 156-159; and "High School YCS Study Week," Apostolate, II, Winter, 1954, 27-29.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The oft-heard expression referring to the generation of "more heat than light" can be applied to other than polemical activities. Often the fervor with which projects of all kinds are conceived and carried out is more indicative of enthusiasm than of the working of the intellectual process. This is true in many instances of apostolic zeal for the advancement of the interests of Christ and His Church. Although we cannot discount the effect of God's grace and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is nevertheless true that human reason is sometimes slighted in works of this kind.

The recent interest in the sociology of religion is a sign that progress may be made in remedying the deficiency mentioned. Careful investigation and study of the many human and material factors involved in the doctrine, practice, organization, and spread of religion can make for more intelligent guidance on the part of those charged with the leadership of these endeavors.

Lay apostolic action, which in its present form and extent, is somewhat of a new element in the Catholic Church, needs sound reasoning and careful planning as much, if not more, than any other aspect of the Church's program. It has been this writer's experience in perusing the literature dealing

with lay action and in attending conferences of the same nature that much subjective thinking and many ill-founded generalizations are current. Since he has been attracted to this form of apostolic work and has had experience in guiding it, he has the desire to make it as effective as is humanly possible. By clarifying the methods of one of the forms which lay apostolic work has assumed among youth, it is hoped that its path may be trod more surely and successfully.

As has been noted, the writer can be said to be committed to the movement which he has undertaken to investigate. In his student days when preparing for the work of a teaching religious, he was given an opportunity to observe, listen to, and speak with boys who were active in the high school Young Christian Students' organization. Their youthful zeal for bringing themselves and their student companions to a more integral living of their Catholic faith made a profound impression; this was followed by study and instruction in the lay apostolate in general, with special reference to the form it assumes in the Young Christian Students. It is the writer's firm conviction that here is the necessary supplement to the classroom and pulpit exhortation and instruction in the doctrines and code of the Catholic faith. He has endeavored to make its program become an actuality in the YCS groups which he has formed and guided during the past five years.

Objectivity may well suffer in a study undertaken by one thus related to the object of investigation. This has been realized from the outset and every attempt made throughout the work of research and writing to avoid just that.

A succeeding chapter will describe fully the organization under consideration in this thesis. Nevertheless, a brief account of its historical development and general nature may serve as a practical orientation to the reader.

The present high school Young Christian Students movement in the United States traces its origins back to the organization begun by Canon Joseph Cardijn, a parish priest of Brussels, Belgium, after his release from imprisonment by the Germans in World War I. Canon Cardijn was impressed and troubled by the overwhelming force of pagan pressures directed upon the young workers in the European factories of his day. He conceived the plan whereby small groups of militant workers would strive to influence their fellow-laborers in a Christian manner, and so the specialized lay apostolate was born.<sup>1</sup>

The Jocist technique (so-named from the initials of the French title for Cardijn's organization: Jeunesse Ouvriere Chretienne) soon was applied to other groups and in other countries. Its first use on the American school scene seems to have been in Toledo, Ohio, in the fall of 1938, by Msgr. James J. O'Toole, who formed groups of young workers, college students, and high school students. Other localities in the United States gradually adopted the program, and by 1948, the high school groups were numerous enough to form the Midwestern Regional High School YCS organization, which included all groups between the Appalachians and the Mississippi. Since that time there has been noticeable growth, culminating in the establishment of a central headquarters in Covington, Kentucky, in 1963. The services of this office are national in

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<sup>1</sup> Brother S. Edward, F.S.C., ed., *Changing the Students' World*, Napa, California, 1961, 3.

scope.<sup>2</sup>

Such has been the development of the high school Young Christian Students movement in the United States. It appears in the American Catholic school picture, as one of the youth organizations which strive to deepen and extend the hold of Catholicism upon the high school student. It takes its place with the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, the Catholic Youth Organization, and the various Third Orders; but in specific aim, function, and structure, it is distinct from any of them. Working in small groups of not more than ten members, and meeting weekly under the guidance of a priest or religious, these students concern themselves with the spiritual and intellectual problems of their own kind, and strive to remedy them by personal contact and group action.

Since this thesis is concerned with a group which functions among American teen-agers, it can be noted that adolescence in America is a field which sociological literature seems to have left largely untouched. Thrasher's The Gang<sup>3</sup> was an early study, to be followed by Whyte's Street Corner Society<sup>4</sup> a number of years later. Well-known in Catholic circles is Dr. Fleege's Self-Revelation of the Adolescent Boy,<sup>5</sup> while Hollingshead's Elmtown's Youth<sup>6</sup> is a

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2 Sister Mary Herman, S.N.D., History of the Toledo Y.C.S. Movement, Unpublished Manuscript, Toledo, Ohio, 1954, 1-5.

3 F. M. Thrasher, The Gang, Chicago, 1927.

4 William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society; the Social Structure of an Italian Slum, Chicago, 1943.

5 Urban Fleege, Self-Revelation of the Adolescent Boy, Milwaukee, 1945.

6 August B. Hollingshead, Elmtown's Youth; the Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents, New York, 1949.



recent study in the field. Of value also is Bossard's chapter on "The Role of Peer Groups" in his work The Sociology of Child Development.<sup>7</sup>

This study proposes to inquire into the methods of the Young Christian Students organization which operates among Catholic High School students. This is to be done by applying to these methods a recognized sociological concept, i.e., that of social control. The first part of this work will be devoted to an analysis of the concept itself, attempting to clarify it in terms of the accepted thought in the field. A working definition will be adopted. Following this, a brief survey of the general field of lay apostolic action in the Roman Catholic Church will be made, with most attention given to the form it assumes in the high school Young Christian Students organization. Finally, the concept will be applied to the methods in use by the organization, hoping that clarification of these methods will result. An evaluation of the effectiveness of these methods where they have been in use is felt to be beyond the scope of this thesis, but their application will be illustrated in the succeeding chapter by the "life history" of a Young Christian Students group which was formed by the writer and guided by him until the members were graduated from high school.

The material of the first section (analysis of social control) has already been covered in large part by a previous study at Loyola University;<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> James H. S. Bossard, The Sociology of Child Development, New York, 1954, 503-549.

<sup>8</sup> Donald J. Thorman, The Roman Catholic Religion as a Source of Social Control in the United States, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois, 1951.

this work will be described in that section. Citations gathered by this author will be used extensively, but with the addition of references to writings on this topic which have been published since the time of that study. It can be seen that there will be little material original to the present study to be found in the first section. Its aim is merely to adopt a working definition of social control which is in harmony with the generally accepted thought of writers in the field.

Once a practical definition of the term social control has been adopted, attention will be turned in Chapter III to the field of the modern lay apostolate. A large number of books, periodicals, and conference proceedings were surveyed in preparation for this section; yet most of the citations will be made from authoritative works. One is the volume by Monsignor Luigi Civardi,<sup>9</sup> held to be the authoritative interpretation of the papal directives which have laid out the field of lay action in the Church. The program in its world-wide scope is outlined by this work. The other sources to be used are handbooks and pamphlets written by pioneers in the application of the principles of Catholic action to the American scene.

In Chapter IV, the third principal section of this study, the plan is to give an intensive analysis of the present methods of the high school Young Christian Students organization. The literature mentioned in the preceding paragraph formed the background for this section also, but, since emphasis will be on current methods, the sources most widely used by those working this in

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<sup>9</sup> Luigi Civardi, A Manual of Catholic Action, trans. C. C. Martindale, S.J., New York, 1943.

movement at the present time will be cited. A description of them will be found in that chapter. The methods to be used by the Young Christian Students, as set forth in their literature will be analyzed in respect to the concept of social control adopted in the first chapter. Their methods will be described in terms of this definition.

Chapter V will show these principles and methods as used in one high school. A YCS leader's group, formed by the writer and moderated by him until its dissolution at the close of the members' senior year, will be described as regards composition, structure, and activities. Minutes of the meetings and the author's personal recollection and notes will be the source of the material for this section of the thesis. Little evaluative material is available; citation will be made of a study done by Brother Lawrence Martin, F.S.C., in 1952, of the operation of YCS in eighteen schools in five midwestern states.<sup>10</sup> A final summary of the analysis will be found in Chapter VI.

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<sup>10</sup> Brother Lawrence Martin Michuda, F.S.C., The Catholic Action Movement in the High Schools of the Middle West, Unpublished Master's Thesis, De Paul University, Chicago, Illinois, 1953.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Before the methods by which social control is exercised by the Young Christian Students movement (hereafter to be referred to as YCS) can be pointed out and analyzed, it will be necessary to clarify the concept itself.

In a study made in 1951, Donald J. Thorman undertook to survey the literature in the field of sociology to determine what was the accepted thought in regard to the concept.<sup>1</sup> He found that the meanings attributed to it by various writers differed greatly. For the purposes of his work, however, he cited what he considered to be representative definitions, formulated his own concept of the term, and then proceeded to use it as an analytical tool for the object of his study, which was the social control exercised by the Catholic Church.

It is proposed in this chapter to review Thorman's survey briefly, point out the varied emphases of some of the definitions, and add recent published material on the matter. Finally, a working definition will be adopted, which can be brought to bear upon the methods of the Young Christian Students movement, as stated in their manuals and other literature. This however, will be the matter for succeeding chapters.

As was mentioned above, it is first intended to survey the concepts

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1 Thorman, Social Control.

of social control as given by selected authors up to the time of Thorman's writing. The method of classification to be used is derived from the points of emphasis of the formulators of these definitions. It will be seen that some stress methods used by the individuals or groups which exercise the control are, i.e., the processes by which they intend to achieve their goal. Others concentrate more intensively upon the organization of the society in which the social control is to be exercised; these would analyze the structure and culture of the society. Still others emphasize the reaction of the individual, the object of social control, and seem to find this aspect most fruitful for their study.

