



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Survey of Cuban Agricultural Workers, 1956-57¹

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Preface

This publication contains a summary of the translation of the Survey of Cuban Agricultural Workers conducted by members of the University Catholic Association (*Agrupación Católica Universitaria*, ACU) throughout Cuba in 1956-57. I read this 63-page booklet soon after it was published in Cuba. Its content made an indelible impression on me. The reality depicted in that booklet encompassed 350,000 male agricultural workers and 2,100,000 agricultural family members, or 34% of the total Cuban population.

The need to circulate that important document led me to translate it into English. To publish it as an International Working Paper (IWP), I had to modify some of its format but not its content. The complete IWP is also available at the Research Initiative on Cuban Agriculture website at www.cubanag.ifas.ufl.edu. This document provides useful information about the reality of the Cuban republic that ended on January 1, 1959.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the many current and former members of the University Catholic Association who honor me with their

friendship. Several people contributed in many ways to the completion of this effort. They include Juan Carlos Espinosa and Clarita Baloyra. Special thanks to José Manuel (Manolín) Hernández, Professor Emeritus at Georgetown University, for his information and his intervention to obtain permission to translate and publish the original booklet. Such authorization came from Father Amando Llorente, SJ. Father Llorente has been ACU's director since the death of its founder, Father Felipe Rey de Castro, SJ, in 1952. He held that position in Cuba until 1960 and continues in that role in Miami, Florida. I also thank Zoe Blanco Roca, of the Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami, who found the original publication and mailed me a copy.

My admiration for those who have given their lives in the constant struggle for a better Cuba (different from the Cuba portrayed in this booklet) makes me mention the names of three young ACU members who were murdered on December 28, 1958, in Pan de Guajaibón while trying to reach the mountains of Pinar del Rio to join the guerrillas: José Ignacio Martí Santa Cruz, Javier Calvo Formoso, Julián Martínez Inclán, and Ramón Pérez Lima.

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1. This is EDIS document FE 297, a publication of the Department of Food and Resource Economics, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. Published September 2001. For the Spanish version of this document, please see FE 292 at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FE292>.
 2. Jose Alvarez, professor, Everglades Research and Education Center, Belle Glade, FL, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. Professor Alvarez received permission to reproduce this document in Spanish and to translate it into English from the University Catholic Association (ACU).

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Finally, I dedicate this effort to the memory of Professor Enrique Baloyra, who carried to his final resting place his medal of *agrupado*, placed around his neck by his widow, my sister Clarita. "El Kike" was a living example of a true Catholic, patriot, and educator. He would be happy to know that, through this publication, his beloved ACU still has a voice in Cuban affairs.

Presentation

By conducting this socioeconomic research, we, the members of the University Catholic Association, are only fulfilling our duty as Catholics, putting our energies and professional skills to the service of our Nation. To conduct this survey research in all areas of the Cuban Republic in the year 1957 is something that cannot be imagined until one tries to do it. Our researchers had to overcome not only the irregular topography of our Fatherland, but also the mental anomalies that disturb our citizens.

The objective of the survey had three main goals. First, to collect, for the first time in Cuba, true and detailed statistics on the living conditions of the agricultural workers that would be useful in both the analysis of and finding solutions to their socioeconomic problems. Second, to facilitate to our members in the cities, the opportunity to feel the reality of our countryside and understand its difficulties. Finally, to be able to affirm, with the corresponding knowledge and with proofs in hand, that the Cuban peasants are struggling because of national selfishness and that our Nation cannot seek real progress while due attention is not given to our countryside.

The city of Havana is living an epoch of extraordinary prosperity while the countryside, and especially the agricultural workers, are living in conditions of stagnation, misery, and desperation hard to believe. At the end of one of our meetings, Dr. José Ignacio Lasaga made a comment that we can hardly forget: "In all my travels throughout Europe, [Latin] America, and Africa, very few times have I found peasants living more miserably than the Cuban agricultural worker." This statement is very strong and overwhelming, but it is the truth.

