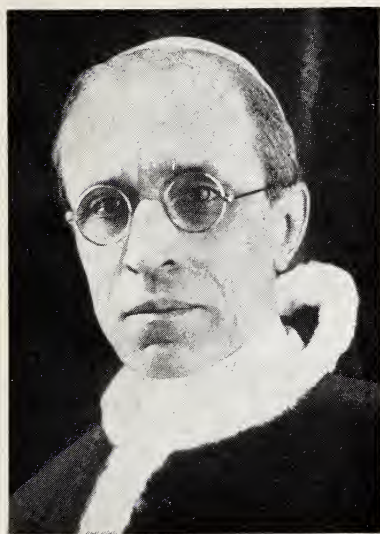


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Six Social Documents

OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE PIUS XII

and a Letter of His Excellency Monsignor Montini



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SIX SOCIAL
DOCUMENTS OF
His Holiness Pope Pius XII

and

A Letter of His Excellency Msgr. Montini

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✠ JOHN F. O'HARA, C.S.C.

Archbishop of Philadelphia

Ash Wednesday, 1953

I

Discourse of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, to the Representatives of the International Union of Catholic Employers Associations

May 7, 1949

It is with equal solicitude and equal interest that We see coming to Us, each in turn, the workers and the representatives of industrial organizations, and both, one and the other, expressing to Us—with a confidence that deeply touches Us—their respective worries and problems.

Thus, while welcoming you with Our whole heart, We most willingly take, dear sons, the opportunity that you afford Us of expressing Our paternal pleasure and praising your zeal in spreading the Christian social doctrine in the economic world.

We allude to the worries and problems of those engaged in industrial production. Both false and evil in its consequences and, unhappily, only too widespread, is the prejudice which sees in those problems irreconcilable opposition between the various interests. That opposition, however, is merely apparent. In the economic sphere there is a community of activities and interests shared by leaders of industry and the workers. To disregard this mutual bond, or to endeavor to break it, can only be the pretension of a blind and unreasonable despotism.

Employers and workers are not unreconcilable enemies. They are collaborators in a common effort, they eat, so to speak, at the same table since they live, eventually, from the gross or net profits of the national economy. Each has his income, and in this respect their mutual relations are not subordinated, one to the service of the other.

To receive a return for one's work is a prerogative deriving from the personal dignity of anyone who, in one way or another, be it as owner or worker, contributes effectively to the output of the national economy. On the balance sheet of private industry, the sum expended on wages can be counted as expense incurred by the employer. But, in the national economy, there is only one kind of expense, and this consists of the natural goods utilized for national production; these must be constantly replenished.

It follows that both parties have an interest in seeing that the cost of national production be in proportion to the return. Since, however, the interest is mutual, why can it not find mutual expression in a common formula? Why should it not be lawful to give workers a fair share of responsibility in the establishment and development of the national economy—and that nowadays more than ever when the scarcity of capital and difficulties of international exchange paralyze the free flow of expenditure on national production? Recent attempts at socialization have only made this sad reality even more clear. It is a fact; and neither has bad will on one side created it, nor can good will on the other side eliminate it.

While, then, there is still time, why not deal with the subject, in full appreciation of common responsibility, in such a way as to safeguard one side from unjust diffidence, and the other from illusions that would not be long in becoming a social danger?

For this community of interest and responsibilities, in the sphere of national economy, Our ever-memorable predecessor, Pope Pius XI, had already suggested a suitable and concrete formula, when in his Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" he recommended professional organization in the various branches of production.

In fact, nothing seemed to him to be more fitted to overcome economic liberalism than the establishment of a statute of public law for social economy, based precisely on the mutual responsibility of all those sharing the work of production. This passage of the Encyclical aroused a series of objections. Some saw in it a concession to modern political opinions, while others regarded it as a return to the middle ages.

It would have been incomparably wiser to put aside old and inconsistent prejudices and come together, wholeheartedly and with good will, for the realization of such a project with its many practical applications.

Unfortunately, this part of the Encyclical seems now to present us with yet another example of the ripe opportunity being missed, because it was not grasped at the right time. Subsequently, there have been attempts to elaborate other forms of juridical and public organization of the social economy, and at the present time preference is given to state and national ownership of industry.

There is no doubt that the Church, too, within certain just limits, approves nationalization and holds that one may legitimately reserve to public authority certain kinds of assets, namely those which are of such power and importance that they cannot be left in the hands of private individuals without endangering the common good (*Quadragesimo Anno*).

To make nationalization, however, the normal rule for public organization of economy would be to reverse the order of things. The object of public law is, in fact, to serve private rights, and not to absorb them. Social Economy is not, by its nature, a state institution, any more than any other branch of human activity. On the contrary, it is the living product of the free enterprise of individuals and of groups of individuals freely constituted.

Neither would it be correct to say that all private enterprise is, by nature, a society in which the relations between the collaborators must be determined by the rules of distributive justice in such a way that all, without distinction—be they owners or not of the means of production—would have a right to share in the property, or at least in the profits of the enterprise.

Such a concept starts with the assumption that all enterprise, by its nature, comes within the sphere of public law. This assumption is false, whether the enterprise be constituted in the form of a foundation or an association of all the workers as co-proprietors, or it be the private property of an individual who signs a work-contract

with his workers: it is amenable to the private juridical order of economic life.

All that We have just said refers to the juridical nature of enterprise as such, but the term "enterprise" can admit another entire category of other personal relations between collaborators, which must not be forgotten, and also relations of mutual responsibility.

The proprietor of the means of production—whether he be an individual, or an association of workers, or a foundation (corporation)—must always remain the master of his economic decisions, within the limits of public economic law. It is obvious that the share of the proprietor will be larger than that of his collaborators; but it follows that the material well-being of all the members of the nation—which is the aim of social economy—obliges him more than the others to contribute to the increase of national assets by savings.

Just as one must not forget that it is of supreme benefit to a sound social economy that this increase in assets should come from as many sources as possible, it is also greatly to be desired that the workers, too, should be able, out of their savings, to share in the building up of national assets.

Many men of industry such as you, non-Catholics and Catholics, have at various times expressly declared that the social doctrine of the Church—and it alone—is capable of providing the essential elements for a solution of the social question. Undoubtedly, the putting into practice of this doctrine cannot be accomplished in a day. Its realization requires of all wisdom, perspicacity and foresight, together with a generous measure of common sense and good will. It requires of them, above all, a radical resistance to the temptation of each working for his own advantage at the expense of the others—regardless of the nature and form of their participation—or at the expense of the common good. It requires that altruism which only true Christian virtue, strengthened by the help and grace of God, can inspire.

To bring this help and grace on your association and on its internal growth and external diffusion—particularly in those coun-

tries which even though Catholic need however to give wider consideration to the social teaching of the Church—We give, with all the effusion of Our heart, to yourselves and your association, and under the powerful patronage of the Mother of Divine love, Our Apostolic Blessing.

II

Discourse of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, to the International Congress of Social Studies

June 3, 1950

WE welcome you, members of the International Congress of Social Studies and of the International Christian Social Union, and We experience an altogether exceptional pleasure in extending this welcome to you, here, during this Holy Year.

This meeting is more than a happy coincidence. It is, on your part, the manifestation of your personal sentiments. It is, on Our part, the basis for Our fond hope that your deliberations and resolutions will contribute, in large measure, towards bringing to full flower the beautiful fruits which We promise Ourselves from this year of the Great Return and of universal reconciliation, namely, the renewal and the expansion, in the great community of mankind, of the spirit of justice, of brotherhood, and of peace.

It is, indeed, the absence or the decline of that spirit which must be regarded as one of the principal causes of the evils afflicting millions of men in modern society—that entire, immense multitude of unfortunates, starving or threatened with starvation because of unemployment.

Upon their misery and their discouragement feeds the spirit of evil with the aim of turning them away from Christ, the true and only Saviour, and of hurling them into the flood of atheism and of materialism, and of enlisting them into the structure of social organizations which are in contradiction to the order established by God.

Dazzled by the blinding light of beautiful promises, by the brazen assertion of inevitable success, they are sorely tempted to

give themselves over to facile illusions, which cannot but lead them to new and frightful social upheavals. And yet what an awakening stark reality reserves for them when once these golden dreams shall have been dispelled!

Only by combining all the people of good will in the entire world into a vast plan, a plan undertaken with loyalty and in perfect accord, can a remedy be forthcoming. Let us have no more of those blinders which limit our field of vision, and which would reduce the enormous problem of unemployment simply to an attempt to bring about a better distribution of the sum-total of the individual physical forces of labor throughout the world.

One must confront, in all its fulness, the obligation of giving to innumerable families, in their natural, moral, juridical and economic unity, an equitable livelihood, corresponding, however modestly so long as it be sufficiently, to the exigencies of human nature. Let us put behind us the selfish preoccupations of nations and of classes which can, no matter in how small a degree, hinder a loyally-undertaken and a vigorously-pursued program involving the combined effort of all forces and of all possibilities on the face of the earth, involving the concurrence of all initiatives and of all efforts whether of particular individuals or of particular groups, and involving the universal collaboration of peoples and of States, wherein each will make his respective contribution of wealth: in raw materials, in capital, and in labor. Finally, all those participating in this common effort must appreciate the help afforded them by the Church.

There you have the great social problem which, at the present time, stands at the crossroads. May it be set on its way towards a favorable solution, even at the expense of material interests, even at the price of sacrifices on the part of all members of the great human family. In this way one of the most disturbing factors of the international situation will be eliminated, that factor, which, more than any other, supplies today the fuel for the ruinous cold war, and which threatens to set off an incomparably more devastating hot war, a burning war.