#### MEANS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Most of the authors Thorman used emphasize the means or process of social control, i.e., how the influence on the individual is actually exerted. Thus, according to Thorman, E. A. Ross, the first in point of time to treat the concept specifically, saw social control as being intended and functional domination.<sup>2</sup> Lumley finds four components of social control: (1) authority, (2) a program of action or an attitude, (3) adequate communication system, and (4) free and impressible individuals or groups to respond. He appears to stress the first two.<sup>3</sup>

E. E. Eubank is explicit in his emphasis on means: "Societary control is therefore defined as including whatever way any person or group exercises

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2 Ibid., 14.

3 Ibid., 15.

influence or constraint which modifies the behavior, thought, or feeling of any other person or group.<sup>4</sup> Kimball Young in 1935 came to a similar conclusion, although he appears to limit the effect of social control to overt action; he defines social control as "the use of physical force or symbolic means to enforce or bring about the operation of prescribed or expected rules or actions."<sup>5</sup> Everett's article in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences makes a distinction between the wider and narrower sense of the term, defining the latter as "active intelligent guidance of social processes."<sup>6</sup>

Lemert's article on the subject, which did not form part of Thorman's analysis, criticizes those who pay too much attention to the social organization, folkways, and mores in their study of the subject and declares that the emphasis must be on the "external process . . . by which individuals and groups shape the responses of others."<sup>7</sup> He sees the crucial process to be that by which behavior patterns are shaped prior to their becoming part of the societal situation.<sup>8</sup>

Thorman understands Father Facey as conceiving of social control as

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4 E. E. Eubank, Concepts of Sociology, Chicago, 1932, 219, cited in Thorman, Social Control, 16.

5 Kimball Young, Source Book for Sociology, Chicago, 1935, 541, cited in Thorman, Social Control, 19.

6 Helen Everett, "Social Control", Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, New York, 1931, IV, 345.

7 E. M. Lemert, "The Folkways and Social Control," American Sociological Review, VI, June, 1942, 396.

8 Ibid.

conscious attempts to impose ideal behavior patterns.<sup>9</sup> Father Murray sees it as "the process by which groups secure conformity to prevailing standards in the conduct of members."<sup>10</sup>

For Rousek, it is " . . . a collective term for those processes, planned or unplanned, by which individuals are taught, persuaded, or compelled to conform to the usages and life-values of groups."<sup>11</sup> And, coming to more recent writings, Ogburn and Nimkoff define social control as "the pattern of pressure which a society exerts to maintain order and establish rules of conduct . . . ."<sup>12</sup>

Lastly, Thorman's own definition of the concept can be given; it is one which fits into the category of those emphasizing the process aspect: "the method, planned or unplanned, conscious or unconscious, by which a society persuades or compels, or both, individuals or other societies to conform to its standards."<sup>13</sup>

#### SOCIETAL ORGANIZATION

Attention may now be turned to those writers who stress the organization of society as being important in the concept under consideration.

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9 Thorman, Social Control, 12.

10 Raymond W. Murray, C.S.C., Introductory Sociology, New York, 1945, 525.

11 Joseph S. Rousek, ed., Social Control, New York, 1945, 3, cited in Thorman, Social Control, 19.

12 W. F. Ogburn and Meyer Nimkoff, Sociology, Boston, 1940, 114, cited in Thorman, Social Control, 19.

13 Thorman, Social Control, 25.

Hollingshead<sup>14</sup> emphasizes how much our behavior depends on the culture of the society in which we live, and concludes that one of the problems in the study of social control is the analysis of the patterns in our culture by which behavior is organized and controlled. This can be seen by his definition: "From the viewpoint of social control, society is a vast, multiform, organized system of appeals, sanctions, prescriptions, usages, and structures focused upon directing the behavior of its members into culturally defined norms."<sup>15</sup> He adds: "In short, the essence of social control is to be sought in the organization of a people."<sup>16</sup> Lemert chooses to take exception with this viewpoint in the article previously quoted, saying that "folkways and mores shed little light on dynamic relations between the group and the individual or on the relations of groups themselves,"<sup>17</sup> although he admits that "it may be that social organization is the significant variable affecting the control process."<sup>18</sup>

The definition of social control given above as quoted in Ogburn and Nimkoff could possibly be interpreted as belonging to this classification, depending upon the importance to be attached to the pattern in "the pattern of

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14 A. B. Hollingshead, "The Concept of Social Control," American Sociological Review, VI, April, 1941, 222.

15 Ibid., 220.

16 Ibid.

17 Lemert, "The Folkways and Social Control" American Sociological Review, VI, 395.

18 Ibid., 399.



pressure which a society exerts to maintain order and establish rules of conduct."<sup>19</sup>

### OBJECT OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Familiarity with the thought of Cooley prevents one from being surprised at his emphasis when dealing with this matter. According to Thorman, Cooley emphasizes the effect of group pressure upon the personality of the individual and the necessity for studying a person's life history in order to understand his behavior.<sup>20</sup> Lemert sees G. H. Mead moving toward this position also.<sup>21</sup> S. F. Nagel seems to fall into line, for his concept of social control emphasizes conformity of the participants to the culture of their group. He sees social control as reinforcing this conformity.<sup>22</sup> And Hollingshead finds that another of the problems in the study of social control, in addition to that given in the preceding section, is how people react to the forms in which their society is organized and how they are followed.<sup>23</sup>

From George Gurvitch's complex attempt to clarify the term, an

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19 Thorman, Social Control, 19.

20 Ibid., 14.

21 Lemert, "The Folkways and Social Control," American Sociological Review, VI, 396.

22 S. F. Nagel, "Social Control and Self-Regulation," Social Forces, XXXI, March, 1953, 266.

23 Hollingshead, "The Concept of Social Control," American Sociological Review, VI, 222.

emphasis on the persons and groups which are the object of social control may well be extracted:

Social control can be defined as the sum total or rather the whole of cultural patterns, social symbols, collective spiritual meanings, values, ideas, and ideals, as well as acts and processes directly connected with them, whereby inclusive society, every particular group, and every participating member overcome tensions and conflicts within themselves through temporary equilibria and take steps for new creative efforts.<sup>24</sup>

It may be noted that he sees the main sociological interest in the problem of social control as consisting in the kinds of social control and their application by various agencies.<sup>25</sup>

In the course of Thorman's analysis, he introduces a point regarding the limitation of the concept of social control. Following Father Facey, he mentions that modern writers have tended to limit it to purposeful activity, the reason being that the inclusion of every unconscious and unplanned force acting upon individuals inclining them to act according to group norms would make the application of the concept to practical affairs almost impossible.<sup>26</sup>

It is possible, by a study of the definitions of the concept given in the above survey, to divide the authors into those who limit the concept of social control to purposeful actions and those who would included all forces which make for the observance of group norms. The former group would include E. A. Ross, Lumley, Everett ("narrower sense" definition), Facey,

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<sup>24</sup> Georges Gurvitch, "Social Control," Twentieth Century Sociology, New York, 1945, 291.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 289.

<sup>26</sup> Thorman, Social Control, 21, 22.

and Thorman ("special definition" which he begins by "The planned methods by which the Roman Catholic Church . . . ." <sup>27</sup>). The latter group, i.e., those who would include unconscious and unplanned activity as well, would be made up of Cooley, Eubank, Lemert, Everett ("wider sense"), Thorman ("general definition"), Ogburn and Nimkoff, Murray, Young, and Roucek.

A recent intensive work of the subject of social control would seem to merit more extended analysis in this study. <sup>28</sup> LaPiere gives a lengthy treatment of the concept. According to him, social control is one of the three determinants of human conduct, the other two being personality and situation. He defines social control as "the forces that induce individuals to conform to standards of conduct imposed upon them by others." <sup>29</sup> These forces affect all men, and to him their function is to correct for the errors of socialization, that is, to exert a normalizing influence on human behaviour. <sup>30</sup>

LaPiere sees social control as being based almost exclusively on the desire of all men for status, i.e., "the position granted an individual in the organized activities of his fellow men." <sup>31</sup> Man receives status principally through the small primary groups of which he is a member. "Modern men do

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27 Ibid., 36.

28 Richard T. LaPiere, A Theory of Social Control, New York, 1954.

29 Ibid., 3.

30 Ibid., 29, 30.

31 Ibid., 73.

live in and are controlled in considerable measure by small primary groups."<sup>32</sup> Thus, the reason for man's susceptibility to being controlled by the forces of social control lies in his desire for status in these small groups. "The tendency of the individual to see himself more or less as others see him is what, under most conditions of life, makes him sensitive to social control."<sup>33</sup> Also, "status that is sufficiently valued by the individual to constitute the basis for effective social control can, however, be conferred only by relatively small, intimate, and enduring groups."<sup>34</sup>

He describes the factors which make for greater or lesser effectiveness in the social control actually exercised by these groups. The real force in a group is exerted by a power structure which is "informal, dependent upon member respect for persons rather than offices, and composed of individuals, with drive and initiative."<sup>35</sup> The subject of leadership, as an important element in this power structure, is given some attention by him.

Techniques used to exercise social control upon the members of the group are divided into two principal groups: basic processes (physical, economic, psychological, and anticipated sanctions) and ideological (myth of distinctiveness, symbolic context, reification of cultural definitions and the symbolic context, and ideologies and their reification). Of these he sees psychological sanctions as the most effective.<sup>36</sup>

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32 Ibid., 23.

33 Ibid., 73.

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35 Ibid., 179.

36 Ibid., 238.

In the last section of his work, LaPiere recognizes the existence of attempts on the part of individuals or of groups to counteract the forces of social control operating upon those individuals or groups. He terms these attempts "countercontrol" and speaks of them as

the efforts of an individual to gain ascendancy over the other members of a group, of one group to gain ascendancy over another, of an organization to gain ascendancy over groups or some other organization. To become ascendent, an individual, group, or organization must effect, by some force or otherwise, changes in the established standards of some established group or organization, i.e., must counter the social control of that group or organization.<sup>37</sup>

He sees a necessary link between social control and countercontrol; the presence of the latter makes the exercise of the former necessary.<sup>38</sup>

In his analysis of countercontrol, he makes a distinction between personal ascendancy (the attempts of individuals) and conquest ("enlargement or modification of established group or organizational activities involves a recognized and deliberate violation of the vested interests of other individuals or groups.")<sup>39</sup> The means and conditions of effectiveness of this cultural conquest are described.