The family of the Cuban agricultural worker, with six persons on average, only has an annual income of 548.75 pesos (1 Peso = 1 US Dollar); that is, an annual average of 91.56 pesos per person. The agricultural working population, which can be calculated as 350,000 workers and 2,100,000 family members, has only an annual income of 190 million pesos. In other words, despite the fact that they account for 34% of the total population, their earnings account for only 10% of the national income.

The Cuban agricultural worker, deceived by governments and forgotten by the leaders of all national sectors, keeps himself astonishingly honest, moral, and human. He is waiting with sadness, but with dignity, for the most qualified and best equipped people to open the way and show him how to march toward development and progress. God willing, this study of the economic situation of the Cuban agricultural workers will act as a light to clarify the current lack of information and will lead to a careful analysis of the causes of that situation for a just and fast rectification.

Introduction

Origin and Purpose

Cuba is, and will be for a long time, a country with an agrarian economy. Despite the remarkable rural exodus that was increased by the concentration of investments and expenditures in urban areas, Cuba's rural population decreased from 56% of the total population in 1907 to 44% of the total population in 1957. Today's agricultural workers account for 40% of the labor force and 33% of the national income. These facts, along with the great misery that, at first sight, is observed in our countryside, more than justifies any effort aimed at bringing to light the peasant problem.

For us Catholics, the peasant mass is of utmost importance. It has merited the frequent attention of the Roman Pontiffs in their economic and social aspects. As Catholics and Cubans, these are the main reasons that moved us to undertake this gigantic task 18 months ago. With sadness for us, the analysis of the work, whose explanations and results we present below, has more than justified the reasons that impelled us to carry it out.

Questionnaire Design

Because the questionnaire is one of the bases on which the success of a survey rests, its questions must be structured with clarity for a proper investigation. With this prior knowledge, we tried to prepare a questionnaire as perfect as possible. To that effect, we distributed the main topics that the survey would encompass to a group of students and professionals and asked them for suggestions concerning the questions. The questionnaire was developed from these reports and similar material that we obtained for our study.

With the testing questionnaire, we began a preliminary investigation in which eight pairs of interviewers conducted 100 interviews for three days in four different zones. Next, the group spent two months revising the questionnaires, the interviewers' reports, and conversational interview questions to develop the final questionnaire. The campaign plan, and the manner to put it into practice, was developed from those meetings.

Drawing the Sample

The study of a determined universe through the survey method involves examining a small, representative sample of the set to be studied. A well-distributed, small sample (which has concentrated the interviews of a determined group) renders more dependable results than a greater sample.

Inasmuch as our study encompassed only one social stratum, the agricultural worker, a previous stratification was unnecessary. Thus we distributed the 1,000 interviews (which was a sampling of 400,000 agricultural workers) among the 126 municipalities. This provided one interview per 400 cases—a larger proportion than the one required for our work.

Training the Interviewers

Once the sample was drawn, the next step was to instruct a volunteer group of students and professionals of the University Catholic Association on how to conduct the interviews. The instruction booklet, which was distributed to the future interviewers, explained not only the presentation of

each of the questions, but also the norms of courtesy used in the countryside and the measures and terms the interviewers needed to know, as well as other special instructions.

Field Work

On November 30, 1956, after five months of intense preparation, we were ready to start gathering the data throughout the island. The object of our research was the census of agricultural families. For such, we understood that a family, according to the 1953 Population, Housing and Electoral Census, was defined as all persons living in the same residential unit, whether or not related by family bond, for whatever reasons. To be considered an agricultural working family for the survey, it was necessary that the family's main source of income must be a salary, wage, or in-kind retribution for work performed for a third party who owns or represents the land and capital goods. In addition, the agricultural family had to live in a rural area with a population nucleus of less than 150 inhabitants that, as a general rule, had no medical, legal, or recreational services and, in the majority of cases, lacked electricity. All these requirements were taken from the concepts established in the 1953 census.

To the topographical difficulties we had to add the great mistrust of many of the interviewees, which made the task more difficult and tiresome in many cases. The prohibition of traveling over some areas in Pinar del Río, Las Villas, and Oriente, along with the arrest of some of the interviewers, made it impossible to obtain the information in several specific places.