In the old industrial countries, a man would indeed show himself to be out of touch with the times were he to think that today—as was the case a century or even but a half century ago—there is question merely of guaranteeing to the wage earner, freed as he is from his feudal or ancient bonds, freedom in fact as well as freedom under law. Such a conception would manifest a complete misunderstanding of the heart of the situation as it exists today.

During the past several decades in most of these countries—and often under the decisive influence of the Catholic social movement—there has already arisen a social policy marked by a progressive evolution of labor laws and, reciprocally, by the subjection of the private owner, in control of the means of production, to juridical obligations which favor the worker.

Whoever wishes to extend social policy even further in this same direction encounters a limit—that is to say, that point at which the danger arises of the working class, in its turn, possibly following the mistakes of capital. These mistakes consisted in withdrawing, particularly in very large companies, the management of the means of production from the personal responsibility of the private owner, whether individual or company, in order to transfer this management to the responsibility of anonymous, corporate groups.

A Socialist mentality would accommodate itself very well to such a situation. But it would disturb the person who realizes the fundamental importance of the right to private property as a means of stimulating initiative and of fixing responsibility in economic matters.

An equal danger arises when one insists that the wage-earners in a company should have the right of economic co-management, especially when the exercise of this right is in fact, subject, directly or indirectly, to organizations outside the company itself.

Now, neither the nature of the work contract, nor the nature of the business necessarily imply, in themselves, such a right. It is beyond all doubt that the wage earners and the employer are both subjects, not objects, of the economy of a nation. There can

be no question of denying this parity; it is a principle which social policy has already proved valid and which a policy organized on the professional level would validate even more effectively. But, at the same time, there is nothing in private law relationships, as these are governed by the simple wage contract, which contradicts this fundamental parity. The wisdom of Our Predecessor, Pius XI, showed this clearly in the encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno" and, accordingly, he denies therein the intrinsic need of modifying the wage contract by a contract of partnership.

This is not to deny the usefulness of what has been achieved up to the present in this matter, in various ways, to the common advantage of employers and employees (Acta Ap. Sedis, Vol. 23, page 199). But in the light of the principles and the facts, the right to economic co-management, which is being claimed, is outside the sphere of these possible achievements.

The trouble with these problems is that they cause one to lose sight of the most important, the most urgent problem of all—a problem which definitely oppresses, like a nightmare, these old industrial countries. We mean the imminent and the permanent threat of unemployment, the problem of reintegration and of the assurance of normal productivity, which productivity, by its origin as well as by its aim, is intimately bound up with the dignity and the well-being of the family considered as a moral, legal and economic unit.

As for those countries whose industrialization is today being planned, We can only praise the efforts of those ecclesiastical authorities who are endeavoring to spare the peoples living up until the present time in a patriarchal or even a feudal regime, and especially in communities of mixed economy, the repetition of the unfortunate omissions of Nineteenth Century economic liberalism.

A social policy in conformity with the teaching of the Church, supported by organizations which guarantee both the material and the spiritual interests of the people, and which are adapted to present-day living conditions—such a policy ought to be supported by the vote of every true Catholic without exception.

Even supposing as an admitted fact these new industrializations, the problem remains unsolved and the question still arises in their regard: are they, or are they not, contributing to the reintegration and to the assurance of healthy productivity in the national economy? Or are they merely increasing still further the number of industries which are always at the mercy of new crises?

And then, too, what precaution will be taken to consolidate and to develop the home market, which is made productive by reason of the size of the population and of the multiplicity of its needs, in those places where the allocation of the capital investment is guided solely by the enticement towards short-lived gains, and where vain illusions of national prestige determine economic decisions?

Mass production, exploitation to the exhaustion point, of all the resources upon and beneath the earth's surface have already been attempted to excess. Only too cruelly have the rural populations and rural economies been sacrificed in these attempts. Equally blind is the almost superstitious confidence in the mechanism of a world market to balance the economy, as well as that trust in a Welfare State charged with providing for each of its subjects, and in every circumstance of life, the right to advance unreasonable claims which, when all is said and done, cannot possibly be realized.

In the face of the pressing duty in the field of social economy of balancing production with consumption, production wisely measured to fit the needs and the dignity of men, the problem of the regulation and of the establishment of this economy, insofar as production is concerned, is today of prime importance. We must look for the solution of this problem neither in the purely positivistic theory founded on the neo-Kantian critique of the "laws of the market" nor in the equally artificial formalism of "full employment."

This is the problem upon which We should like to see theorists and practitioners of the Catholic social movement concentrate their attention, making it the focal point of their study.

Wherefore, as a pledge of the paternal interest We take in

your studies and your work, initiated under the protection of the Holy Ghost Whom We pray will shower you with His gifts, to you and to all Catholic sociologists, We, from the fullness of Our Heart, impart Our Apostolic Blessing.

III

Address of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, to the
Italian Catholic Association of Owner-Managers (Consiglio
Nazionale Della Unione Cristianaa Imprenditori
Dirigenti) UCID

January 31, 1952

WE thank you, beloved sons, wholeheartedly, and We congratulate you. With no less modesty than zeal, you dedicate yourselves to a task which We consider of great importance. A lofty ideal, and one truly worthy of you, has been its inspiration. This undertaking is still in its early stages. And yet, during the first five years of its life, it has already produced good results, and gives promise of even better and more abundant fruits. And its ultimate hope of success is assured rather by the goal at which it aims, and by the Divine assistance which it invokes, than by any human support, however powerful it may be.

Zeal has inspired you to begin your task without waiting until you should be many in number, or until you should be equipped with all the means that might be desired. Modesty has allowed you to advance with caution, sure of foot, without a grandiose and minutely detailed program, but rather only with the clarity and precision of the thought which animates you.

What, then, is this thought—this ideal of yours which daily becomes increasingly clearer and more defined? To Us it seems to be the clear, lofty and Christian concept which you have of industry. For you, industry is more than a mere means of earning a livelihood and of maintaining the lawful dignity of one's social position, one's individual independence and that of one's family. It is more than the technical and practical collaboration of ideas, of capital, and of the many types of labor—all of which favor production and pro-

gress. It is more than an important factor of economic life, more than a simple contribution to the development of social justice, however praiseworthy that contribution might be. For, if the concept of business were but this, it would still be insufficient to establish and to promote complete order, since order is not truly such unless it dominates the whole of life and all of its activities: material, economic, social and, above all, Christian activities without which Man remains ever incomplete.

Without doubt, you have not attempted—for such would have been a fanciful, even though noble, dream—to bring about this order immediately, or even to have crystallized its final program. But your purpose is clearly determined; and on this score you have no hesitation. That purpose is dear to your hearts. Indeed one might say that it has taken possession of your minds. You are determined to do your best to achieve that purpose, although fully aware that you can realize it only step by step in the light of experience.

There is no doubt that you have already obtained results, albeit they are nothing more than your meeting, your project, your common action and your progress in understanding, appreciating and carrying out your duties. Your numbers are still few, but significant—each of you working in his own field, without, however, on that account working in isolation.

On the contrary, moved by a most ardent spirit of solidarity and of conquest, you are aspiring to increase your ranks by gradually winning over other leaders, animated by the same desire. Your program is that while each one labors in his own field of endeavor, each of you also cooperates with all the others, striving not so much to increase your numbers as to promote among yourselves the purity and grandeur of your aims as well as the effective conviction of your duty and of your ideal.

This duty, this ideal is, as We have said, the full management, lofty and Christian, of your business, management penetrated with human sentiments in the widest and highest sense of the word. Like the drop of oil in the gears, this human sentiment must pene-

trate all the members, and all the branches of industry: the executives, their assistants, the clerical employees and the workers of all ranks, from the artisan and the highly skilled workman down to the humblest manual laborer.

If business firms, effectively penetrated with the truly human spirit, multiply and unite with you one after another, if they become like so many large families, and if, not content with their own separate existence, as in a closed vessel, they will unite among themselves, then, all together, they will tend to form a strong and a happy society.

It would be certainly Utopian to suppose that this society could be formed all at once. And that is precisely why We have just lauded that confident zeal of yours which, without undue delay, has the courage to blaze the trail, and that prudence of yours which regulates its progress. Persevere in this spirit! Thus, you will certainly labor effectively in bringing about in an ever better fashion the consolidation and the expansion of a vigorous and a healthy Christian society.

The great misery of the social order is that it is neither deeply Christian nor truly human, but only technical and economic. It is not at all built on what should be its basis and the solid foundation of its unity—viz., the character common to men of being men by reason of their nature, and also sons of God by reason of the grace of divine adoption.

As for you who are resolved to introduce everywhere this human factor into industry, into its various component grades and offices, and into economic and public life by means of legislation and popular education—you are attempting to transform the masses, who would remain amorphous, inert, lifeless, and at the mercy of agitators with an ulterior purpose, into a society whose members, while differing one from the other, constitute, nonetheless, each according to his own function, one united body.

This is a comparison with which you are very familiar. (Cf. I Cor. 12, 12 ff.) May this always be your policy and, as it were, the

charter of your organization. By remaining faithful to it, you will be sure that you are building on the solid Rock Which is Christ, on the rock which Christ has placed as the foundation for His Church.

Beloved sons, there is much talk nowadays about a reform in the structure of industry. Those who are promoting it are thinking primarily of juridical modifications among its members, be they businessmen or employees included in the business by virtue of their labor contract.

We could not, however, but note the changes infiltrating into such movements. These tendencies do not, as they should, apply the incontestable norms of natural law to the changed conditions of our time, but simply exclude them. For this reason, in Our addresses of May 7, 1949, to the International Union of Catholic Employers' Associations and in that of June 3, 1950, to the International Congress of Social Studies, We opposed these tendencies, certainly not to favor the material interests of one group over another, but rather to assure sincerity and tranquility of conscience for all those to whom these problems apply.