This summary might be concluded by returning to what he terms his basic position: "All men place some value on their status in some groups of men and . . . this regard for status is one of the important factors that enter into the determination of their behavior."<sup>40</sup> In Hollingshead's review of this

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37 Ibid., 325.

38 Ibid., 355.

39 Ibid., 446.

40 Ibid., 45.

volume, he states that LaPiere's conception of social control is far narrower than is customary in sociological circles. He also sees LaPiere's concept as an extension of social psychological theory, rather than of sociology.<sup>41</sup>

In fitting LaPiere's concept of social control into the classifications given previously, the following observations might be made. Although he enumerates the techniques by which social control is exercised and evaluates their relative effectiveness, he appears to focus chiefly upon the individuals and groups who are the object of social control. This is seen when he definitely places the individual's desire for status as the condition which makes the exercise of social control possible. Hence, we might place him with Cooley, Mead, Facey, and the others who stress the object of social control when treating the concept. Indeed, he acknowledges his dependence upon the work of Cooley.

With regard to the inclusion of both planned and unplanned influences, or the former only, in the concept of social control, LaPiere would seem to include both categories since he defines social control, as was mentioned above, as "The forces that induce individuals to conform to standards of conduct imposed upon them by others."<sup>42</sup> And in studying his list of techniques used to exercise the control, we find some included which are not consciously exercised.

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<sup>41</sup> August B. Hollingshead, "LaPiere's Theory of Social Control," American Sociological Review, XX, February, 1955, 123.

<sup>42</sup> LaPiere, Social Control, 24.

Another current writer,<sup>43</sup> not a sociologist, has vigorously expounded on the social control exercised over Americans today by public opinion and its vehicles of expression: press, radio, television. He sees it as having a determining voice upon the officers of government as well as upon private individuals.

Since a culture is more powerful than a political creed it enables American society, in the name of democracy, to apply almost irresistible extra-political pressure upon individuals, nearly always in the direction of public opinion. Every society has used social sanctions, but never before has a free society urged them so powerfully upon its members over so broad and varied a field.<sup>44</sup>

It seems best, at the conclusion of this survey, to adopt Thorman's general definition of the concept, as the one which includes what is generally accepted, even by those who wrote after the time of his study, as within the meaning of the term. His definition of social control as "the method, planned or unplanned, conscious or unconscious, by which a society persuades or compels, or both, individuals or other societies to conform to its standards"<sup>45</sup> would include all forces which in any way incline the individual to act or think in the manner prescribed by the group which exerts the force. Both overt and covert culture would be included.

Thorman limits the above definition in a way so as to provide a workable concept for his study of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church.

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43 Alan Valentine, The Age of Conformity, Chicago, 1954.

44 Ibid., 47

45 Thorman, Social Control, 3.

He comes up with social control in the limited sense as the "planned methods by which the Roman Catholic Church in the United States persuades, or compels, or both, its members to conform to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion and the ecclesiastical laws of the Roman Catholic Church."<sup>46</sup> He then proceeds to set forth these methods and makes an attempt to evaluate their effectiveness.

Following a similar method, a definition of social control which can be applied to the Young Christian Students movement would be: "the planned methods by which the high school Young Christian Students movement in the United States aims at persuading and otherwise inducing its members, fellow Catholics, and other societies, to conform to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion and the ecclesiastical laws of the Roman Catholic Church." Several aspects of this working concept bear explanation.

As will be seen in our survey of the YCS movement in the succeeding pages, the organization does have a definite program of action. This is not to say that its influence is not felt in intangible ways, but our study will be confined to the specific methods as set forth by the literature of the movement. The aspect of compulsion is not included, since the organization does not include formally-sanctioned authority but rather uses non-coercive methods for the most part, as will be seen later.

It attempts first of all to influence its own members through the program of personal spiritual and intellectual development, then Catholics

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 36.



not connected with the organization, and finally all society by its program of what it terms "institutional reform." The ultimate aim is to bring about and intensify adherence to the doctrines and laws of the Roman Catholic Church, and it does not claim to have any other objectives other than those of this Church.

All of the above points regarding the concept of social control will be substantiated, it is hoped, by the survey of the Young Christian Students movement which is to follow. It must be kept in mind that the application of the concept will be limited to the aims of the organization, as set forth in the official manuals and other literature. No attempt will be made to actually evaluate the results of the methods, i.e., whether or not the YCS has succeeded in accomplishing its objectives. The explanation of the nature of the movement will indicate the practical difficulties which would be involved in such a course of action.

Our working concept of social control will, therefore, be the planned methods by which the high school Young Christian Students movement in the United States aims at persuading its members, fellow Catholics, and other societies, to conform to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and its ecclesiastical laws.

## CHAPTER III

### SURVEY OF THE MODERN SPECIALIZED LAY APOSTOLATE

For some time Christianity has, in some respect, been losing its hold upon the Western civilization. The truth of this statement, which may appear arbitrary to some, can be verified by anyone who is familiar with current Catholic literature, or by one who is an acute observer of the events of our times. It is sufficient, however, to read the messages of recent Popes to learn of their recognition of the inroads that paganism has made into the lives of modern man. Pius XI described the situation in 1929 as follows:

You clearly see the manner of times in which we are living, and what they demand from the Catholic forces. On the one hand, we deplore a society growing ever more pagan, wherein the light of the Catholic Faith is growing faint in souls. In consequence, the Christian sense, and the purity and integrity of morals, are also waning with them to a really alarming degree. On the one hand, we grieve because the clergy is quite insufficient to cope with the necessities and needs of our times. This is so, either because in certain places it is not numerous enough; or, because among many sorts of persons, refractory to its beneficent influence, it cannot cause its voice and the force of its admonishments to achieve contact. Hence it is necessary that all men be apostles; it is necessary that the Catholic laity do not stand idle, but be united with the ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and ready to obey its orders, and take its share in the holy warfare, and, by complete self-dedication, and prayer, and strength of will, and action, co-operate for the reflowering of faith and the reformation of Christian morals.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Pius XI, Letter to Cardinal Segura and the Spanish Hierarchy, cited in Civardi, Catholic Action, 105.

In this quotation, three reasons can be indicated why something more than the traditional program of activities by the Church is needed for our world: the increasing paganism of society, the lack of sufficient numbers of the clergy, and their inability to persuade many persons today to accept their teaching and ministrations--all these point to the need, expressed by the Pope, of the laity's joining the battle against the enemies of religion. This, in brief, is the basis for Catholic Action.

#### CATHOLIC ACTION

Catholic Action is, in the classic words of Pius XI, "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy."<sup>2</sup> It can be further described as an officially sanctioned organization composed of lay people (neither clergy or religious can be participants properly-so-called) which exercises an auxiliary function in the Church. Its activity is to consist of the spiritual formation of its members and in apostolic action.<sup>3</sup> While its immediate end is the Christianizing of the consciences of individuals,<sup>4</sup> its ultimate purpose is to assist in bringing about the triumph of the Kingdom of Christ here on earth.<sup>5</sup> This is to be done by employing all possible licit religious and material means (excepting of course,

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2 Reverend James J. O'Toole, What is Catholic Action?, New York, 1940, 9.

3 Civardi, Catholic Action, 4.

4 Ibid., 12.

5 Ibid., 13.

the sacramental means of sanctification whose bestowal is limited to the clergy) to Christianize individuals and society.<sup>6</sup>

To distinguish modern Catholic Action from the collaboration which the members of the Catholic Church have always rendered their pastors, it is necessary to emphasize certain of its characteristics. Although playing an auxiliary role and always under the direction of the clergy, the laity today have been called to form an organization in which they are to exercise a definite measure of authority and in which they alone are to carry on the activity proper to the organization.<sup>7</sup> The organization itself is not to be confused with existing religious associations which are formed for purposes of piety or charity or even the spread of the faith.<sup>8</sup> The Popes called for a new and distinct organization, to which all the faithful are to associate themselves in various degrees.<sup>9</sup>

The form of Catholic Action has varied in the various countries in which it has been begun. Because of the directives of the local Bishops and also due to the varying specific purposes for which it was set up in different localities, varied types of structure and methods of operation have been worked out. The movement has also been divided according to age and sex; four principal divisions can be noted: two adult groups (men and women) and two

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6 Ibid., 72.

7 Ibid., 149.

8 Reverend John Fitzsimmons, The Christian in a Changing World, South Bend, Indiana, 1950, 33.

9 Civardi, Catholic Action, 69.

for youth (boys and girls).<sup>10</sup> Further specialization according to occupation, following the recommendations of the encyclical Quadragesimo Anno has resulted in separate organizations of workers, students, farmers, etc.<sup>11</sup>

This thesis will treat one of the groups included in the general plan of Catholic Action, the high school Young Christian Students movement. Although the movement encompasses Catholic boys and girls attending secondary schools, the sexes are never mingled at the level of the unit group.

### YOUNG CHRISTIAN STUDENTS

High school YCS functions in small groups of from four to ten members and uses the Jocist technique, the plan of action developed by Canon Joseph Cardijn of Belgium. The essential notes of this method are (1) grouping into a small "cell" a limited number of potential leaders of the same age, sex and vocational pursuits,<sup>12</sup> who use the social inquiry method consisting of three successive steps, "observe, judge, act" with regard to the problems they encounter in their daily life.<sup>13</sup>

High School YCS is but one member of the family of Catholic Action groups making use of the Jocist technique. Others included are the college

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10 Ibid., 9.

11 Reverend Stephen Anderl and Sister M. Ruth Fellman, F.S.P.A., The Technique of the Catholic Action Cell, 6th ed., La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1950, 17.