Cost and Time

In general, the work was performed, in its majority, by the students and professionals of the ACU. One could say, without exaggerating, that the total work took 15,000 hours. The interviewers traveled about 150,000 kilometers, at an estimated cost of \$30,000 (the real expenses were only \$1,600 since the interviewers were volunteers).

Reliability of the Results

One of the worrying questions, when analyzing the results of a sampling, is the extent to which the sample is representative of the universe studied. A common practice is to include in the research some figures that are known for the whole universe in order to compare the values obtained against the benchmark figures. In our study the comparison values were registered in the 1953 census. If the results of our research (listed first in the list below) are compared with the 1953 census results (listed second in the list below), we can see how the studied sample was completely representative of the total number of agricultural workers. In 1956-57 versus 1953, the percentages of use are as follows:

- kerosene for lighting: 89.84% and 85.53%
- population younger than 16 years: 44.70% and 44.61%
- whites: 86.01% and 85.72%
- water from wells: 88.52% and 83.59%
- wooden houses, with palm-leaf roofs, and dirt floors: 60.35% and 58.41%
- houses without toilet or privy: 63.96% and 62.77%
- inhabited, without paying rent: 55.48% and 54.73%
- joined in matrimony: 34.13% and 34.32%
- women older than 12 years, without children: 45.31% and 44.30%
- not paying rent: 55.48% and 54.73%
- illiteracy: 43.09% and 42.62%
- married: 34.13% and 34.32%
- single: 63.64% and 63.02%.

However, we need to do more than just look at the statistics, we need to listen with the heart to the voice of 2,500,000 countrymen, Cubans like us, who through the statistics talk about their lives and their problems.

The Survey

Height and Weight

The average height and weight in a community are, to a certain extent, an index of the sanitary conditions of that community. The average height of the Cuban male agricultural worker is 5 feet and 4 inches. Knowing from other studies that the height of the Cuban woman is 5 feet and 3 inches, we note the small difference between the two. It needs to be stated, however, that the average height of the male agricultural worker is not representative of the height of the average Cuban man, but is indicative of the backward and unsanitary hygiene-related conditions in our country.

Based on the commonly accepted height-weight charts, the average weight of our male agricultural worker should be 153 pounds. In our survey, however, he weighs 16 pounds below the theoretical average. This datum is in agreement with the index of malnutrition, which is 91%.

Study of the Diet

Global Caloric Contribution

Based on the average height-weight charts and the type of work performed, our agricultural worker should receive a daily intake of 3,500 calories. The information gathered in our survey shows that the daily real caloric intake is less than 2,500 calories.

We note that the 1,000-calories deficit may not be a deficiency—these 1,000 calories are probably consumed as fruits and sugar, which were not studied in our research. The reader should not be surprised to know that fruits do not constitute a fundamental food in the survey, which is intended to reflect a peasant phenomenon. Fruit is consumed much more frequently in the urban areas than in the rural areas.

Qualitative Analysis of the Diet

In a normal diet, a sufficient portion must have:

- Enough calories (energetic value, mainly provided by carbohydrates)

- Enough proteins (meats, eggs, milk, and some vegetables such as beans)
- Enough fats
- Enough carbohydrates (sugar, flour, starch, legumes, and fruits)
- Enough vitamins, mineral salts, etc.

The global caloric value, analyzed in another section, is insufficient in the average diet of the agricultural worker.

For the study of the different foods that are contained in the customary diet of this type of peasant, we followed the criterion of directly asking what they had eaten the day before the interview. Because the interviewers knew, based on pre-testing results, more or less what the forthcoming answers would be, questions were asked in a manner that suggested answers so as to make it easier for the respondent to be frank. The following data represent the frequency (number of days per month) with which one type of food was present in the composition of the head of the family's diet on the day preceding the interview: bread, 3.36 days; milk, 11.22 days; flour, 7.14 days; beans, 23.28 days; rice, 24.08 days; meat, 4.02 days; eggs, 2.12 days; fish, 0.72 days; and viandas (taro, sweet potato, pumpkin, yam, cassava), 22 days.