Nor could We disregard the changes which distorted the words of high wisdom of Our glorious predecessor, Pius XI. These distortions have come about by overemphasizing an observation of wholly secondary importance (regarding the eventual juridical modifications in the relations between the employees subject to the labor contract, and the other contracting party), and by giving to this observation the value and the importance of a modern social program of the Church. Meanwhile, they pass over, more or less in silence, the principal part of the Encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno," which contains the Church's real program: viz., the idea of a corporate, occupational order of the entire economy. Whoever sets about to treat problems relative to the reform of the structure of industry, without taking into account that every single business is, by its very purpose, closely bound up with the whole of the national economy, runs the risk of positing erroneous and false premises, endangering the entire economic and social order. Therefore, in that same address of June 3, 1950, We tried to place in its proper light the thought and the doctrine of Our Predecessor, to whom nothing

was more alien than to give any encouragement whatsoever to follow the road which leads toward the forms of an anonymous, collective responsibility.

But you, on the contrary, are traveling the one, safe road, that road which tends to inspire personal relations with sentiments of Christian brotherhood, a road that can be traveled everywhere and one which is of ample circulation on that industrial level. Your aim will give you the inventiveness and the ability to ensure that the personal dignity of the workers, far from being lost in the overall management of the industry itself, will increase the efficiency of that industry not only in a material way, but also, and above all, by gaining for it the advantages of a true community.

Go forward, therefore, and work with confident perseverance under the protection of Almighty God, in pledge of which We wholeheartedly impart Our Paternal Apostolic Blessing to you, to those who are united or who will be united with you, and to everyone and everything dear to your hearts.

IV

Text of A Letter of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII,
Addressed to the Thirty-Ninth 'Social Week'
at Dijon, France
July 7, 1952

TO our beloved son, Charles Flory, President of "The Social Weeks" of France:

In accord with the tradition of the lofty economic and social themes which have been studied in your annual sessions, the "Thirty-ninth Social Week," which will soon convene at Dijon, has the intention of coming to grips with one of the problems on which, without any doubt, social and international peace depend today. That contrast between wealth and poverty, which is intolerable to the Christian conscience, has been brought home to you most forcibly by the picture of present conditions in the world. And, in the coming sessions, you will be searching for a remedy for the problem through the increase and the better distribution of national income.

The question is not new. As early as 1931 Our immediate Predecessor, reiterating the doctrine of Leo XIII, wrote as follows: "Each one must be given his due share, and the distribution of created goods must be brought back into conformity with the norms of the common good or of social justice. For the flagrant contrast between the handful of those who hold excessive wealth and the multitude of those who live in utter destitution gives witness, in the mind of every sincere observer, to the serious disorders which exist today in this matter" (Acta Apostolicae Sedis XXIII, 1931, page 197).

This consideration led Pius XI to urge all responsible parties "to leave no stone unturned" in attempting to see to it that the rich-

es created in such great abundance in our period of industrialism might be more equitably divided. To be sure, We gladly recognize the fact that, for the past several decades, thanks to persevering efforts and to progress in social legislation, this disparity in economic well-being has been rather considerably reduced—indeed, at times, to a very notable degree. And yet, since the last war this problem has become even more acute. It now presents itself on a worldwide scale with contrasts which are still startling; and the problem is further aggravated by the new yearnings which are being awakened in the minds of the masses by a more vivid realization of the economic inequalities existing between nations, between classes, and even between members of the same social class.

We Ourselves have also, on several recent occasions,⁽¹⁾ deplored the intolerable increase in luxury spending and in superfluous and unreasonable expenditures which contrast sharply with the misery of a great many people, whether in the ranks of the urban or rural working-class, or among the throng of those little people who are usually categorized as the “economically weak.” “The goal toward which you can and must aim,” today just as much as yesterday, “is a more equitable distribution of wealth. This is and remains a basic point of the program of Catholic social doctrine” (Discourse of September 7, 1947, to the men of Italian Catholic Action).

For this reason, one can only encourage the “Social Week of Dijon” to come to grips realistically with a problem of such gravity, and to study, both on the economic and social as well as on the national and international levels, its possible and prudent solutions in the light of the doctrine of the Church. This it will do in that university city of ancient renown, thanks to the convening there of experienced authorities; nor will this assembly lack prudent counsel from the Shepherd of that diocese which has welcomed this meeting.

In approaching this question of wealth and poverty, could one possibly fail to recall to mind the unforgettable lessons of Sacred

(1) Cf. Discourse of November 2, 1949; Discourse of March 8, 1952.

Scripture regarding those who possess earthly riches and who are so easily tempted to take delight in them and to abuse them? The entire Gospel urges men to detachment from earthly possessions as a condition for eternal salvation. And the true follower of Jesus learns from the Gospel to consider worldly goods as being adapted for the life of the spirit and for a higher perfection. There can be no worse misery for man than to place his hopes in the possession of such perishable treasures: "With what difficulty will they that have riches enter the kingdom of God . . . Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God . . . But woe to you that are rich for you are now having your consolation" (Luke XVIII, 24 and Luke VI, 20, 24).

What should we say, then, of those rich oppressors against whom Saint James thunders forth his solemn maledictions: "Behold, the wages of the laborers who have reaped your fields, which by fraud have been kept back by you, cry out; and their cry has entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts" (Saint James V, 4).

Such teachings of the Gospel raise the discussion to a distinctly higher level. Whatever be the subject under consideration, the Catholic thinker is confirmed in a supreme spiritual independence with regard to the prestige given by riches—both those actually possessed, and those which are longed for. The Catholic thinker openly admits his esteem for Christian poverty; he professes that respect for and that service to the poor which honors Jesus Christ. He guards himself against the seduction of a false pretension that all men are economically equal; but at the same time, heeding the counsel of Saint James, he is careful never to show partiality toward persons simply because of their financial status (Saint James II, 1).

Nor does he forget that, in the Christian view of a society wherein wealth would be better distributed, there would still always be a place for renunciation and for suffering, (man's inevitable but fruitful heritage in this life), which a materialistic conception of life, or the illusion of perfect justice during this earthly pilgrimage, tries in vain to erase from man's sight.

Finally, at the sight of the vast number of poverty-stricken

whose distress cries to Heaven, the urgent appeal of Saint John delineates for the Catholic thinker his duty: "He who has the goods of this world and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God abide in him? . . . Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth" (I St. John III, 17-18).

How, then, in this modern world of ours, can we sculpture this effective and efficacious charity into the economic and the social order? How, in the first place, can we translate it into terms of justice, since, in order to be genuinely true, charity must always take into account the justice which must be established, and must never satisfy itself with disguising the disorders and the deficiencies of an unjust situation.

The purpose of economic and social organization, to which we must here refer, is to obtain for its members and their families all the goods which the resources of nature and of industry, as well as a social organization of economic life, are capable of obtaining for them. As the Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" states in this matter: "These goods ought to be abundant enough both to satisfy the demands of a decent subsistence and to raise people to that degree of the comforts of life which, provided it be wisely employed, is no hindrance to virtue, but, on the contrary, greatly facilitates its exercise" (Acta Apostolicae Sedis, Vol. XXII, 1931, page 202).

Now then, if it is true that the best and the most natural means of satisfying this obligation is to increase the available goods by means of a healthy development of production, still it is also necessary, in pursuing this effort, to have care to distribute justly the fruits of the labor of all. "If such a just distribution of goods should not be realized or were only imperfectly assured, the true aim of the national economy would not be realized, since, however affluent the abundance of available goods might be, if the people were not allowed to share in them, they would still be not rich but poor" (Radio Message, June 1, 1941).

This basic distribution is originally and normally brought about by virtue of the continuous dynamism of the social economic pro-

cess which We have just recalled; and this process is, for a great many men, the source of their wages as recompense for their work. But we must not lose sight of the fact that, from the point of view of the national economy, these wages represent the income realized by the worker. Executives of industry and workers are here co-operators in a common task; both of them are called upon to derive their livelihood from the net and gross profits of the economy. And from this point of view, their mutual relations do not in any way render the one subservient to the other. In Our discourse of May 7, 1949, We said: "To receive a return for one's work is a prerogative deriving from the personal dignity of anyone who, in one way or another . . . contributes effectively to the output of the national economy."

But since all are "eating at the same table," so to speak, it would seem fair that—while respecting differences in functions and responsibilities—the shares given to each should conform to the common dignity which they have as men, and that, in particular, these shares should permit a greater number of persons both to attain that independence and security which comes from possession of private property, and to participate with their families in the spiritual and cultural goods to which earthly goods are ordained.

Furthermore, if both the owners and the workers have a common interest in the healthy prosperity of the national economy, why would it not be legitimate to give to the workers a just share of responsibility in the organization and development of that economy. That observation which We made not long ago in Our address of May 7, 1949,⁽¹⁾ is it not now all the more opportune when, under the difficulties, the insecurities and joint and separate liabilities which are part of the present time, decisions of an economic order are at times being imposed upon a country which involve the whole future of that national community, and often even the future of the whole family of nations?

These few reflections suffice to show the difficulty involved in

(1) Discourse of May 7, 1949 to "The International Union of the Catholic Employers Associations."

a sound distribution of earthly goods. To meet the demands of the social life, such a distribution cannot be left to the free play of blind economic forces, but must be viewed on the level of the national economy, since it is on that level that one gets a clear picture of the aim which should be pursued in the service of the common temporal good. Whoever considers the problem in this fashion is led to question himself concerning the normal, even though restricted, functions which are vested in the State in these matters.