12 Ibid., 21, 22.

13 Young Christian Students, ed., Young Christian Students, South Bend, Indiana, 1950, 28-31.

level Young Christian Students, the Christian Family Movement, and the Young Christian Workers. The system in use by these movements was commended by Pius XI: "We have defined it (Catholic Action) in the way it has been perfectly realized by the Jocist movement and interpreted in its publications that have come to our knowledge."<sup>14</sup>

As was mentioned above, the small group of leaders is a sine qua non of the Jocist Method. This is indicated by the words of its originator: "The Study circle (small group) is the essential seminary where militants are both recruited and formed. It is the laboratory where promoters and directors are trained; it remains the cenacle from which go forth Jocist apostles."<sup>15</sup> In such a group, always to consist of less than eleven members, it is to be expected that a greater sense of community and of participation will develop. Each member is to be the object of personal training and development on the part of the Chaplain or religious who is attached to the group. The face-to-face contact and easy participation in the discussions held at weekly meetings serve to deepen the sense of responsibility to the objectives of the group.<sup>16</sup>

All that has been said thus far about the Jocist groups applies to Young Christian Student groups organized among high school students. It is understood among those working in this field that a small number of youths

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<sup>14</sup> Pius XI, Discourse to the Jocist Pilgrimage to Rome, September 22-29, 1929, cited in Eugene Geissler, Militante, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1943, 10.

<sup>15</sup> Canon Joseph Cardijn, cited in Anderl-Ruth, Technique, 23.

<sup>16</sup> Geissler, Militante, 10.

possessing some amount of natural leadership are to be chosen and, after a short process of formation, encouraged to attack the problems of their student lives through the three steps of the social inquiry; that, it is expected, will result in their attempting to remedy the undesirable situations which they discover.

According to the fundamental principles of Catholic Action, its component groups must be unified to assure harmony of action. This point has been emphasized in the papal directives on the subject which stress that submission to ecclesiastical superiors and also to duly constituted lay authority would assure this unity.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, high school Young Christian Students leaders' groups are directed to unite themselves in their schools, in their cities where numbers warrant, and in their dioceses. However, as is evident from Canon Cardijn's statement quoted above, the individual leaders' group is to be held as the prime source of the good which the Young Christian Students may hope to accomplish.

Thus far, the modern lay apostolate has been briefly surveyed. The reasons for today's stress on the laity in the rechristianization of our world were pointed out, along with the papal plan for its accomplishment. Catholic Action has been seen in the form it assumes in the specialized movements which use the Jociist technique. A short description of the Young Christian Students Movement as found among high school students completed the chapter. This last-named topic will be considerably amplified in the following chapter, in which the aims of the organization will be analyzed

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17 Civardi, Catholic Action, 10.

and fitted into the concept of social control adopted in the preceding part of this work.

With reference to the sources upon which this chapter was based, the introduction pointed out that Civardi is considered to be the authoritative guide in the interpretation of the papal directives in the field of Catholic Action. His words have world-wide application. The others (Msgr. O'Toole, Fathers Anderl and Fitzsimmons, Sister Ruth, and Eugene Geissler) are well-known as among the earliest who have worked to apply these directives to the American Catholic school. Succeeding participants have guided themselves by their writings, and the following chapter--an intensive analysis of the high School Young Christian Students--will be based on current publications which amplify and make more precise the directions of the pioneers named above. This course seems desirable since recent years have seen noticeable growth in the movement with the result that early thought has been refined through experience and its application rendered more specific. An analysis of any organization, unless a historical treatment is wanted, should be made of it in its present state. Such will be done in the following pages.



## CHAPTER IV

### YCS AIMS IN THE EXERCISE OF SOCIAL CONTROL

We work, we recreate, we learn, we live all phases of our lives in an atmosphere created by men who prefer to ignore the precepts of justice, charity, and purity. Christians, as well as anyone else, are a part of their environment. They too must earn a living, recreate, and learn; and this they do in large measure as society influences them to do it.<sup>1</sup>

The above quotation, taken from the official program of inquiries for the school year, 1954-1955, published by the central headquarters of the high school Young Christian Students movement in the United States, gives in the words of the youthful authors, the raison d'être for their organization. They recognize the influence of society upon its members, i.e., the fact of social control, and see that it is too often exercised in ways which are in conflict with basic Christian beliefs.

The booklet here mentioned forms one of the two principal sources for the material in this chapter. Most of the existing high school Young Christian Students groups in this country are affiliated with the central headquarters, although only on a voluntary basis. Apostles Today, the current program of inquiries, was issued by this headquarters office and is accepted as having an official character by the members of the entire organi-

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<sup>1</sup> Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, Covington, Kentucky, 1954, 9.

zation, all of whom are urged to purchase it and use it as the basis of their year's work. Since it has been prepared by students and adults engaged in the work of the organization at the present time, it was considered the best subject of analysis; it is felt that this booklet will furnish a reliable statement of the current aims and methods of operation of the high school Young Christian Students.<sup>2</sup>

The other source used in this regard was Teamwork Does It.<sup>3</sup> The present writer's extensive contact with those working in YCS as well as his perusal of its publications has furnished evidence of the fact that this booklet is widely recommended and used for beginners in the organization. It too, therefore, can be regarded as an authoritative statement of current objectives and practice.

There are several other widely used publications which may also provide insight into the current theory and practice of the movement and which will be cited in this chapter. The central high school Y.C.S. headquarters in Covington, Kentucky, issues the occasional bulletins with news and discussion of topics of interest to the members. Although published jointly by the National Federation of Catholic College Students and the college Young Christian Students of Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana, the quarterly magazine Anima and its companion piece, Anima Newsletter, are highly regarded by high school Y.C.S. chaplains and adult moderators for their discussions on the theological and theoretical bases of the movement. Published yearly

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2 Ibid., 17, 18.

3 Reverend James R. Anderson, Teamwork Does It, San Diego, California, 1952.

in mimeographed form are the reports of the annual three-day conferences sponsored by the high school Y.C.S. organization for adults, moderators and student members. As might be expected, these are rather uneven in quality, since they consist mainly of the transcriptions of the addresses given at the conference, but they have the advantage of containing expression of student thought in the speeches given by the boys and girls who are actually engaged in YCS activities on the high school level at the time of the conference.

Apostles Today presents the following definition of the Young Christian Students movement:

The Young Christian Students is a Catholic action apostolate of student to student which attempts to restore the practice of a Christian way of life to the student environment by effective necessary changes in the social pressures, the attitudes, and the institutions of the school community.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that they acknowledge themselves as a "Catholic action apostolate" should be sufficient indication that they are in harmony with the beliefs and laws of the Roman Catholic Church. Further confirmation of their conformity to orthodox doctrine and practice is furnished by the following direction given to beginners regarding their choice of action: "Decide on something you can do as a group to change the situation, to make it more like right reason, your conscience, Christ and the Church say it should be."<sup>5</sup>

With regard to the field of action in which the organization is to operate, it may be noted that the definition given above refers to the "student environment" and the "school community." It has recognized the fact that

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4 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 9.

5 Anderson, Teamwork Does It, 24.

the social pressures, the attitudes, and the institutions of this segment of American society are often at variance with the beliefs and norms of the Catholic Church. Examples are given:

Unwillingness to study; and willingness to do anything to "just get by"; "looking down" on a student who studies or who takes his spiritual life seriously; going steady, and other kinds of recreation designed to stunt our moral and social and intellectual growth--these are a few of the attitudes present among us. When students cheat; when many of their fellow students drift through school lonely or in need of help in their studies; when students can find no way to recreate other than by drinking or roistering about; when home becomes a place to hang one's hat; when parish life is ignored--then there is something wrong.<sup>6</sup>

YCS sees institutions in the student world as often being at variance with Christian creed and code. Institutions are defined as "an accepted manner of responding to a human need" and are held to work against being better students and against spiritual progress.<sup>7</sup> Thus they see their work as "an effort that is directed precisely towards these forces and structures that mold the behavior of persons."<sup>8</sup>

YCS restricts its action to specified areas in student life.

During 1954-1955, the members were to direct their attention on the pressures, attitudes, and institutions in the three areas of friendship, learning, and recreation.<sup>9</sup> Attempts were to be made to bring them more in line with what they would conceive the Catholic ideal would be in each case.

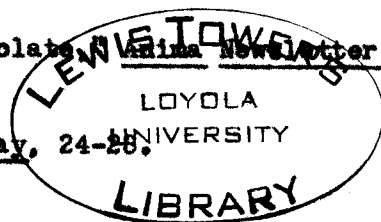
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6 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 8, 9.

7 Ibid., 10.

8 Richard C. Clark, "Institutional Apostolate," Indiana Newsletter, Notre Dame, Indiana, June, 1955, 9.

9 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 24-25.



The young members of the Young Christian Students are given directions as to their own mentality when exerting their effort to bring about the goals of the organization. They are told of the "Spirit of YCS; Giving Ourselves--our time, our energy, our talents--whatever we have."<sup>10</sup>

#### SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE YCS MOVEMENT

Much stress in the literature is given to the fact that the work of Catholic Action movements must be organized if the desired goals are to be attained. They are mindful of the admonition of Pius XI that the individual apostolate is no longer sufficient because of the complexity and organization to be found among the forces leading students to disregard Catholic norms.<sup>11</sup> Hence, a definite structure is to be found in the Young Christian Students organization.

The smallest unit is called a group. This is made up of from four to ten youths who possess some capability of leading their classmates. Each member of the group is to have a team, which is composed of a small number of other youths, usually friends of the group member. Their purpose is to further the work of the group. There are also general members, who are students not belonging to a group or a team, but are interested in the Young Christian Students. They may attend monthly meetings on general topics concerned with

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10 Anderson, Teamwork Does It, 12.