The former did not preclude the interviewer from developing an impression of what occurred in the remaining days of the year through friendly conversations with the respondents. In the great majority of cases, the food of the previous day was a carbon copy of the food of the other previous days. In addition, the constancy with which the same data repeat themselves renders an enormous validity to the results obtained.

Very little animal protein is an integral part of the agricultural worker's daily diet. Only 4% of the interviewees consumed meat, less than 1% consumed fish, 2.12% consumed eggs, and 11.22% consumed milk.

How does the peasant subsist with such a deficient diet in animal protein? There exists a providential and redeeming element: the bean. As a

basic element of the peasant's diet, the bean is, by exception, a vegetable very rich in protein. In other countries where corn represents the role of beans in Cuba, deficiency illnesses are more frequent. We can assume, without fear of making a mistake, that the Cuban peasant does not suffer from more deficiency illnesses thanks to beans.

Carbohydrates reveal curious and significant facts, especially for foreign observers. Bread, the universal food par excellence and the symbol of human feeding, is only consumed by 3.36% of our agricultural workers.

The consumption index of viandas (22% of the total diet) can be broken down as follows: Cassava, 9%; plantain, 3%; taro, 4%; sweet potato, 6%; and pumpkin, 0.6%.

Without a doubt, the main source of energetic elements is rice, which provides 24% of the total diet (the highest index). If we compare rice consumption (24%) with bean consumption (23%) and vianda consumption (22%), we can conclude that the Cuban agricultural worker's main diet is rice, beans, and viandas.

The survey did not study, for the inherent difficulties, the consumption of sugar. We can be certain, however, that sugar, in one form or another, is part of the daily diet of the Cuban peasant. Also, for obvious reasons, green vegetables consumption is not studied.

This is the statistical truth, but the reality of life is more painful. The data are unable to express the pathetic fact of a monotonous (day-after-day) daily diet of rice, beans and viandas. Children and adolescents grow without hardly drinking milk at the age when it is most needed. Meats, raw vegetables, and eggs. . . are all absent from the daily ration. What is behind this dramatic picture? Ignorance, of course, and bad feeding habits due to lack of education and an attachment to irrational routine methods.

State of Physical Health

The data concerning the diseases present in the peasant's family have been obtained through two methods. First, by asking the interviewee directly if

he suffered from such diseases. Second, by asking the interviewee about his symptoms and the syndromes that allows one to assume or suspect the presence of a disease. This part of the questionnaire was designed and evaluated by medical personnel.

Lung Tuberculosis

The index of tuberculosis infection in a community is a good index to assess the standard of living. The factors that help in the development of this disease are: bad diet, overcrowding and promiscuity in the dwelling, bad living habits, and physical exhaustion. Supposedly, 14% of the peasants interviewed suffer or have suffered from tuberculosis.

Diseases of Hydro-Telluric Contamination

These are those diseases that are transmitted, not from person to person, but through the waters and the land. Some of them include: typhoid fever (commonly known in Cuba as typhus), intestinal infections from different germs, dysentery from amoebas, and intestinal parasitism.

Just as the tuberculosis index measures the economic level of a country, the index of these diseases measures better than anything else the sanitary advancement of a community. Typhus has been present in 13% of the Cuban agricultural workers. This figure is perfectly understandable if one recalls that only 6% of the housing units have water pipe lines; that in the 64% of the cases with outdoor privy, this is rarely located more than 30 meters away from the well, which is the minimum distance required to avoid water contamination. The figures are even more alarming concerning intestinal parasitism. Thirty-six percent declared without any doubt that they suffered from the disease.

There is a parasite in Cuba, which in general produces the worst cases, called *Necator Americanus*. This worm, as opposed to the others, is not acquired by ingestion. When a person with parasitism defecates on the soil, the egg of *Necator* develops, becomes larva and then this larva penetrates the bare foot puncturing the person's skin. We can deduce that the high index of infection from *Necator* is signaling three important facts: first, lack of sanitary privies;

second, bad education concerning hygiene including depositions on the soil and walking barefooted; and third, as usual, the problem of the misery which impedes the purchasing of shoes.