First of all, the duty of increasing production and of adjusting it wisely to the needs and the dignity of the man places in the foreground the question as to how the economy should be regulated insofar as production is concerned. Now, although the public authorities should not substitute their tyrannical omnipotence for the legitimate self-government of private initiatives, these authorities have, nonetheless, in this matter, an undeniable role of coordination, which is made even more necessary in the confusion of present conditions, especially present social conditions. Specifically, without the cooperation of the public authorities it is not possible to formulate a concerted economic policy which would promote active cooperation on the part of all, and the increase of industrial production, the direct source of the national income.

Now if we think of the many riches which are lying dormant or being squandered in useless spending, but which if put back into circulation could contribute, through judicious and profitable use, to the welfare of so many families, could not these riches still serve the common good by opportunely helping to restore men's confidence, by stimulating credit, by checking egoism, and by promoting in this way a better balance in the economic life?

But it also devolves upon the state to see to it that the very poor people are not unjustly wronged. On this point, the doctrine of Our predecessors is explicit wherein they teach that in the protection of private rights, the authorities should have particular concern for the weak and the needy: "The wealthy class," as Leo XIII observed, "constructs for itself, as it were, a bulwark out of its wealth, and has less need of governmental protection. But the needy

masses, on the contrary, without the means to protect themselves, rely especially upon the protection of the State" (Encyclical, Quadregesimo Anno," citing "Rerum Novarum," Acta Apostolicae Sedis, XXXIII, 1931, page 185.

It is for this reason that, in the face of the increased insecurity of many families whose precarious condition threatens to jeopardize their material, cultural and spiritual interests, some institutions have been endeavoring now for several years to correct the most flagrant evils which result from an over-mechanical distribution of the national income. While leaving due liberty to private factors of responsibility operating in the economic life, these institutions, remaining themselves adequately independent of the political power, can become for the low-income masses and for the poor of every category an indispensable remedy for the evils caused by the present economic or monetary disorder. However, the various forms and methods of such institutions should be studied with great care, and one could not possibly commit oneself unreservedly to a course wherein excessive taxes might threaten the rights of private property and wherein abuses of collective security might infringe upon personal or family rights.

So the Church, taking a position midway between the errors of liberalism and statism, invites you to pursue your investigations along the course that she has many times set forth for you. "The great misery of the social order," as We said recently, "is that it is neither deeply Christian nor truly human, but only technical and economic. It is not at all built on what should be its basis and the solid foundation of its unity—viz., the character common to men of being men by reason of their nature, and also sons of God by reason of the grace of divine adoption" (Discourse of January 31, 1952, to the Italian Catholic Association of Owner-Managers).

May the studies of this Social Week cast a peaceful light on this group of grave problems. May God avert from the wealthy the spiritual perils which accompany riches, and from the laboring class the inhuman trials of want. May He draw both to the evangelical spirit of poverty and of service, and allow all to carry out,

under better balanced conditions of the economic and social life, their one necessary work, namely, their salvation. It is with this prayer that, from a fatherly heart, We call down upon the forthcoming sessions of your social University a generous outpouring of Divine graces, and that We impart to you and to all the teachers and the auditors of this "Social Week" Our Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, July 7, 1952

PIUS PP. XII

V

Radio Address of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, to the Austrian Katholikentag in Vienna September 14, 1952

B*eloved sons and daughters of Catholic Austria:*

Gladly We fulfill the wish of your Pastors, Our venerable brothers, to address your Katholikentag being held this year, the first since 1933, and to bestow upon it Our blessing.

The years elapsed since that date have continued in unimaginable upheavals and catastrophies, the course of the fateful events which began with the First World War, shook your existence as a nation and a state to its very foundations, and left your land a prey to the most dangerous political, economic and cultural tensions. A happy outcome of these events can as yet not be foreseen and must in all humility be committed to the merciful disposition of Divine Providence.

Placed in this condition, you have assigned to your rally of Catholic forces one unmistakable goal: it was to be a signal for the reawakening and revival of religious life in the Austrian people.

In doing this you have well planned. For though your freedom of action, in disregard of the dignity and rights of your nation, is still largely restrained and shackled in other fields, in the sphere of religious revival you can always exert your power and bring about a religious regeneration, thus creating for your country values which it will need under all circumstances however the future may be shaped.

Your beautiful Austrian homeland, beloved sons and daughters, abounds in precious creations of art and folk customs, expressive of Catholic religion and culture, which are the fruit of many centuries of faith and occupy a place of honor in the temple of history and

art. But what matters now above all and practically alone is this: See to it that these external forms retain their inner meaning, that they do not some day turn into a deathmask but always remain the outward manifestation of a living organism warm with an inner glow and overflowing vitality.

Therefore We appeal to you and especially to the young generation: Seek to grasp your Catholic faith with new clarity and with deeper and fuller conviction. Endeavor in every way to make it more and more a reality in prayer and intimate union with Christ, the source of all grace, in your innermost thinking and willing, in your personal actions, in your family life, in your public relations and activities.

Bear in mind that what we are saying at this occasion applies not only to the crowded industrial centers with their toiling masses but is likewise applicable to the rural population up to the most remote mountain hamlet.

The solicitous concern for your Faith must inspire you to insist that your children be permanently assured of Catholic schools. What profits Catholic education in the parental home if the school undoes all the home has carefully built up. Taught by sad experiences in the past and present, the Church in this matter insists to the very last on the rights of the faithful, and exhorts you, on your part, stoutly to claim your rights.

As you love your faith uphold the sanctity of marriage!

Let the nuptial ceremony be sacred to you. A Catholic can enter a true marriage only under religious auspices, and never by a purely civil ceremony. If the will of the people has any meaning in civic life, demand that the wishes of the overwhelming majority of your nation in this regard be duly respected.

Preserve the sanctity of married life! May you be guided by what Our predecessor of blessed memory, Pius XI, wrote in his encyclical on marriage, and by what We Ourselves, giving proper consideration to present day conditions, set forth last fall in a discourse on the moral requirements of the married state. You are not

Di tutto cuore ~~io~~ vi ringraziamo, di letteri fogli, e vi congratuliamo con voi. Con non minore modestia che zelo voi vi dedicate ad un' opera che stimiamo di grande importanza. Un alto ideale, ben degno di voi, l'ha ispirata. Essa è giovane ancora; e nondimeno, nel corso dei suoi primi cinque anni di vita, ha già prodotto buoni frutti, e anche migliori e più abbondanti ne promette, e le sue promesse sono ~~garanzie~~ garantite, più che da potenti appoggi umani, dal fine stesso che si propone, dall'aiuto divino che ~~l'assicuratore~~ ^{invoca} lo zelo vi ha fatto iniziare il vostro lavoro, senza attendere di "essere molti" e provvisti di tutti i mezzi desiderabili; la modestia vi ha permesso di avanzare prudentemente, con passo sicuro, senza disegni grandiosi e minuziosamente concepiti, ma con la γ chiarezza e la precisione del pensiero che vi anima.

Qual è dunque questo pensiero, qual è questo ideale, che va, di giorno in giorno, maggiormente determinandosi e illuminandosi? E', lei sembra, il concetto chiaro, elevato e cristiano che voi avete dell'impresa. Per voi essa è più che un semplice mezzo di guadagnare la vita e di mantenere la legittima dignità del proprio grado; l'indipendenza della propria persona e della propria famiglia. E' più che la collaborazione tecnica e pratica del pensiero, del capitale, del lavoro multiforme, favorevoli alla produzione e al progresso. E' più che un fattore importante della vita economica, più che un semplice - ben lodabile - contributo allo svolgimento della giustizia sociale; e se non fosse che questo, sarebbe ancora insufficiente a stabilire e a promuovere l'ordine completo, perché γ l'ordine non è tale che δ regna in tutta la vita e in tutta l'attività materiale, economica, sociale, e soprattutto cristiana, fuori della quale l'uomo rimane sempre incompiuto.

Senza dubbio, voi non avete preteso - sarebbe stata una chimera, per quanto generosa - di effettuare in un sol tratto quest'ordine, e neanche di tracciarne, di getto, il programma definitivo. Ma il vostro scopo è nettamente determinato, e voi non avete a questo riguardo alcuna

La grande miseria dell'ordine sociale è che esso non è profondamente cristiano né realmente umano, ma unicamente tecnico ed economico, e che non riposa punto su ciò che dovrebbe essere la sua base e il fondamento solido della sua unità, vale a dire il carattere comune di uomini per natura e di figli di Dio per la grazia dell'adozione divina.

Quanto a noi, che siete risolti a introdurre questo fattore umano dappertutto, nell'impresa, fra i diversi gradi e ^{attività} funzioni che la compongono, nella vita sociale e pubblica, per mezzo della legislazione e della educazione del popolo, voi vi studiate di trasformare la massa, che resterebbe amorfa, inerte, incosciente, alla mercé di agitatori interessati, in una società, i cui membri, distinti fra loro, collaborano, ciascuna secondo la sua funzione, l'unità di un solo corpo.

Questo paragono, a voi ben noto, vi è familiare ~~ai vostri figli~~ (cfr. 1 Cor. 12, 12 e segg.). Sia esso sempre il vostro programma e come la carta della vostra Unione. Mantenendovi ad essa fedeli, sarete sicuri di edificare sulla solida pietra, che è Cristo, sulla pietra che Cristo ha dato come fondamento alla sua Chiesa.

Diletti figli!

Si parla oggi molto di una riforma nella struttura dell'impresa, e coloro che la promuovono sono pensati in primo luogo a modificazioni giuridiche fra quanti ne sono membri, siano essi imprenditori, o dipendenti incorporati nell'impresa in virtù del contratto di lavoro.