11 "Common Basis for Catholic Action Students Movements Throughout the World," Anima Newsletter, Notre Dame, Indiana, June, 1955, 3.

student problems and may assist in one or more specific project planned by the groups or teams. All the students connected with YCS in a certain school (group, team, or general members) are grouped into a section, which may have its own officers who preside over the work of YCS in that school. Finally, two or more sections in a single are (city, state, or diocese) may combine into a federation, which may also have its officers.<sup>12</sup>

So far, what may be called the local organization of YCS has been described. The movement also attempts to operate on a national scale. A central headquarters has been established, staffed by full-time and part-time workers. A priest-chaplain is also attached to this office. Its function is to receive reports from the affiliated groups, sections, and federations, issue publications, visit the various localities where the movement is functioning, and give counsel to members and moderators. Financial support is provided by the students in the organization. Besides the office staff, leadership is provided by two elected officers, the president and the financial secretary, and one appointed by the adult moderators, the executive secretary. These three are all of student age.<sup>13</sup>

Further organizational elements are provided by regular meetings on a nation-wide scale. The largest of these in scope is what is termed the "Summer Study Week"; all schools having one or more YCS groups are eligible to send delegates. The purpose of this meeting is to elect national officers,

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12 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 14-18.

13 Ibid., 16.

to become familiar with the topics for the program of action for the coming year, and to foster unity. The "Winter Business Meeting", attended by the officers and delegates from each of the principal areas in which YCS is functioning, plans the Study Week for the following summer and selects the topics for the program of action for the succeeding school year.<sup>14</sup>

It is obvious that the group is considered to be the essential unit in the YCS structure. In order that they may be effective in accomplishing their aim of bringing the influence in the student world more in harmony with Catholic belief and practice, the YCS publications insist that the members of the group possess certain characteristics: "The group is composed of from four to ten students who, in the opinion of the chaplain and other YCS members, possess qualities of leadership."<sup>15</sup> The qualities of which leadership is composed are, according to Teamwork Does It: generosity, being typical of the student body, ability to get along with others, and ability to get to others.<sup>16</sup> It has been this writer's experience that much of the time at the discussions held by clerical and religious moderators of high school YCS groups has been devoted to the difficulty of finding students possessing these qualities and of interesting those who do have them in the work of the organization.

#### YCS METHODS OF ACTION

The weekly meetings of the groups play an important part in the YCS

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, Teamwork Does It, 13.

program of action. For accomplishing their goal of influencing the student world they use the Jocist technique described in the preceding chapter. "The most practical method that has been found to enable YCS members to investigate their environment and act on it is the social inquiry."<sup>17</sup> By the three steps of "observe, judge, act", they seek to determine the elements of their environment which are in need of rechristianization and plan their mode of action. In language calculated to be understood by his teen-age audience, the author of Teamwork Does It describes the process:

Observe; waking up to what's going on . . . getting a grasp of something we aren't conscious enough of in life about us. Then when you come to the meeting, you bring exact facts and figures on what you learned.

.....  
Judge; now what do you think of these things you found out? Does right reason allow you to approve of them? Is the situation what Christ and His Church would want it to be? Can you as a Christian approve of it? If you leave things as they are, what will be the consequences? Can you in conscience leave them as they are . . . you who are your brother's keeper?

.....  
Act; what can you do to improve or change matters? Decide on something you can do as a group to change the situation, to make it more like right reason, your conscience, Christ and the Church say it should be.

.....  
Be sure you'll be able to do what you resolved to do. You may have to be bold, but use your head; in doubts, follow the advice of your chaplain or Religious Assistant. The fruit of every social inquiry must be some kind of action . . . action which you and your co-workers can do together.<sup>18</sup>

Realizing that it would not be possible to attach every influence upon students which is not in conformity with the Catholic ideal, the groups

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17 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 11.

18 Anderson, Teamwork Does It, 22-25.



limit their investigation and action to areas designated by the yearly program booklet. These topics are selected by the national student leaders of high school YCS; students from different schools then compose the inquiry questions, which are designed to aid the "observe, judge, act" process of the social inquiry.<sup>19</sup> However, it is recognized that each school has a distinctive situation, so this is not intended to impose uniformity, merely to "point up areas of possible action."<sup>20</sup>

As has been stated, the end product to be attained by the work of the YCS groups is change in attitude or social pressures in the student world; they hope for institutional changes which will affect a large number of students. The actions which will accomplish this end involve teamwork with each actor conscious of a sense of responsibility for doing his part. The members are cautioned against timidity, even with regard to ambitious projects, provided these are well-organized, well-planned, and needed.<sup>21</sup>

To keep the members of the group conscious of their responsibility to further the aims of the organization and to ascertain the success or failure of the projects they attempt, a regular feature of the weekly group meetings is the report. It is at this time they are expected to give a candid report of their observations and actions, answering questions such as the following:

Did you hear about any situations, organizations, places which were outstandingly good or bad, in need of improvement, in need of "working over"?

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19 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 17.

20 Ibid., 18.

21 Ibid., 12.

What did you do for other students? Exactly how did you give yourself to help others? Did you help change anyone's thinking? Anyone's way of action?<sup>22</sup>

It might be noted that desire for status in the eyes of their fellow group members might be expected to be part of the motivation for carrying out the assigned actions, the members realizing their being faced with the prospect of giving an account of their attempts.

The types of actions decided upon by the group as a result of their investigation into student life in their school and locality may vary.

Apostles Today classifies them into four types: (1) providing a service needed by the student body, e.g., a used book exchange; (2) campaigns; (3) contacting certain members of the student body, either because of the influence they possess or because they are notable sources of unChristian influences; (4) a project, e.g., library display, movie, open discussion.<sup>23</sup> It can be seen that, with the possible exception of the first-named, all would tend towards the aim of YCS in directly exerting a Christian influence.

Not included in the above, yet a part of the YCS program for influencing others, is personal good example, as can be seen by the following quotation: "All of us must be witnesses to Christ. Our lives must reflect the joy there is in possessing the life of God, the divine life of sanctifying grace. In this way others will be attracted to the Christian way of life."<sup>24</sup>

Several aspects of the weekly group meetings are worth noting. Two of them are closely concerned with the attitudes which the organization wishes

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22 Anderson, Teamwork Does It, 21.

23 Young Christian Students, Apostles Today, 12.

24 Ibid., 11.

to foster among the members of the group. The first is the Gospel discussion in which the youths talk over a brief selected passage from the New Testament. "Then the members try to apply the lesson from the Gospel to their own lives. They try to determine how they can act as Christ did in meeting similar situations in their own lives, or how He would want them to act."<sup>25</sup> This is to be followed by the Liturgy Discussion which "focuses attention on some part of the worship of the Church so that the members can understand better the means at hand for the spiritual improvement of themselves and their classmates."<sup>26</sup> The reports have been already described; it may be said further that in every meeting, three distinct reports are to be given: (1) report on the results in their personal lives of the previous meeting's Gospel Discussion; (2) reports on acts of service to others performed since the previous meeting; (3) report on the action assigned as a result of the social inquiry of the previous meeting.<sup>27</sup>

It can hardly be expected that high school students are capable of entirely correct application of Catholic belief and practice to their student situation. To assist the groups, the organization provides for chaplains whose role consists of (1) preparing the discussion before each meeting with the leaders; (2) encouraging the members in their work; and (3) directly working for the personal spiritual formation of the members. In short, the chaplain counsels and aids the group "so that they may enter into their job with a more Christian attitude."<sup>28</sup>

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25 Ibid., 13.

26 Ibid., 13.

27 Ibid., 12, 13.

28 Ibid., 14.

It has already been seen that teams form a part of the YCS structure. Each group member is to have his team, thus enabling him to carry out the actions resulting from the social inquiry. He is to work especially to change the thinking and acting of this team, and then they are to strive for the same effect on their own friends. The team members also are to assist the group member in the gathering of the facts he needs for the "observe" section of the social inquiry. No definite number of team members is specified, but they are not to be too numerous for the group member to contact each week. Eventually the team is to hold regular weekly meetings, led by the group member. In short, the purpose of the team in the YCS movement is to provide an organized way of exerting the desired influence upon the student world.<sup>29</sup>

To obtain a still wider diffusion of their influence, the Young Christian Students movement strives for as wide an audience as possible for the presentation of their ideas. In an organized way, this is to be done by means of school assemblies or other types of general meetings.<sup>30</sup> It is in projects of this type that the so-called general members are to participate.

On the individual basis, this is done through personal contact by the group members. They are told: "If you are going to be an effective tool in the hands of God, you must establish a link with other students. The link is established through CONTACT with the persons."<sup>31</sup> Other influence over

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29 Young Christian Students Central Headquarters, The Structure of Your YCS Section, Covington, Kentucky, 1954. 1.

30 Vincent Giese, "The Apostolic Pitch," Anima, Notre Dame, Indiana, VI, Spring, 1955, 42.

31 Anderson, Teamwork Does It, 30.

outsiders is to be exerted by the group members taking part in other organizations, groups at school, in his neighborhood, in the parish, and at work.<sup>32</sup>

Before our analysis of the structure and the functions of the high school Young Christian Students organization is completed, it may be helpful to attempt to clothe the dry bones of theory with the warm flesh of illustration. The following chapter will sketch the "life history" of a Y.C.S. leaders' group which was formed and guided in accordance with the principles given above.

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32 Ibid., 30.

## CHAPTER V

### CASE HISTORY OF A YCS LEADERS' GROUP

For the past five years the writer has been actively engaged in promoting the Young Christian Students movement in the high school where he is a member of the faculty. During this time he has formed and guided several groups. This chapter will be an account of the "life history" of one of these groups. Sources used were the minutes of the meetings as kept by the members, a journal account kept by the writer of these same meetings, and his own personal recollections and observations.

The group which will be described was "born" in July, 1952. It was desired to gather its members from the class in school which was to be the junior department during the following year. The school was a Catholic boys' day high school of approximately one thousand enrollment, located in Chicago and staffed by a faculty of Christian Brothers and laymen. Faculty members familiar with this grade were consulted and asked to recommend possible members of the group basing their choice upon the evident possession of two qualities, leadership and generosity. In this way a list was secured which was then submitted to the members of an active YCS group in the same school, a group composed of boys of a higher class. On the same basis as the faculty, these boys selected those they considered suitable, making up a roster of fourteen candidates. The selectees were contacted and asked to come to the school one evening to work on a project which, they were told, would help the

school. Seven appeared and they formed the nucleus of the new Young Christian Students group.