Paludism is mentioned as an antecedent by 31% of the peasants. In the case of paludism the means for contagion is the mosquito.

Medical Assistance

Having learned the sanitary level within which the life of the agricultural worker takes place, the inhabitant of the capital has all right to think that all salary earned is not enough to cover medical care. However, according to the survey, the average monthly expenses of a family for medical care is \$2. This is for 6 persons that conform the average family. It is evident that the majority of the diseases do not receive any medical attention.

The most startling figure is the following one: 80.76% stated that they received help only from a paid doctor; that is, a private physician that charges for his or her services. Only 8% receive free medical care from the State and this is a very significant figure. One has to remember that we are referring to the inland worker because in the small towns of the countryside it is a very different matter. The boss or the union provides medical care to 4% of the agricultural workers and another equal percentage of 4% receives professional care from private clinics.

Medicines

In 70.49% of the cases there were medications in the house at the time of the interview. Of these medicines, 46.67% were special formulas, what are commonly referred to as prescriptions. The rest belonged to pharmaceutical specialties, commonly known as *patente*; that is, those manufactured by laboratories and sold in the pharmacy already packaged.

Of these medicines (*patentes*), 74.77% were from ethical laboratories; that is, from manufacturing labs which, in the physician's eyes, deserve moral credit. The remaining 25% belonged to non-ethical laboratories. These laboratories function in the following manner: they manufacture a series of

products almost unusable with a very reduced cost of production which are offered as a business to doctors with a low ethics. The physician prescribes this medication and receives one-half of the profits. Since the product has a high price, this illegal business becomes an important source of income for the physician, to the point that there are professional doctors in the interior of the Republic who charge absolutely nothing for the appointment, living exclusively from the profits derived from the business with those laboratories. One-fourth of the medicines prescribed to the peasants by their doctors are medications from useless fakes.

Social Aspect

In examining the agricultural workers' attitudes concerning health improvements for them and their families, the following two questions were asked: (1) From what do you expect a solution? and (2) From whom? The answers to the first question (with much prompting from the interviewers) included more schools (18.86%), more roads and highways (4.96%), more hospitals (2.72%), and more sources of employment (73.46%). The answers to the second question (again, with much prompting from the interviewers) included the government (68.73%), the Church (3.43%), the masons (4.3%), the bosses (16.72%), and the unions (6.82%).

Educational Aspect

Survey statistics revealed the terrifying fact that 43% of the peasants do not know how to read and write, which is almost one-half of the population of agricultural workers! This figure has to necessarily have its concomitant in the data of school attendance: 44% of the agricultural workers never attended school, 53.6% can read and write; 4% can read but not write; 55.89% attended school during childhood, and 21.66% attended beyond third grade.

Housing

As in past times, the type of housing most representative of that of agricultural workers is the classic *bohío*, whose characteristics do not seem to reflect the passing of time and new building technologies. As noted previously, ACU's research on housing followed the 1953 census criteria to

present a true description of housing for agricultural workers.

Building Materials

The 1953 census defined housing as that which isolates its occupants from the outside environment in a comfortable physical and spiritual climate. In many cases, the peasant's house consists of concrete floors, wooden walls, and palm-leaf roofs. Houses with brick or hewn stone walls are commonly classified as masonry houses. With one or another combination, most peasant dwellings fall within the minimum required to provide adequate housing. With those value judgments, we can better appreciate the combinations of building materials used in the houses of agricultural workers: 0.8% masonry, roof tiles, and cement; 2.50% wood, roof tiles, and concrete tiles; 1.70% wood, roof tiles, and cement; 1.70%; wood, roof tiles and soil: 2.04%; wood, roof tiles and wood: 7.37%; wood, palm leaves and cement: 19.49%; wood, palm leaves and soil: 60.35%; and other combinations: 5.75%.