Alla Nostra considerazione non potevano però sfuggire le tendenze che in tali movimenti s'infiltrano, le quali non applicano - come ^{si esprime} ~~secoli~~ ~~consuetudine~~ ~~e~~ ~~opinione~~ - le incontestabili norme del diritto naturale alle mutate condizioni del tempo, ma semplicemente le escludono. Perciò nei Nostri discorsi del 7 maggio 1949 alla Unione Internazionale delle Associazioni Nazionali Cattoliche e del 3 giugno 1950 al Congresso Internazionale di Studi Sociali le siamo opposti a quelle tendenze, non già, veramente, per favorire gli interessi materiali di un gruppo piuttosto che di un altro, ma per assicurare la sincerità e la tranquillità di coscienza a tutti coloro cui questi problemi si riferiscono.

Né potevamo ignorare le allusioni, con cui si sovrano le parole di alta saggezza del
 nostro ^{glorioso} ~~grande~~ ^{Papa} ~~Predecessore~~; dando il peso e la importanza di un programma sociale della Chiesa, nel
 nostro tempo, ad una osservazione del tutto accessoria intorno alle eventuali modificazioni giuridiche
 nei rapporti ^{fra i} ~~tra i~~ ^{lavoratori} ~~comparsi~~ ^{soggetti} del contratto di lavoro e ^{l'altra parte, contrattante} ~~l'imprenditore~~; e passando invece
 più o meno sotto silenzio la parte principale della Enciclica "Quaragesimo anno", che contiene in
 realtà quel programma, vale a dire la idea dell'ordine corporativo professionale della intera
 economia. Chi si avinge a trattare problemi relativi alla riforma della struttura dell'impresa
 senza tener conto che ogni impresa particolare è per il suo scopo strettamente legata all'insieme
 della economia nazionale, corre il rischio di porre premesse errone e false, con danno dell'intero
 ordine economico e sociale. ^{nello stesso} ~~nel~~ discorso del 3 giugno 1950 lo studiammo di mettere nella sua
 giusta luce il pensiero e la dottrina del nostro ^{Predecessore}, ^{cui nulla} ~~non~~ ^{era} ~~più~~ ~~altrimenti~~ ~~come~~
 giustamente a proseguire il cammino che conduce verso le forme di una autentica responsabilità col-
 lettiva.

Voi camminiate invece per la sola via nuova, quella che impregna tutto tendendo ad armonizzare i
 rapporti personali coi sensi di fraternità cristiana; via che è praticabile dappertutto e creata larga-
 mente sul piano dell'impresa. Questa vostra intenzione vi renderà ingegnosi ed abili a far sì che
 la dignità personale del lavoratore, ben lungi dal perdersi nell'ordinamento generale dell'impresa ^{stessa},
 porti questa a una maggiore efficienza; non solo materialmente, ma anche e innanzi tutto procu-
 rando i valori di una vera economia comunitaria.

Avviate dunque a lavorare con fiduciosa perseveranza sotto la protezione divina, in segno
 della quale impartiamo di cuore a voi, a quanti sono uniti o si uniscono a voi, a tutte le
 persone e le cose che ce sono con, la nostra paterna Apostolica Benedizione.

unaware, beloved sons and daughters, that in this matter what the most elementary concern for the existence and future of your nation suggests coincides with the demands of the law of nature and of the Church.

Uphold the sanctity of family and home! Let parents look on the Christian upbringing of their children as a sacred duty; let children honor the Fourth Commandment and accord their parents respectful obedience. Family prayer must be a devout practice and Sunday must be observed in a worthy manner. Sunday must in a true sense remain the Lord's day, a day of spiritual and physical recreation, the day of the family. With its heartwarming atmosphere of peace and joy, the Christian Sunday can still, given good will, counteract the tendencies of modern economic life menacing the unity of the family. Make a common front against the secularization and profanation of the Sunday and the consequent family disruption, which follow in the wake of the rampant paganlike glorification of physical culture and the pursuit of pleasure.

As in other countries, so in your country, far-reaching housing projects are under way. Make sure, as much as is in your power, that the planning as well as the construction meet the needs of marriage and the family as God intends them to be.

Speaking to the Catholics of Vienna and Austria We could not but touch on the Social Question since Vienna has always been one of the focal points of the Catholic social movement. Gladly, therefore, We offer in this solemn hour the tribute of grateful remembrance to all those among you who ever since the time when this question became urgent contributed to the development of Catholic Social Teaching through study and practical action.

Today the Church looks back on the first phase of the modern social dispute. It revolved around the labor question: the distress of the proletariat and the problem of lifting this class of society, defenselessly exposed to the vicissitudes of the economic situation, to a status equal to that of other classes and endowed with clearly defined rights. At least in its essentials this problem has been solved, and the Catholic World has honestly and effectively contributed to

the solution. Though in some countries understanding and corresponding action came late, as it were at the eleventh hour, the social principles and directives laid down by the successors of St. Peter during the past sixty years, by this time have, on the whole, become the common inspiration of Catholic thought and action.

If the signs of the times are not misleading, the second phase of the social dispute, on which it appears we already have entered, confronts us with problems and tasks of a different nature. Two of these We shall now mention:

The overcoming of the class struggle by an organic coordination of employer and employee, for class struggle can never be a goal of Catholic social ethics since the Church feels itself equally beholden to all classes and strata of the people.

In the second place stands the protection of the individual and the family against their absorption by the state, a process of excessive socialization at the end of which looms the threatening nightmare of "Leviathan." Against this menace the Church will fight uncompromisingly because the highest goods, human dignity and the salvation of the soul, are jeopardized.

Pursuant to this aim Catholic social teaching in particular deliberately and vigorously champions the right of the individual to private ownership. Herein lie the deeper motives why the Popes of the social encyclicals, and We Ourselves have declined to infer either directly or indirectly from the nature of the labor contract the right of the worker to co-ownership in the operating capital, and its corollary, co-determination in the conduct of the business. Such a right must be denied because of more basic issues involved. The right of the individual and the family to private property stems immediately from the nature of human personality and is connected with the dignity of the human person; it is not merely a social function, but a personal right, though, to be sure, burdened with social responsibilities.

We feel it incumbent upon Us to exhort you and all Catholics anew, from the very outset of the new developments in the social

dispute to hew close to the clearly defined line of Catholic social teaching without deviating either to the right or the left. A slight deviation may at first seem inconsequential. However, in the long run, it would lead dangerously away from the right path, and entail disastrous consequences. Sober thinking, self-control, steadfastness in the face of temptations from extreme positions, accordingly shall be the watchword of the hour.

That is what We wished to say to you at the occasion of your Katholikentag.

We are aware, beloved sons and daughters, of the harassing cares and apprehensions, which afflict you as citizens of your country and as children of the Catholic Church. We are aware of your tenacious perseverance throughout the dark years of uncertainty and the veiled future as well as of your firm determination to hope and work constructively. Your cares and hopes are also Our cares and hopes and We shall not tire of presenting them to the Divine Omnipotence and Love in the Holy Sacrifice and in prayer.

We believe that in this hour We cannot do anything better than to recommend you, on Our part also, with the whole fervor of Our paternal heart, to the Alma Mater Austriae, who, at the shrine of Maria Zell, has so often proved herself in danger and distress a source of protection and help, a Mother of good counsel and a Mediatrix at the throne of her Divine Son. Entrust to her your fate, and put into her hands your dedication to a new and holy life. Then you have nothing to fear; then you may confidently hope.

May Mary extend over you her maternal hand, and may the love and grace of her Son, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God praised in all eternity, come to you in abundant measure. In pledge of which We impart to Our Legate, to your Bishops and Priests, to you all, beloved sons and daughters, as well as to your entire people and country, from the fulness of Our affection Our Apostolic Blessing.

VI

Letter of His Excellency Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini, Substitute Secretary of State to His Holiness, Addressed to the Archbishop of Genoa, His Excellency the Most Rev. Giuseppe Siri, President of the 'Twenty-Fifth Italian Catholic Social Week' Meeting in Turin

YOUR Excellency:

I have the honor to fulfill my esteemed charge of informing you that His Holiness has read with paternal satisfaction the program of the subjects which will be developed in the "Twenty-fifth Italian Catholic Social Week" to be held in Turin from September 21st to September 27th.

Its theme: "The Enterprise in Modern Economy," constitutes an important subject for study and consideration. It reflects the desire—indeed, more than the desire, the necessity—for that contribution which Italian Catholics must make towards the solution of those problems which are increasingly disturbing minds and consciences in a determined field of the political, social, economic and moral life of the nation, and at a definite historical moment in that life.

Therefore, the Church, always solicitous for the temporal as well as the spiritual good of humanity, cannot but praise and encourage the generous efforts of all those who are, with sincerity of purpose and with a true knowledge of Christian social principles, dedicating themselves towards hastening the realization of that necessary harmony which must reign among the different social classes, and which must be based on the demands of justice and of Christian brotherhood.

It might, therefore, be profitable at this point to recall to mind some of the teachings of the Sovereign Pontiffs with respect to this specific theme of the "Social Week."

The control of production and of the distribution of wealth is known to be a fundamental problem of economic life, a problem which must be resolved both in conformity with justice and the common good, and in such a way as to safeguard the integrity and the development of the human personality.

Now then, whoever browses through the papal teachings on this matter can notice therein three outstanding aspects of business: (1) the relationship existing between the machine and the laborer; (2) the juridico-social position of the laborers; (3) the relationship between the enterprise and the State.