An idea of the composition of the group may be gained from the following listing: three were to be members of the varsity football team; two were well-known basketball players; one was a school cheerleader; and another an associate editor of the school paper. All were better than average students possessing some amount of prestige in the student body. Individual description follows:

Joe, first considered for the post of leader of the group, was a nervous, energetic lad. He was of rather high intelligence (112 I.Q.); his fluency in speech and originality of thought had won him the post of associate editor of the school paper, and he would go on to be editor-in-chief during his senior year. He frequently came up with unconventional ideas during the group meetings and did not hesitate to take issue with the opinions of others if he disagreed with them. Joe had frequent conflict with his father, a policeman, which resulted in his leaving home and boarding at a separate residence during the latter part of his high school term. He was prominent in the activities of the YCS group during the first months of its existence but then came to the moderator and informed him that he was about to withdraw, saying frankly that he considered YCS worthwhile but felt that he could not live up to its demands.

Jim, who served as group leader during the first year, was a highly intelligent football player (140 I.Q.). He was the thoughtful type of boy, having read and enjoyed books by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen and Frank Sheed during

his sophomore year. Jim came from a mother-dominated family living in a working-class neighborhood. Most of his out-of-school companions were students at public schools or had left school to go to work. In school, he had few close friends at first but appeared to develop friendships during his last two years. His classmates respected him for his intelligence and manly piety. Jim became president of the Chicago Boys' High School YCS Federation during his senior year.

Bob took over as group leader during the second year of operation. The son of a widowed mother, he was prominent on the football team and an honor student, although his intelligence was only average (103 I.Q.). He was extremely conscientious in all that he did. His leadership was rather unimaginative and plodding; again it seemed based on the respect which his classmates held for him, rather than on any personal dynamic qualities.

Dennis was the playboy of the lot. Living in a working class neighborhood, as did all the boys in the group, he was intelligent (110 I.Q.) and unconventional in thought. His position as school cheerleader perhaps contributed to his lack of reticence in stating frankly his views. He had extensive influence over a very small number of his classmates; the rest regarded him with amusement.

Tall and gangling like Dennis was Art, a star basketball player and sincerely religious boy. Hesitant in expressing himself, Art perhaps was able to exercise more leadership over his friends (classmates who had come with him from the same parish school) than any other member of the group. Of less than average intelligence (89 I.Q.), Art found difficulty in paying prolonged



attention to the group discussions and was asked to withdraw from the group by the moderator during his senior year. Although his leadership ability was recognized, the moderator found it impossible to keep him from becoming a disruptive force in the meetings.

Also asked to withdraw during his senior year was Jay, a member of the school band. Jay (107 I.Q.) was not considered for membership in the group when the others were chosen but was asked by one of the other members; and the moderator decided to allow him to remain. Jay was passive, lacked real interest in the meetings and activities, and seldom contributed to the discussions. He was there because his friend was there.

Pat was the member who had asked Jay to come. A thoughtful lad, Pat (100 I.Q.) was noticeably devout; yet his Irish wit made him a pleasing companion in the eyes of his classmates. His mother also was widowed. Pat was idealistic; YCS seemed to him the opportunity to put his ideals into practice, although he confessed disappointment at the end of his senior year.

In spite of his retiring disposition, Ed (122 I.Q.) was chosen to be in the first group. He was a prominent basketball player and held the post of class officer several times. However, he had a few close friends and seemed unable to widen his scope of activity beyond them. He became more and more passive at the meetings at the year progressed.

Tom, whose father was also dead, was brought into the group at the end of the first year. Vivacious, popular, studious (107 I.Q.) generous--these were qualities he shared with his older brother who had preceded him by two years in the same school. Both boys were members of YCS, and both had

been chosen president of the senior class. Tom was conscientious on the athletic field and in the classroom. His leadership was perhaps more widely felt upon the senior department as a whole than that of his fellow YCS members.

Such were the boys chosen to be the apostles of Christian ideals to their fellow classmates. When they first came together as a group, some were not even acquainted with the others; the frequent and close contacts they were to have during the following two years were to bind the majority of them in close friendships. They came from scattered parishes and from homes where the Catholic faith appeared strong. In three cases, as was mentioned, the father of the family was dead. Family income was on the working class level; all of the boys held some sort of part-time job to help in paying their school expenses. The number of children in the families from which they came ranged from two to five.

The initial meeting of the group was of the "Are you with us?" type; some idea of the organization was given with heavy stress on an appeal to their generosity in asking them if they were willing to do something to help their schoolmates and the school in general. It was mentioned in closing the meeting that if they wished to help, they should attend the following week, although they were free to drop out. The next meeting brought them all back, with the addition of Jay, who had been invited by Pat. At this session, the aims and methods of the Young Christian Students were explained in detail, and plans were made for a third meeting the following week. This meeting was conducted by the members themselves and centered around a discussion of the principal problems faced by the students of their school. A specific action

resulted: the members were to do whatever possible to lessen the inevitable confusion (often student-abetted) of the first day of school, which was to follow shortly thereafter.

### A TYPICAL MEETING

From the time of the third meeting, the attempt was made to have each session conducted according to the regular plan set forth in the literature of the movement. After the school term began, meetings were held in a small conference room at the school during one of the lunch periods each week, the boys munching their sandwiches at the same time. The regular group leader presided, but the writer was present throughout as adult moderator.

The meetings opened with a short prayer led by the student leader. Absentees were noted, then the Gospel discussion was held, lasting about ten minutes. A member, other than the group leader, had been prepared previously by the moderator. During this preparatory discussion, the background material for the section of the New Testament was gone over, and the moderator also attempted to add to this informal interview some general encouragement and instruction regarding the Young Christian Students movement. The texts for the discussion were chosen by the moderator; most frequently these corresponded with the Gospel of the Mass of the following Sunday. At the meeting itself, a preliminary reading of the chosen text by the student who was to lead the discussion was first given; then all members would participate, following the questions prepared by the leader to stimulate thought and application of the Gospel to their personal lives. Too often, this would turn into a sort of "quiz program" with the group members vying for the honor of coming up with the

correct answer. To close this discussion, the members would endeavor to decide how this New Testament text applied to them as modern students; and they would agree on some personal application. For example, the parable of the Good Samaritan, which served as the basis for discussion repeatedly, was considered to have a "Do unto others as you would have them to do to you" application. Most of the applications derived were of this general spiritual nature, e.g., more prayer, striving after specific virtues, and deepening of piety in reception of the sacraments.

The next few minutes of the meeting invariably were taken up with the service report. For the purpose of developing the generosity considered so essential for such a movement, each student in turn would describe one or more acts of service to others that he spontaneously rendered since the previous meeting. This procedure, in which the participants were often the subject of good-natured teasing at each others' hands, most often included acts connected with the housework at home, bringing friends to confession, helping others with homework, lending money, or what might be termed the "Boy Scout type" of good deed--such as helping the blind and aged across intersections, giving up one's seat on the bus, and the like. This writer, while admiring the charity involved in these deeds, often could not help wondering whether the desire to render service was not often intermingled with other motives.

The reading of the minutes of the previous meeting was the next item in the meeting. This was insisted upon to ensure continuity in the discussions from one week to the next and to enable a check to be made upon the specific actions decided upon and assigned the previous week.

Immediately following was the action report, in which the members

individually gave an account of what they had done to carry out the action decided upon at the previous meeting. For example, after the first student-led meeting referred to above, in which they had set out to lessen the first day's confusion at the opening of the new school term, the members reported at the following meeting such items as the following: being personally supplied with necessary equipment, giving directions to new students, and keeping quiet in order not to add to the inevitable confusion. Each member was called upon at each meeting for this report.

The main body of the meeting was taken up with the social inquiry. As was described in a previous chapter, this consisted of the three steps--observe, judge, act--by which the members of the organization are to endeavor to solve the problems of the student world. The group leader (Jim the first year, Bob the second) had met with the moderator previous to the meeting to go over the matter for the social inquiry and to plan the discussion. During this conference, the moderator and leader would talk over the progress of the group together with its problems and plans. The time of this interview would range from ten minutes to an hour or more, and was always considered of importance, since the success of the group was held to depend upon the ability of the leader to stimulate and guide a profitable discussion at the meetings themselves. Bob worked very hard to arouse thought on the part of others at the meeting and to get all members to contribute. He acquired some skill at this. Jim had put little effort into it.

As an example of the social inquiry at the group meetings, the discussion of the members on the matter of knowing their classmates might serve. They considered in the "Observe" the number of classmates actually known to

them, also the meaning of the term know in this regard. They discovered that a relatively small group of fellow students could be considered as acquaintances, and even many of these were known only superficially. In the "Judge" section of the inquiry, they discussed the natural advantages as well as the Christian motives that would lead a member of the lay apostolate to attempt a more intensive knowledge of those with whom he daily comes in contact. At the conclusion, in the "Act," it was decided that each member would become acquainted with three classmates before the next meeting.

It was not always found possible to cover all three steps of the social inquiry in one meeting. Often it was necessary to gather facts about a situation before it could be considered. However, the derivation of a specific action from each meeting's discussion was always insisted upon, if only the fathering of a certain type of facts. Over the two years of this group's existence, this writer sometimes marvelled at the penetration achieved in this type of group analysis, but more often he was disappointed at the apparent lack of interest in and feeling of responsibility toward glaring problems, the hasty judgments and decisions, and the sometimes hilarious or lackadaisical manner in which the discussions were carried on.

The meeting closed with a few remarks from the moderator. Very rarely, although he was often tempted, did he break into the meeting to correct or assist. Usually he was content to wait until the close to commend their efforts, wisdom, or ambition, or to make suggestions on points which were faulty or imprudent. The Gospel leader for the next week's meeting was selected, and the meeting closed with prayer--and the hasty gathering of milk bottles, lunch wrappings, and books.