By looking at the data it is easily observed that only 31.86%, less than one-third of the housing, surveyed in 1957 met the minimal required conditions.

Sanitary Installations

One of the most important characteristics of every dwelling is the existence of toilets and their condition. We assume that, if all peasant families could not enjoy sanitary installations commonly offered in the city, at least they could enjoy an outdoor privy because it is cheap and easy to build. Although this assumption is logical, the current reality of the type and location of sanitary facilities do not even reach the theoretical minimum we aspired to obtain. The reality is 2.08% have indoor toilets; 7.60% have outdoor toilets; 1.28% have indoor privies; 25.08% have outdoor privies; and 63.96% have no toilets or privies.

Bathrooms and Showers

It is logical to consider the bathroom or shower as a complement of every sanitary installation. We suppose, however, that the existence of an outdoor

bathroom or shower, since it does not have the sanitary importance of the privy, is an object easy to reach. The following figures appear to contradict our assumption: 5.76% have bathrooms or indoor showers; 11.62% have bathrooms or outdoor showers; and 82.62% have no bathrooms or showers.

Water Supply

From the data in the previous section, one can infer the number of houses that have installations for running water as the main supplier of their drinking water needs. We pointed to the possibility of the existence of installations for indoor water that comes from a nearby well. Although indoor water from wells is relatively easy to obtain, it is not present in more than 8% of the cases.

In the cases in which water is obtained from a well, it is generally transported to the house in different containers than from which it is drunk as needed. It was observed that most wells were not located far enough from the outdoor privy or other deposits of sewage to eliminate water contamination. To our regret, we do not have a frequency distribution of the distances between the wells and places of contamination. However, we accept that the houses (42.22%) reported in bad sanitary conditions were evaluated as a deficient supply of drinking water. The following figures show the manner in which the water supply is distributed to the peasants' houses: 3.24% had aqueduct water with indoor installation; 2.54% had aqueduct water connected outside the house; 5.42% had cistern water with indoor installation; 0.30% had water taken directly from a river; and 88.50% had wells.

Lighting

In analyzing the lighting in peasant housing, we found that 7.25% had electricity; 0.74% had acetylene and carbide lights/lamps; 89.84% had kerosene lamps; and 2.14% had no means of lighting. The enjoyment of electric service does not have to be considered as indispensable in the life of the agricultural workers, even more when we determine a logical order of priorities in necessary improvements.

Housing Capacity

It was impossible to perform a complete evaluation of the housing density per dwelling. Instead, we obtained a datum that makes it easy to assess to what degree our peasants had houses that allow them to have the necessary privacy and amplitude needed by the different groups that compose their families. Number of rooms used to sleep: one, 41.64%; two, 43.76%; three, 12.96%; and four, 1.64%.

Only 1.64% of the peasant housing had the capacity to house an average family composed of two parents, two sons, and two daughters, along with the occasional visiting relatives or friends. Rates of responses summarizing the conditions of the houses of agricultural workers are as follows: good, 22.1%; moderate, 35.56%; and bad, 42.34%.

Income Levels

The main objective of the survey was to investigate the income levels and working regimes of the agricultural workers. This was done by asking the interviewees directly their incomes for the different types of work they performed during the year for themselves and others, as well as their working regimes.

Working Regime

The first result that stands out when studying the working regime of the agricultural workers is that 49.5% of them work a seven-day week, 35.5% work a six-day week, and 15% work less than a five-day week. This information, of course, does not represent annual employment, but only the working regime in the different tasks that are remunerated in salary, which is the subject of this study.

Mechanization

An interesting fact is that the mechanization of agricultural work in 1957 appears in only 4% of the cases. Manual work is done by 86% of the agricultural workers.

Labor Force

Concerning the age composition of the labor force of the heads of family, 15% reported being older than 60. At the age when they should be enjoying retirement, they have to continue working, sometimes doing "back-breaking work" in the fields. We can add as an interesting figure that one of our interviewers found a 93-years-old peasant who still worked to support his family.

