

Project Economic Justice update:

- The report of the Presidential Task Force on Project Economic Justice, now published, should soon be in President Reagan's hands. He is expected to officially receive it from Task Force Chairman (and CESJ Co-Chairman) J. William Middendorf at a press conference in December. The report strongly advocates the use of employee stock ownership in Central America and the Caribbean as a means of promoting justice for workers and greater economic stability in the region. The president has publicly endorsed the concept of employee stock ownership in speeches since the early 1970s.

- Prior to its official release, the task force report has generated a great deal of excitement. Father Cassian Yuhaus, the Director of the Institute for World Concerns at Duquesne University, recently delivered a copy of the report as well as several CESJ documents to Archbishop Achille Silvestrini who heads foreign relations for the Vatican. Archbishop Silvestrini expressed keen interest in the potential of Employee Stock Ownership Plans for promoting dignity among Third World workers. During his trip to the Vatican, Father Yuhaus also presented the CESJ documents to Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, President of the world-wide offices of the Pontifical Commission for Peace and Justice, and his Vice-President, Monsignor William Murphy.

- Through the efforts of Anne Orleans, a public relations consultant and friend of CESJ, the report was personally delivered to the ambassadors of several Caribbean nations who are now studying the report. The report has also been reaching high-level officials in the White House and the State Department. Thanks to David Binns, the Executive Director of the ESOP Association, a number of U.S. senators and congressmen have received the report. CESJ plans to ensure that it reaches all key members of Congress by the

beginning of the new session. (Single copies of the Task Force report, **High Road to Economic Justice**, can be purchased through CESJ for \$19.95, CESJ members, \$15.95).

Expanded ownership news around the globe:

- The government of France is embarking on a plan to use broadened share ownership as a means of privatizing \$35 billion worth of state-owned enterprises, according to an article in the Wall Street Journal (Nov. 5, 1986). During the next five years it intends to sell sixty-five companies and banks and in doing so, increase by five-fold the number of individual French stockholders. The hope is to spread ownership of these companies among so many people that it would become extremely difficult to re-nationalize them in the future. Government-sponsored newspaper and television ads are promoting the advantages of stock ownership and encouraging citizens to participate. Stock ownership is a novel idea to many of the French, who are used to other ways of investing their money. For employees of the privatized companies there will be an opportunity to buy shares at a discount and to take part in profit-sharing stock plans. At some point, France will discover the ESOP route to privatization.

- China recently established a small stock market in Shanghai and two markets for trading bonds. According to the New York Times (Nov. 12, 1986), the government has already made plans for up to nine more markets in other cities. China's experiments with stock ownership may make it more receptive to the ESOP as a better means for spreading capital ownership opportunities to as many of its people as possible.

- The Soviet Union next year expects to initiate a number of economic reforms, one of which would allow private citizens to open up small factories. These

production cooperatives will pay the government a fee or tax and will then be allowed to divide profits (but presumably not equity ownership) among their members. According to one of the architects of Mikhail Gorbachev's economic reform program, Leonid Abalkin, these enterprises could account for 10-12% of national income in the next ten years (Wash. Post, 11/28/86).

Invitation to December meeting of CESJ

When: Sat., December 13, 9:30 am-1:30 pm
Where: National Graduate University,
1101 N. Highland, Arlington, Virginia
(across from the Clarendon Metro station).

For this special meeting of CESJ, Rob Lederer and Allison Parker of Association Management Group, who have been planning and coordinating the CESJ International Conference scheduled for early 1987, will brief CESJ members on the progress of this major event. The aim of the conference is to present the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on Project Economic Justice to policy-makers from around the world. We invite your involvement.

For further information, please contact Dawn Kurland at (703) 243-5155.

... Closing Thoughts ...

"The Church's teaching on ownership diverges radically from collectivism as proclaimed by Marxism and "rigid" capitalism. The primacy of the person over things [can be restored through] joint ownership of the means of work."

Pope John Paul II
Laborem Exercens