Such was the plan adhered to in the meetings held by the group being described. Deviations were occasionally necessary, but these were held to a minimum. It now remains to sketch the activities of this group from the time of formation until the graduation of the members.

#### FIRST SEMESTER, 1952-1953

The first semester of the 1952-1953 school year found them taking up successively four topics for their discussion and action. Initially they worked on helping their classmates, then the student retreat, their student vocation, and finally Christmas food baskets for the poor. Personal contact of the individual member with his friends and associates outside the group was the method most often used, e.g., personal services rendered where it was considered needed; inquiring into attitudes prevalent toward homework, retreat, and attempting to convince others of the desirability of going to confession during the retreat. They also planned and initiated class discussions as a means of enlightening their classmates on the obligations resulting from their vocation as students. Signs and posters were made and distributed in connection with their work on the retreat and Christmas basket projects, the latter being a planned project in which duties of various types were assigned and performed by the members.

What were the results of this semester's work? In a tangible way, many poor families in the vicinity received an extra supply of foodstuffs for the holiday season; posters and signs were noticed about the school. Whether attitudes and convictions on the part of the members or their fellow students were changed, or even whether or not their overt behavior was affected to any

degree, was not possible to determine.

During this period, the members of the group made their first contact with other Young Christian Students from their own school and other Catholic high schools in Chicago when they attended a Study Night, consisting of two hours of speeches and discussion regarding the work of the movement.

#### SECOND SEMESTER, 1952-1953

During this period, the group's inquiries were concerned with the topics of drinking and recreation, homework, Easter, profanity, preparations for their senior year, and summer problems. The members were encouraged to form teams of their friends to assist them in their work in the movement. Their methods in dealing with the topics just mentioned consisted almost entirely in questioning their team members and other fellow students to obtain a true estimate of the situation, and then of attempting to convince them of the correct Christian attitudes and mode of behavior. In their gathering of facts, they did much more or less subtle inquiring in regard to the prevalence of drinking, attitudes toward doing homework, use of leisure time, and the value of an early election of the senior council. Many difficulties were encountered in their attempts to put over the correct attitudes. Drinking among high school students, although considered by them to be a problem of major importance, was finally relegated to the position of a sideline action, to be dealt with as each saw fit since no definite program of action could be found. Homework, proper methods of doing it, and its place in the high school system were discussed for two months and then abandoned. Minor individual successes were reported in regard to both drinking and homework, as well as



with the problem of profanity; but the end of the school year found neither members nor moderator conscious of any appreciable difference in attitude or conduct in these matters on the part of the student body or even the junior department. The reason might be found in their small numbers, together with an attempt to remedy too many problems and the failure to discover effective modes of action for dealing with them.

#### SUMMER, 1953

The early part of the summer season, 1953, was marked by a trip taken by four of the group members (Jim, Ed, Dennis, Tom) to a college in Minnesota where the Christian Brothers of the Midwest province were assembled for their annual retreat. A demonstration group meeting was presented to this audience; the regular plan of the weekly meeting was adhered to, although a bit of necessary explanation was interjected from time to time. After the meeting there was an open discussion period during which the boys answered the questions regarding their work in the organization. This writer was impressed at the conviction with which the youths spoke of the movement and their work of the past year; it was evident that they at least had benefited from the discussions and actions of the preceding months.

Meetings were held on a biweekly basis during the months of July and August of this summer. Inquiries dealing with the attitude towards women fellow-employees in industry and business, summer recreation, profanity, and at the end of the summer, freshmen orientation, were taken. Again, each member attempted to better the above situations by his personal influence upon his friends and acquaintances. An exception to this method was the freshmen

orientation, which consisted of a planned program of welcoming, talks, and school tours, intended to ease the entrance of the freshman into his high school situation and insure that he would realize the interest of the school and upperclassmen in his progress. Apart from the orientation program, the moderator was not aware of any lasting achievements resulting from the summer's work. Again, perhaps, too much was attempted.

The group members realized, for the first time perhaps, the far-flung scope of the high school Young Christian Students movement, when most of them attended the Summer Study Week in late August. Here they went through a program of talks, discussions, worship, and recreation in the company of students from many sections of the country. Apparently they enjoyed it and were encouraged to greater efforts by their participation in this study week.

#### SENIOR YEAR, 1953-1954

The group began the new school term--their last year of high school--with high hopes for a successful year in the Young Christian Students, and their moderator shared these expectations. A number of changes had come about or were deliberately introduced which, it was hoped, would increase the effectiveness of their work, it was hoped. They had met with the YCS group of the class ahead of them in school to receive their suggestions and advice for the coming year.

It was planned that two lunch periods each week, instead of the weekly sessions of the previous year would be used for the group meetings during the coming year. This would insure the full hour, considered ideal for the weekly meeting. All had purchased copies of the official inquiry

booklet, and the group expected to attack the problems outlined therein in conjunction with all the other high school YCS groups throughout the nation. Contact with the newly established national headquarters was insured by each member's purchasing a subscription to the bulletin this office was to issue periodically during the year. The collection of dues was introduced to support the headquarters. A new feature in the meeting was to be the liturgy discussion following the Gospel discussion; this would provide opportunity to discuss the sacramental life of the Church: Mass, sacraments, and church seasons. New emphasis was to be placed on teams, and, in addition to the other reports made at the meeting, another regarding the members' contacts with their team members during the week was to be introduced. All of these developments became operative; the results will be noted later.

The inquiries of the year dealt with a variety of topics: conduct toward new students, social pressures on students, cliques in the school, attitude toward authority among the students, value of the senior council, homework, manner of studying, preparation for out of school life, use of leisure time, dating, Lent, rosaries, and the senior retreat. Team members were used more extensively this year than ever before, both as sources of opinions and objects of persuasive attempts and also for specific help in ushering assignments, promotion of the all-Chicago YCS Dance in January, and attendance at conferences. However, personal contact of the group members with their team members and other fellow students remained the preferred way of bringing the situation in line with what they considered to be the correct principles.

A number of definite projects were carried out by the group during

this year. Freshmen orientation has already been mentioned; Christmas baskets were handled again, but this year the initiative was taken by another YCS group in a lower department in the school. The members of our group merely gave assistance to the younger lads, and without the zest of the previous year's campaign. Other projects included a library vocational pamphlet display, a campaign for the purchase and use of rosaries by all members of the senior class, publishing "Sam Slughead" (a pamphlet satirizing the prevalent scholastic faults to be found among the student body), and an induction ceremony for new group members in the lower classes.

What were the results of this year's work? One boy organized a neighborhood club as a result of the discussion of leisure time; several boys, probable failures, succeeded in passing as a result of intensive help given at examination time; poor families were fed at Christmas. Other consequences must have lain in the realm of attitudes and convictions; none of the institutions which make up the American Catholic high school system was noticeably affected, however, e.g., homework habits, dating system, faculty-student relationships, etc.

#### ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

It will now be possible to apply our analysis of the methods of the Young Christian Students movement as outlined in the literature of the movement to the description of its operation as just described. Tentative evaluation of the effectiveness of these methods, as revealed by their use, can also be attempted, in order that it may be seen to what extent social control is achieved. It is to be understood that the limitations of this evaluation

are to be kept in mind throughout, based as they are upon such a limited experience.

It can be asserted that the group described in this chapter was definitely in harmony with the orthodox teaching of the Roman Catholic religion. The moderator saw to it that background material was provided for the theological and moral judgments that were to be made and any incipient heresies were quickly eliminated in his remarks at the close of the meeting. These deviations usually took the form of overly rigorous applications of the moral law to concrete situations.

As seen in the previous chapter, the aim of the organization is to apply the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith to the area of student life. And it can be said that our group confined its work to this area. The underlying theme of most of the inquiries was that of student vocation which can be described thus: the duty of state of pupils in school is to make as full as possible a use of the educational opportunities afforded them. Not directly concerned with the school are the particular moral problems of the adolescent age group, although some affect the quality and amount of work done in that institution. Dating, drinking, profanity were also among these moral problems taken up by the group. The Christmas basket campaign was perhaps the only project in which the stated aim of the organization would be most difficult to find.

The choice of topics for their discussion and action was determined for the most part either by the moderator and group leader or by the problems outlined in the program booklet furnished by the central headquarters. This latter was used only in the second year of the group's functioning, since none

existed during the first year. Although the members of the group were encouraged to adapt the prepared questions to the situation prevailing in their own school, it was this writer's observation that their use of the outlines was largely passive; little genuine reflection apparently was aroused much of the time. The group members agreed that the problems existed; but since their personal contact methods of dealing with them appeared unsuccessful, they easily became discouraged and abandoned the topics before any noticeable accomplishment had been made.

It was mentioned previously that the members of YCS were encouraged to adopt a "giving ourselves" mentality; their efforts to change the student world were to be motivated by charity for their fellow students. The service report was included in the meeting to foster this attitude. The writer does not feel it possible to pronounce on the results of this emphasis.

Organization was also given as a necessary characteristic of any effort to achieve the aims of the movement. The group just described made up the basic unit prescribed for the organization, i.e., a small group of student leaders who meet weekly to discuss and plan. Teams, which were to make for the extension of the group's activities, were used, although not to the extent set forth by the directives. Most of the group members could claim no more than two or three fellow students as belonging to their teams. There were no general members affiliated with the group. In a few instances the projects of the group did reach the attention of all their classmates (posters, library display, Christmas baskets). In most cases, however, only a small portion of the department was contacted. In this connection, the question of numbers arises. In order to achieve the aims of the Young Christian students in a

school, what proportion of the school population should be actively engaged, either as members of groups or of teams? It can be said that it should be sufficient to contact and influence every member of the student body. Other factors, of course, besides that of mere numbers are involved, but the experience of the group described in this chapter would seem to indicate that one group of seven or eight leaders can not effectively influence a class of over two hundred students.