Payment Regime

When we study the payment regime, we observe that part of the salary (6%) is paid in vouchers. One-half of that 6% is paid 100% in vouchers. [These vouchers are not part of the known voucher system of the sugarcane plantations, which is equivalent to cash.] These vouchers are paid by the boss himself for purchases made in his own store(s). Also, 2.5% of the agricultural workers receive part of their salary in food, and 1% receive their entire salaries in food.

Income Distribution

Income distribution included all expenditures for the prior month. Living expenses totaled \$50.43, with 69.30% for food, 1.69% for housing, 14.06% for clothing, 7.51% for services, and 7.44% for other expenses. If we compare this figure with the one obtained by the Foreign Policy in 1934, we see that food expenditures are 10% greater today than back then. This is explained by the fact that while the agricultural worker's current salary is 194% more than in 1934, the level of food prices is 228% higher in 1957. Since food is necessary, the agricultural worker must solve the disequilibrium between his salary level and the food price level by devoting more (10%) of his salary to food. That is the amount strictly necessary to keep the minimum diet he already had in 1934.

It is convenient to point out here that in Europe, the United States, and Canada food expenditures range between 30% and 45%, while in Asia they fluctuate between 55% to 75%. Therefore, when a Cuban agricultural worker devotes 70% of his income to food, he is approaching the index of the most backward countries of the Asian continent.

With that background, the income figure presented should not be a surprise. The annual median income of a family of six persons, where each of the salaried workers works 23 hours per week, is 548.75 pesos. It includes \$27.04 from the head of family's salary, \$5.19 from others' salaries, \$6.91 from crop sales, and \$0.91 from other sources. In this case, although not as pronounced as in the survey conducted by the National Bank in the urban sector, a deficit of 50.00 pesos per year is present. It was not analyzed how it was solved, but one can accept the hypothesis that this is done through debts and remittances from other sectors.

The monthly, disposable, median income is 45.72 pesos. However, if we analyze the histogram with the accumulated frequencies, we can see how 50% of our interviewees did not even reach that level. How can the agricultural worker support a family on only \$0.25 per day, per person, of which \$0.17 is devoted to feeding the family at prices very similar to those in urban areas? The answer to that question, which has bothered all who have worked in this survey, we pass on to those readers with more knowledge than we have on the cost of feeding a family.

Conclusion

We have presented the data with complete objectivity and no exaggerations. The objective of this study is not to reach conclusions, which indicates to us possible solutions in a concrete form. There are many solutions if we want to act in good faith. Neither are we going to analyze in a detailed manner the causes that led to the current situation. We only want to state, in a categorical and sound manner, that we are not fulfilling our duty as Cubans, neither are we fulfilling our duty as Catholics, if we do not make a sincere and effective effort to remedy the current situation. The unsurpassable Cuban land and the work of our agricultural workers have produced much wealth for our Fatherland, but the agricultural worker does not participate in the benefits of that wealth.

The responsibilities of that great social sin fall upon all of us although not in equal amounts. They fall upon the governments that have not enacted national laws to stimulate greater production and better distribution. They fall upon the capitalists who

have not wanted to put into production, with the greatest possible efficiency, their material goods, and when they have done it, they have not fulfilled the social function of production by sharing equitably the benefits produced.

The responsibilities also fall upon the professional and intellectual leaders because they have not put their intellects to work, even in part, to organize and direct the Cuban socioeconomic problem. It directly affects some more than others, but it affects all of us deeply.

His Holiness Pope Pius XII has said: "If the necessary social reforms are not carried out with vigor and without delays to put them into practice, it is useless to pretend an effective defense of the public order, the peace and tranquility of human society. . . . It is unfortunately true that the behavior of some Catholics has contributed to weaken the trust of the workers in the religion of Jesus Christ."

It is time for our Nation to cease being the private fief of some powerful ones. We have the firm hope that, within a few years, Cuba will not be the property of a few, but the true Fatherland of all Cubans. We also have the firm conviction that, in this task of social redemption of the Cuban citizen, Catholicism will have an important and effective role to play.