* * *

While in recent decades substantial improvements have been realized in the spheres of labor, nevertheless the aspect of the relationship existing between the machine and the laborer still remains serious. The discovery, the adoption and the application of the machine certainly bespeak a conquest of human progress. But this imposing phenomenon contains within itself a negative side, inasmuch as the productive processes, by their connection into a series of almost identical phases, threaten to cause labor to lose every trace of humanity by reducing themselves to a simple mechanical motion.

From this fact there arises various necessities: (1) the necessity of examining attentively particular provisions for cases wherein the machine might possibly increase unemployment; (2) the necessity of offering to the laborer adequate professional instruction to make him aware of his own specific contribution to the goods produced (and on this particular point, recognition is due the action undertaken on the part of public authorities by the establishment and the increase of professional retraining courses); (3) the necessity of striving to improve the laborer's moral consciousness and his social sense by means of which he may convince himself that his

labor also accomplishes a service towards his neighbor; (4) the especial necessity, finally, of strengthening religious sentiment through which the laborer may come to consider his work as collaboration in the creative and the redemptive action of God, and, consequently, as a means for his own spiritual perfection.

* * *

Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, has many times referred to the juridico-social position of the workers in industry, accurately distinguishing what belongs within the sphere of natural law, from that which forms part of the aspirations of the working classes and which can consequently be pursued by legitimate means as an ideal.

He warned, in fact, that "a danger arises when one insists that the salaried workers in a company should have the right of economic co-management, especially when the exercise of this right is, in fact, subject, directly or indirectly, to organizations foreign to the company itself. Now, neither the nature of the work-contract nor the nature of the business necessarily imply, in themselves, such a right . . . The wisdom of Our Predecessor, Pius XI, showed this clearly in the Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" and, accordingly, there is denied therein the intrinsic need of patterning the work-contract on the contract of partnership," (Discourse to the International Congress of Social Studies, June 3, 1950).

A true right of the workers to co-management cannot, therefore, be conceded as axiomatic. But this fact does not prohibit employers from having the laborer participate in some fashion and to some degree in management, just as it does not prevent the State from conferring upon labor the right to make its voice heard in the administrative management of certain definite affairs and in certain definite cases wherein the extraordinary power of anonymous capital, when left to itself, manifestly harms the community. And in his radio message of September 1, 1944, the Supreme Pontiff taught that "the small and medium-sized holdings in agriculture, in the arts and in the crafts, in commerce and in industry, must be guaranteed and encouraged; co-operative unions should ensure them the advantages of big business; and in those cases wherein

big business even today shows itself to be increasingly productive, the possibility should be offered of adjusting the work-contract with a partnership contract."

But with paternal insistence His Holiness has recalled our attention to the profound spiritual changes which must first be realized in order to humanize and to vitalize the relations in the inner-workings of the business between laborers and employers. In this vein, in fact, did His Holiness express himself when speaking to the Christian Employers: "This duty, this ideal, is, as We have said, the full management, lofty and Christian, of your business, management penetrated with human sentiments in the widest and the highest sense of the word. Like the drop of oil in the gears, this human sentiment must penetrate all the members, and all the branches of industry: the executives, their assistants, the clerical employees and the workers of all ranks, from the artisan and the most highly-skilled workman down to the humblest manual laborer.

"If business firms, effectively penetrated with the truly human spirit, multiply and unite with you one after another, if they become like so many large families, and if, not content with their own separate existence, as in a closed vessel, they will unite among themselves, then, all together, they will tend to form a strong and a happy society.

"You are traveling . . . the one, safe road, that road which tends to inspire personal relations with sentiments of Christian brotherhood, a road that can be traveled everywhere, and is of ample circulation on the industrial level. Your aim will give you the inventiveness and the ability to ensure that the personal dignity of the workers, far from being lost in the overall management of the industry itself, will increase the efficiency of that industry not only in a material way, but also, and above all, by gaining for it the advantages of a true community." (Discourse of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, *Supra*, No. III.)

Once the atmosphere in the inner-workings of business shall have been transformed, there will subsequently be made possible

and less difficult those changes which the professional qualifications and the sense of responsibility on the part of the laborers, the keen and effective sensibility on the part of the employers, and the demands of the common good might at a given moment permit or require.

* * *

Finally, the doctrine of the Church regarding the relationship between business enterprise and the State is clear. If the so-called liberal conception is based on various erroneous principles, no less erroneous and dangerous is the doctrine which attributes to the State the right of chartering a totally planned economy, because from such a conception there would likewise follow the restriction and the extinction of fundamental human rights. "Whether," as His Holiness so wisely observes, "this economic slavery should arise from the selfish domination of private capital or from the power of the State, the result is the same. Indeed, under the pressure of a State which controls everything and which rules over the whole sphere of public and private life, even going so far as to penetrate into the realm of ideas, of beliefs and of conscience, this absence of economic liberty, as experience shows and proves, can have even more serious consequences," (Christmas Message, 1942).

The economic world is primarily a creation of the free will of men; it pertains to the State, therefore, to create those conditions which may allow private initiative to expand within the limits of the moral order and of the common good.

The Church, therefore, has always benevolently regarded and encouraged those forms of business undertakings in which she finds it possible for the personal initiative of all participants to assert itself and to expand, as, for example, in the case of craftsmen's projects, the family-sized farm, and cooperative undertakings. (Radio Message, September 1, 1944). But the Church also maintains that, in complete conformity with the proper order, big business can remain within the realm of private initiative, provided that evident considerations of the common good do not militate against such a situation. (Discourse of His Holiness to "The International Union

of the Catholic Owners' Associations" [UN.I.A.P.A.C.], (May 7, 1949, *Supra* No. I.)

This latter state of affairs will be the better realized in direct proportion to, in the first place, the recognition on the part of the responsible parties in the above-mentioned businesses of their rights and their duties towards both the community of citizens and their own employees; and, in the second place, in direct proportion to the extent to which the working classes, having been made cognizant of the negative aspects of State super-capitalism, will be allowed to assume adequate responsibilities in the cycle of the national economy, in professional life, and in the organs of production themselves.

In his discourse of March 11, 1945, His Holiness emphasized the fact that the proper concept of justice and an efficacious sense of Christian brotherhood would contribute towards such a solution: "The time has now come to abandon empty phrases, and, in accord with the 'Quadragesimo Anno', to envision a new disposition of the productive powers of the people. Over and beyond the admitted distinction between employers and laborers, let men learn to see and to recognize that higher sense of unity which reciprocally binds together all those who collaborate in production, namely, their union and their solidarity in the duty which is jointly theirs of providing permanently for the common good and the needs of the entire community.

"May this solidarity extend itself into every branch of production; may it become the basis of both a better economic order, and a healthy and equitable autonomy; may it open the way for the working classes to win by honest measures their share of responsibility in the direction of the national economy! In this way, thanks to this harmonious coordination and cooperation, and to this more intimate union of his labor with the other factors of economic life, the laborer will come to find in his work a secure and a sufficient income for his own support and that of his family, a true satisfaction of mind, and a powerful stimulus towards self-perfection."

While expressing his very best wishes that the "Social Week"

may be most successful, Our Holy Father, with paternal feeling, and as a token of graces and heavenly blessings yet to come, heeds the request of Your Excellency, and sends to all the promoters of and the participants in this "Social Week," His consoling Apostolic Blessing.

As for myself, I willingly take this opportunity to show my reverence for you, and, with sentiments of the highest esteem, to assure you that I am

Your Excellency's devoted servant,

Giovanni Battista Montini,

Substitute Secretary of State of His Holiness.

Monday, September 22, 1952

VII

Text of the Christmas Message of His Holiness,
Pope Pius XII, Calling on Mankind to
Aid the Poor and Showing the
Road to True Salvation

December 24, 1952

“LIFT up your heads, for your salvation is at hand” (Luke 21, 28). This happy prophecy of the Divine Master with reference to the Last Day, when, as Sovereign Judge, He will return again to earth “with great power and majesty” (Luke 21, 27) to converse once more with humanity, is recalled to mind and addressed to the faithful by the Christmas liturgy as an invitation to cast off every shadow of anguish from their countenances, and to welcome into their souls the great hope of salvation, which, renewed every Christmas, radiates from the humble cradle of Bethlehem, the revealer of the kindness and of the mercy of the Most High God. (Cf. Epistle to Titus, 3.4).

We intend to make Our own today this same invitation to lift up your gaze to the sun of hope, as a Father’s greeting and wish to you all, beloved sons and daughters. May the sweet mystery of the Christian Christmas entice you to fulfill that which the Heavenly Child initiated at His birth. May the mystic splendor of the Holy Night be reflected in your souls, as a precursor of positive hope and of reliable comfort, for both of which your souls are more than ever thirsting, yet which, since they are precious stones of heaven, you would look for in vain on this arid earth.

*THE MOURNFUL CHORUS OF THE
POOR AND THE OPPRESSED*

But Our wish and greeting is addressed before all others to the poor, to the oppressed, and to those who for whatever reason are

groaning under afflictions, and whose life depends, as it were, upon the breath of hope which can be infused into them, and upon the measure of help which can be procured for them.

They are so very, very numerous, these beloved children! The mournful chorus of prayers and of pleas for help—far from marking that decrease which the lapse of quite a few years since the world conflict gave good reason to hope for—continues and at times becomes more intense on account of the many and pressing needs. It rises toward Us, it may be said, from every part of the world, and torments Our mind because of the amount of distress and tears it reveals.

Sad experience has by now taught Us that even when news arrives of an improvement in the general conditions of one particular country, We must, nevertheless, be prepared for the announcement of perhaps new calamities in another country, with new miseries and new wants. And yet, however much the ceaseless pains of so many children may weigh heavily upon Our heart, still the words of Our Divine Master: “Do not let your heart be troubled or be afraid . . . I go away and I am coming to you” (John 14, 27-28) are a powerful spur to Us to put to use whatever means are in Our power to bring comfort and relief.

