

*Summary of the discussion after the
papers of M. Archer and M. Ramirez*

After the presentations of Professors Margaret Archer and Mina Ramirez the discussion had to be short because of lack of time. Even, more than for the other fields approached in this first session of the Academy, it was clear that consideration of sociological analysis would require much further attention than could be given on that occasion.

The discussion was opened by Professor Zubrzycki who praised the quality of the two papers and pointed to their remarkable degree of coalescence. He also raised a question to Professor Archer about her recommendation of applying the social teaching of the Church to the pursuit of solidarity and other aims: should not that be achieved through "mediating structures", to which individuals can associate themselves, rather than by the macro-structures like the nation-state? Professor Archer agreed that indeed it should be so and that the problematic then had to be extended: the present mediating structures tend to neglect, at least in some parts of the world, the quality of human relationships.

Two economists, Professor Arrow and President Tietmeyer, questioned some of the views expressed by Professor Archer, particularly as to some features of the picture she gave of socio-economic evolution: the concepts of shrinking employment and of unjustified development of tertiary sector were particularly highlighted. Professor Archer agreed that her description of the facts might have been a little too much influenced by the recent history of her own country; but she argued that appropriate socio-economic categories have to be delineated for historical and comparative purposes and that, in this respect, a full analysis could not avoid becoming too technical for the occasion, in order to substantiate her basic argument.