Wider organizational aspects of the movement were also participated in by this group. The other YCS groups in the school (there were never more than two other) were contacted on the occasion of joint meetings or conferences. This occurred about ten times during the group's existence and usually served as a sort of stimulus to greater action. They also held joint meetings with the other groups in the city federation; they were affiliated to the central headquarters as soon as it was established; and the national business meetings and study week were attended by delegates from the group. This was effective, it is believed, in widening the horizons of at least some of the members, enabling them to see student problems in a wider context than that of their own school.

The members of this group, as was noted when the manner of choosing them was described, were thought to be leaders, that is, boys who because of certain qualities of personality, and athletic or other accomplishments, were able to exert influence upon their classmates. Election to the post of class officer, which can usually be considered some attribution of leadership qualities on the part of their classmates, seemed to bear out this judgment in the cases of nearly all members of the group. Only Dennis the cheerleader did not

hold some post in the senior class or school organization. Also, the athletic achievements of most of them--also a source of high prestige value in a high school--can be held to have added to their influence. All had pleasing personalities and were able to "get along" easily with their classmates. The group as a whole was not typical of the general run of the class in that they appeared to possess a greater degree of piety, albeit of a manly sort, and applied themselves more seriously to study than did their associates in the school. The writer feels that the class as a whole might have been more effectively influenced, had other members been added to the group. There were other lads in the class who seemed to have a wider following; school records revealed poorer scholastic work than that of the YCS members; they had less interest in school work and less apparent piety. All of these factors would have made it more difficult to attract them to the movement. The selection and training of leaders remains a major problem in YCS.

It has already been seen that the weekly meeting, considered the mainspring in the program of the movement, was held quite faithfully by this group. The social inquiry was adhered to. It was observed that the "judge" section seemed to get least attention from the boys: they devoted little effort to ferreting out the principles of reason and faith against which the situations were to be projected in order to arrive at a conclusion as to their harmony with the desired pattern.

The effectiveness of the actions has already been evaluated during the description of them. It can further be noted that this writer had to take over much of the initiative in all those action undertaken, particularly when it came to the organized projects. The members were either unable or were



disinclined to take the responsibility upon themselves. Four types of actions were used during the existence of the group: (1) services--freshmen orientation; (2) campaigns--retreat posters, Christmas baskets; (3) personal contact; and (4) projects--pamphlet display; open discussion meeting on dishonesty.

How did the movement exercise social control over the members of this group themselves? Did the Gospel and liturgy discussions contribute to the development of Christian attitudes? It was here that some of the most encouraging, although indirect, results were noted. During the two discussions just mentioned, the members spoke freely and often associated with the topic at hand material gained from sermons or classroom religion instruction. All were boys of good character upon their entrance into the movement; their participation did not hinder the development of a Christian character; rather this writer believes that it noticeably augmented it. Brother Henry John's study,<sup>1</sup> in which he questioned former members of the high school Young Christian Students movement as to the effect they felt their participation to have had upon their spiritual life, would be in agreement with this.

The other principal effect upon the members themselves which was noted was in their attitudes towards study. More serious efforts were made in this regard. Whether or not the decision which all made to go on to college after graduation was affected by YCS was not determined. One of the group members (Jim) is engaged in the college branch of the movement; the others are

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<sup>1</sup> Brother Henry John, F.S.C., The Effect of YCS upon the Spiritual Life of American Boys, Unpublished Bachelor's Thesis, St. Mary's College, Winona, Minnesota, 1955.

not, although it is functioning in the institutions where most are in attendance.

Indications that the members were not overly impressed with the value of their work consisted of their conduct during the meetings; this often showed tendencies toward hilarity or ennui. Lack of interest was shown by unexplained absences from meetings. The usual pressure of senior activities, especially toward the end of the term, caused most of the members to cease attendance completely during the last month, although efforts were made to persuade them to continue until the end. Bob, the group leader, and Pat, the idealist, were the most faithful; for the rest the meetings became more and more of a chore. Their lassitude revealed this attitude.

Perhaps the extension of the meetings to include two lunch periods a week would help to account for the decrease in participation. The normal relaxation of this break period in the classroom routine was hindered for the members, as was also participation in the intramural sports carried on at this time. However, it was the only time when the entire group could be present; there seemed no other alternative.

One more source of influence upon the members themselves must be mentioned. The moderator met with the group leader before the meeting each week, and this personal contact was used to encourage and instruct them. The other members of the group were also seen in this manner whenever it was their turn to lead the Gospel inquiry. Since the moderator also taught sociology to this group, his choice of class materials and assigned reading was directed to some degree to topics related to YCS.

The reader has no doubt noted that the group described was not considered by the writer to have achieved much success in exercising control over

their fellow students. This constitutes the main object of the movement, and raises a question as to reasons for its failure. It may have been caused by poor selection of leaders, improper direction on the part of the moderator, natural adolescent irresponsibility, or a number of other factors. However, the writer has become aware of similar experiences on the part of many of his fellow moderators. At meetings with the latter, the capabilities of high school students for lay apostolic responsibility has been frequently discussed and sometimes denied to a degree.

The type of guidance to be exerted by the moderator is a related question. This writer attempted to leave as wide a scope as possible for student initiative, until he felt a more positive role was necessary to ensure continuance of the group. Results were not forthcoming to this course of action either. Inspiration is perhaps the major contribution of the adult moderator, and this is an intangible quality.

The fact remains that the movement sees a large turnover in moderators each year, and it seems necessary to attribute this, in part at least, to the lack of success achieved by most groups. Studies similar to the present one may help to locate weaknesses in the system, or even to point up the impracticability of the movement in the American Catholic high school system.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this study we have considered social control in our working concept as

The planned methods by which the high school Young Christian Student movement in the United States aims at persuading its members, fellow Catholics, and other societies, to conform to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion and the ecclesiastical laws of the Roman Catholic Church.

It is now possible, after our survey of the Young Christian Students movement, to make specific application of this concept.

It has been established that the objective of the organization of Young Christian Students is to further the beliefs and norms of the Roman Catholic Church; this is the purpose of its existence. The movement operates under the assumption, drawn from the statements of recent Popes and from the observations of the members themselves, that there are widespread influences in the world, and in student life in particular, which are inimical to conformity to these doctrines and laws on the part of today's youth.

The use of the term "persuades" to describe the mode of operation of YCS methods has been shown to be applicable. The organization lacks the authority to apply coercive sanctions, either upon its own members or outsiders. Membership is voluntary in the group; the role of the adult moderator is largely advisory. Individuals and groups not connected with the YCS are to be influenced in thought and action by personal leadership, campaigns which use the mass communication media to some extent, discussions, and

similar methods. It can be noted that the Young Christian Students and other Catholic Action movements have no official authority in the Roman Catholic Church and can levy no ecclesiastical sanctions of any sort. They can impose no new moral obligations in addition to those already binding by the laws and doctrines of the Church.

The structure and method of operation of the Young Christian Students movement have been surveyed, and it has been shown that both have a specific connection with the objectives of the movement, i.e., they are planned and conscious attempts to influence their own members and other individuals and groups. The movement is organized because it attempts to change institutions in the student society.

It seeks to exert an effect upon fellow students and their parish, home, neighborhood, and work groups. The principal method in this regard is the social inquiry, in which a methodical investigation and judgment of specific situations is followed by a planned action which is designed to bring influence to bear about these individuals and groups.

Another method of exercising social control over outsiders is the use of personal leadership qualities. Necessarily this is not minutely detailed for each YCS member, since leadership is not clearly understood; however, since it is the object of much psychological research today, it may be expected to bring forth helpful suggestions in the future.

Team members and general members, though connected to some extent with the Young Christian Students organization, are in the whole, recipients of its influence and not active forces. Therefore the two above methods of

influence and example can be used on the group members to bring about a change in the attitudes or actions of the team and general members.

Undoubtedly, there are many intangible effects upon the group members themselves which result from their participation in the YCS activities; yet it would be difficult to ascertain what these might be. The organization does, however, utilize three methods for the specific purpose of increasing knowledge of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church as it deepens the convictions of the members regarding the worth of their adherence. These methods are (1) the advice and encouragement of the chaplain; (2) the Gospel and liturgy discussions at the weekly group meetings; and (3) the reports required of all members at each meeting.

Once the aims and methods of the high school Young Christian Students movement have been analyzed in terms of the concept of social control, the question can be asked: does the organization actually achieve its purpose? Do its members and associates towards which the members direct their efforts achieve a higher degree of living the doctrines and laws of the Roman Catholic Church?

The answer would be difficult to determine. The preceding chapter in this study described the operation of a YCS group known to the author. Most of the effectiveness of its work was seen in the members themselves whose attitudes and convictions were brought closer to the ideal proposed by the Catholic Church. Apparently little effect was achieved and observed on those fellow students not members of the group; again, we acknowledge this point as difficult to ascertain.

A related study, one which can be used for evaluation purposes, is that done by Brother Lawrence Martin in 1962, mentioned previously. He submitted a questionnaire to YCS moderators in eighteen schools in the states of Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Tennessee; in the questionnaire he asked them to answer his questions on the structure, methods, and activities of their groups. Conclusions pertinent to the present discussion can be briefly commented upon.

One in particular dwelt with the difficulty of choosing the members of the group and of maintaining their interest until the group became firmly established. He concluded that the influence at the time of his survey was felt in the main in the fields of school spirit and study. Such accomplished good is perceptible in the various services established or assisted by YCS groups in their student communities. A bond of unity is maintained by the general uniformity of plan used in the weekly group meetings.

As can be seen, some of his conclusions differ from those of the author. The need for additional evaluation by exact studies is clearly seen.

Since the aim of the high school Young Christian Students movement is so praiseworthy from the Catholic point of view, it is desirable that these researches be made soon. Any organization which has for its aim the adherence to the teaching of Christ as presented to us in the doctrine and laws of His Church and which can secure such an effect is well worth the prayerful encouragement of all.

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