It is true that We are not alone in this desire to provide and to help. Innumerable proposals and projects which aim at preventing and remedying misery are being formulated daily by public and private agencies. Many of them, which are presented to Us by individuals and by groups, undoubtedly signify the good will of their authors; but their unusual abundance and the contradictory results into which they fall, manifest a state of general perplexity.

SALVATION CANNOT COME FROM PRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION ALONE

One would say that humanity of today which has had the ingenuity to construct the marvelous and complex machinery of the modern world, subjugating to its service the tremendous forces of

nature, now appears incapable of controlling their course, as if the rudder had slipped from its hands, and thus finds itself in danger of being mastered and overpowered by these same forces.

This lack of control of itself ought to suggest to men, who are its victims, not to expect salvation solely from the techniques of production and organization. This technique, provided it be bound up with, and directed toward, an improvement and assertion of true human values, can, indeed, contribute to a notable degree to the solution of the grave and widespread problems besetting the modern world; but in no case—oh! how We wish that all men both on this continent as well as those beyond the sea would come to realize this fact—will technical progress by itself avail in fashioning a world free of misery!

Meanwhile, in so urgent a problem of bringing help to souls in distress, humanity must raise its eyes to the operation of God, in order to learn continually from His infinitely wise and efficacious manner of acting the way to help and to redeem men from their ills. Now then, it is precisely the mystery of the Nativity which casts a wonderful light upon this problem. For, as a matter of fact, in what does the substance of this ineffable mystery consist but in the work undertaken by God and by Him gradually brought to its conclusion on behalf of His creature, in order to lift him up again from the depths of the most grievous and general misery into which he had fallen: namely, the misery of sin and his separation from the Supreme Good?

TWO FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE WORK

Observe with humble and illuminating contemplation how God conducts His redemptive work. Two fundamental concepts, one might say two laws, dictated by His infinite wisdom, rule and guide the execution of His plan of redemption, stamping that execution with an unmistakable character of harmony and of efficacy, which is characteristic of the Divine mode of operation.

In the first place, far from disturbing the pre-existing order established by Him in creation, God maintains steadfast the full force of those general laws which govern the world and man's nature, weakened though the latter is by the infirmities it has contracted. In that order, which was established also for the salvation of the creature, He deranges nothing, He withdraws nothing; but He inserts therein a new element, destined to perfect and to surpass it. This element is Grace, by whose supernatural light the creature will be enabled to know that order better, and by whose superhuman force he will be better able to observe it.

In the second place, to render the general order efficacious in each particular concrete case, each of which is never the same as other cases, God establishes an immediate, personal contact with men, and actuates that contact in the mystery of Incarnation. By this mystery, the second Person of the Most Holy Trinity becomes man among men, thus bridging, as it were, the infinite distance which separates the helping Majesty from the needy creature, and mutually harmonizing the immutable efficacy of the general law with the personal exigencies of each creature.

Whoever contemplates this ineffable harmony of the Divine operation, which involves the Divine wisdom, omnipotence and love, cannot but exclaim with absolute confidence: "*O Rex gentium, qui facis utraque unum: veni et salva hominem*—O king of nations, bond of union: come and save man." (Roman Breviary, Antiphon in preparation for the Nativity, December 22). He cannot refrain from pointing out this harmony as a model to be followed whenever there is question of initiating, on a human basis, a project to succour human miseries.

TWO FALSE WAYS

Unfortunately, it might be said, especially in the present case of very widespread miseries, that mankind today is no longer capable of reducing this duality into unity, namely, this necessary adaptation of the general order to the concrete and ever-diversi-

fied conditions not only of the individuals but also of the peoples whom one wishes to help.

Salvation is either committed by men to some order which is rigorously uniform and inflexible, and on a world-scale—to a system that must necessarily produce results with the certainty of a tried and proved medicine—to a new social formula reduced to cold, theoretical terms—or, on the other hand, rejecting such general prescriptions, they entrust salvation to the spontaneous forces of the natural instinct in man to preserve life and, in the best hypothesis, to the sentimental impulses of individuals and of peoples, without concerning themselves as to whether the overthrow of the existing order might follow as a consequence of such a course of action, and however evident it might be that salvation cannot be born of chaos.

Both these ways are false, and are far from reflecting the wisdom of God, Who is the first and the exemplary alleviator of human misery. It is superstition to expect salvation from rigid formulas, materialistically applied to the social order, for this way of thinking attributes to such formulas an almost prodigious power which they cannot have; while, on the other hand, to base one's hopes exclusively on the creative forces of the instinct to preserve life which is in each individual is contrary to the designs of God, Who is the Lord of the existing order.

We wish to draw the attention of those who offer themselves as benefactors of these peoples to both these errors, but particularly to the superstition which would hold for certain that salvation ought to spring from the organization of men and of material things into an intimate unity capable of the highest productive capacity.

If men succeed—so they think—in coordinating the forces of man and the resources of nature into a single organic mass, spread out to assure the highest possible and an ever-increasing productive capacity, by means of an organization designed and made operative with the most minute attention given to its important features as well as its smallest details, then every kind of desirable benefits

will spring forth from such an organization: prosperity, security for the individual and peace.

*SOCIAL LIFE CANNOT BE CONSTRUCTED AFTER THE
MANNER OF A GIGANTIC INDUSTRIAL MACHINE*

One knows where to look for the technologist's point of view in social thought: namely to the gigantic enterprises of modern industry. We do not intend here to pronounce judgment on the necessity, utility and disadvantages of forms of production such as these. Indubitably, they are marvelous realizations of the inventive and constructive genius of the human spirit. Deservedly are these enterprises held up for world-wide admiration which, following norms which have been maturely considered, succeed both in production and in management in coordinating and in uniting the forces of men and of matter. And the present age may take legitimate pride in the stable way in which these enterprises are organized and not infrequently in the wholly novel and characteristic beauty of their external set-up. But what must be denied is that these forms either can or should avail as a general model according to which modern social life should be arranged or with which it should be made to conform.

It is, above all, a clear principle of wisdom that all progress is truly such only if it knows how to add new conquests to old, to join new benefits to those already acquired in the past—in a word, if it knows how to profit by experience. Now, history teaches that other forms of national economy have always had a positive influence upon the entire social life, an influence which benefited both the essential institutions—such as the family, the state and private property—and those institutions formed by voluntary association. We point out by way of example the undeniable advantages which have been realized wherever agricultural enterprise or that involving the crafts has predominated.

Unquestionably, modern industrial enterprise, too, has had its beneficial results; but the problem which presents itself today

is this; "Will a world in which the only economic form to find recognition is a vast productive system, be equally capable of exerting a happy influence upon social life in general and upon the three above-mentioned fundamental institutions in particular?"

We must answer that the impersonal character of such a world is in contrast with the wholly personal inclination of those institutions which the Creator has given to human society. In fact, marriage and the family, the State and private property tend of their very nature to form and to develop man as a person, to protect him and to render him capable of contributing, through his own voluntary collaboration and personal responsibility, to the likewise personal maintenance and the development of social life. The creative wisdom of God remains, therefore, alien to that system of impersonal unity which outrages the human person, the origin and very purpose of social life, and in its innermost essence the very image of God.

THE "DEPERSONALIZATION" OF MODERN MAN

At the present time, unfortunately, it is not a question of mere hypotheses and predictions, for this sad condition is already with us; wherever the demon of organization invades and tyrannizes man's mind, there are at once revealed the signs of the false and abnormal orientation of social development. In many countries the modern State is becoming a gigantic administrative machine. It extends its influence over almost every phase of life. It would like to subject to its administration the entire range of the political, economic, social and intellectual fields, including even the birth and the death of its subjects.

No wonder, then, if in this atmosphere of impersonality, which tends to penetrate and to encompass life in its entirety, the meaning of the common good is diminished in the conscience of individuals, and if the state loses more and more its original character of a community of morally responsible citizens.

In this fact is to be discovered the origin and the source of that

current which is submerging modern man under its tide of anguish: his "depersonalization." In large measure his identity and his name have been taken from him; in many of the most important activities of life he has been reduced to a mere object of society, since society itself is being transformed into an impersonal system, into a lifeless organization of forces.

EFFECTS OF THE WIDESPREAD NEGLECT OF THE HUMAN PERSON

If anyone should still harbor doubts about this state of affairs, let him turn his gaze upon the teeming world of misery, and let him ask the ever so diversified classes of needy people what answers society is wont to give them, directed as society now is towards the neglect of the human personality.

Let him ask the ordinary poor man, destitute of every resource, whom one encounters so frequently in cities, in towns and in rural areas alike. Let him ask the impoverished head of a family, a constant visitor to a Relief Agency, whose children cannot wait for the distant and vague compensations of a golden age which is always on its way. Let him put the question, too, to a whole nation whose standard of living is inferior or very low, and which, while being associated in the family of nations side by side with its fellow men who enjoy a sufficient or even an abundant way of life, is waiting in vain from one international congress to another for a stable improvement of its lot in life.

What is the answer which modern society often gives to the unemployed person, who presents himself at an employment office, disposed, perhaps, through habit to receive a new disappointment, but not resigned to the immerited fate of being considered useless? And what is the response that is given to a people who, despite all its efforts and exertions, has not succeeded in freeing itself from the atrophying clutches of mass unemployment?

For a long time now the constant answer which society has given to all these poor people is that their case cannot be handled

on a personal and individual basis, but that the solution must be found in an order yet to be established—in a system which will embrace all, and which, without any essential prejudice to liberty, will bring men and matter to a more unified and growing strength of action, by availing itself of an ever more extensive utilization of technological progress. When such a system will have been realized, they say, the prosperity of all men will automatically ensue; a constantly rising standard of life and full employment will be realized everywhere.

Though We are far from believing that the constant references to the future mighty organization of men and matter is a mean diversion invented by those who do not want to help, and even recognizing that it may be a firm and sincere promise, calculated to instill confidence, yet We do not see upon what serious foundations this promise can rest, since lessons gleaned from experience up to the present moment lead one rather to a sceptical attitude toward the chosen system. This scepticism is, moreover, justified by a kind of vicious circle in which the preordained and the method adopted revolve one about the other without ever meeting and being reconciled.

In fact, in those places where one wishes to guarantee full employment with a constant rise in the standard of living, one may well pose the anxious question as to the degree to which expansion is possible without provoking a catastrophe and, above all, without bringing in its wake mass unemployment. It seems, therefore, that efforts should be made to attain the highest possible level of employment, but at the same time means must be sought to insure its stability.

No sense of confidence can, therefore, brighten a panorama such as this, over which hovers the spectre of that insoluble contradiction. Nor will there be any escape from its spiral, if men continue to depend solely upon the factor of the highest possible production. One must no longer consider the ideas of the standard of living and of employment of labor as purely quantitative factors, but rather as human values in the full sense of the word.

Whoever, therefore, would furnish assistance to the needs of individuals and peoples cannot expect salvation to come from an impersonal system of men and matter, no matter how vigorously developed in its technological aspects. Every plan or program must be inspired by the principle that man as the subject, guardian and promoter of human values, is more important than mere things, that he is more important even than the applications of technological progress, and that, above all, it is imperative to preserve from an unwholesome "depersonalization" the fundamental forms of the social order, which We have just mentioned, and to use them to create and to develop human relationships.

If the social forces are directed towards this end, they will not only realize one of their natural functions, but they will contribute in great measure towards the relief of the needs of the movement. For these forces of society have the task of promoting full and reciprocal solidarity among individuals and among peoples.

MUTUAL SOLIDARITY AMONG MEN AND PEOPLES

It is upon the basis of this solidarity, and not upon worthless and unstable systems, that We call upon men to erect the social structure. Solidarity demands that the excessive and provocative inequalities in living standards among different groups in a nation be eliminated. To achieve this urgent end, the efficacious voice of conscience should be preferred to external compulsion, for conscience will know how to set limits to the sums expended upon luxuries, and will likewise induce those of more modest means to provide, before all else, for what is necessary and useful, and then to put the balance into savings, if there remains a balance.

Mutual solidarity demands, not only in the name of brotherly love but even in the name of reciprocal advantage, that all possible means be utilized to maintain existing jobs and to create new ones. Wherefore, let those who are in a position to invest their capital productively consider in the light of the common good and with due regard for the opportunities of the moment and the limits of

their financial ability, whether they can feel justified in conscience either to withhold such investments or to withdraw them because of exaggerated caution. On the other hand, they act against conscience who, exploiting their own jobs for selfish ends, prevent others from finding employment, or cause them to lose their jobs. Then too, where private initiative is inactive or possibly inadequate, the public authorities are obliged both to provide employment, insofar as possible, by undertaking projects of general utility, and to facilitate, by counselling and by other means, the finding of employment by those who seek it.

But also to nations as such We extend our invitation to render operative this sense and this obligation of solidarity. Let every nation develop its own potentialities with regard to living standards and employment, and let it contribute to the corresponding progress of less fortunate nations. Although even the most perfect realization of international solidarity would hardly bring about absolute equality among nations, still, there is an urgent need that this solidarity be put into practice at least enough to change perceptibly the present world situation, which is far indeed from representing a reasonable balance. In other words, solidarity among nations demands the cessation of the glaring inequalities in living standards, and likewise in financial investments and in the degree of productivity of human labor.

Such results, however, will not be produced by a mechanical arrangement. Human society is not a machine, and must not be made such, not even in the economic field. Rather, one must always employ the human personality and the individuating characteristics of nations as the natural and the basic fulchrum around which all efforts must revolve in striving to attain the end of the public economy, which end is to insure a stable sufficiency of goods and of material services, directed in turn towards improving moral, cultural and religious conditions. Hence, solidarity and the desired improvements in the proportionment of the living conditions and employment ought to be brought about in the various regions, relatively extensive though they be, where the nature and the

historical development of the peoples concerned can more easily offer a common basis for attaining this goal.

ANGUISH OF CONSCIENCE IN MODERN SOCIETY

However, economic difficulties are not the only ones under which man suffers in present-day society. Often connected with these arise difficulties of conscience, especially for the Christian, anxious to live according to the dictates of the natural and the divine law. Those who maintain the impersonal idea of society are condemning to interior anguish that very conscience upon which, in great part, depends the cure for our ills and our salvation itself. And this perhaps is the widest possible deviation from the Divine plan that man is realizing in his efforts to help his fellow man.

Indeed, modern society, which wishes to foresee and to organize everything, because of its mechanical concept of society, comes into conflict with that which is living, and which, therefore, cannot be subjected to quantitative calculations. More precisely, it comes into conflict with those rights which, by nature, man exercises on his own and sole personal responsibility, that is to say, insofar as he is the author of new life, of which he is ever the principal custodian. Such intimate conflicts between the economic system and conscience are, therefore, disguised under the terms: the question of the birth rate and the problem of emigration.

BIRTH CONTROL AND THE PROBLEM OF EMIGRATION

When married couples mean to remain faithful to the sacrosanct laws of life established by the Creator, or when, to safeguard this fidelity, they seek to extricate themselves from the straitened circumstances which shackle them in their own country, and they find no other remedy for their situation but emigration—a remedy in former times counseled by the desire for gain, today often imposed by misery—behold how they run up against the provisions of organized society as against an inexorable law, against cold math-

ematical calculations, which have already determined how many persons, in a given set of circumstances, a country can or ought to support at the present time or at some future date.

And on the basis of such anticipated calculations an attempt is made to mechanize even consciences. And so we see public directions for controlling the birth rates; pressure is brought to bear by the administrative machinery which concerns itself with so-called social protection; influence is exercised along the same lines upon public opinion. Finally, see how the natural right of the individual to be unimpeded in immigrating or emigrating is not recognized or, in practice, is nullified under the pretext of a common good which is either falsely understood or falsely applied, but, nevertheless, a pretext which is sanctioned and made to apply by legislative or administrative measures.

These examples suffice to show how organization animated by a spirit of cold calculation, in trying to compress life within the narrow framework of set charts, as though it were some kind of static phenomenon, denies and offends the true concept of life itself and the essential characteristic of life, which is its incessant dynamism, communicated to it by nature, and manifested in the immensely diversified scale of individual circumstances.

The consequences of this manner of acting are very serious. Numerous letters which We receive reveal the affliction of good and noble Christians, whose conscience is troubled by the relentless lack of understanding on the part of a society inflexible in its rules, which, like a machine, is set in motion according to mathematical calculations, yet which mercilessly tramples and disregards problems, which personally and intimately affect the moral life of these people.

Certainly, We will not deny that this or that particular region may be at present over-burdened by a relatively excess population. But the desire to solve the difficulty with the formula according to which the number of inhabitants should be regulated according to the public economy is equivalent to overthrowing the order of

nature and the entire psychological and moral world that is bound up with it. What an error it would be to blame the natural law for the present miseries of the world, when it is clear that these miseries come from the lack of mutual solidarity between men and nations.

OPPRESSION AND PERSECUTION

Consciences are today also afflicted by other oppressions. Thus, for example, against the will and convictions of parents, teachers are prescribed for their children. Again, access to employment or to places of labor is made to depend upon registration in certain parties or in certain organizations which trace their origin to the labor market. Such discriminations are indicative of a wrong concept of the proper function of labor unions and of their essential purpose, which is the protection of the interests of the wage earner within modern society, which has become more and more anonymous and collectivist.

In fact, is not the essential purpose of unions the affirmation in practice that man is the subject, and not the object of social relations? Is it not their purpose to protect the individual against the collective irresponsibility of anonymous owners? Is it not to represent the person of the worker against those who are inclined to consider him merely as a productive agent with a determined price value? How, therefore, can they consider it normal that the protection of the personal rights of the worker be more and more in the hands of an anonymous group, working through the agency of immense organizations which are of their very nature monopolies? The worker, thus wronged in the exercise of his personal rights, will surely find especially painful the oppression of his liberty and of his conscience, caught as he is in the wheels of a gigantic social machine.

Whoever would think that this solicitude of Ours for true liberty is without foundation when We speak, as We do, to that part of the world which is generally called the "free world" should consid-

er that, even there, first of all real war and then the "cold war" have forcibly driven social relations in a direction which ultimately curtails the exercise of liberty itself, while, in another part of the world, this tendency has reached the ultimate consequences of its development.

In vast regions where souls and bodies are made to bend beneath the weight of absolute power, the Church is the first to suffer active anguish as a direct result of this situation. Her children are victims of a continual persecution, whether direct or indirect, at times open, at times disguised. Ancient Christian groups or communities, renowned for the ardor of their faith, for the glory of their saints, for the splendor of their theological treatises and works of Christian art, and, above all, for the diffusion of charity and of civilization among their people, appear to be approaching the imminent ruin of their external grandeur.

New Christian communities, the vineyard of the Lord, rich in promise, watered by the sweat and the blood of new apostles, sustained by the prayers and sacrifices of the entire Christian world, have been suddenly struck by the same hurricane which pitilessly uproots in its passage both the ancient oak and the tender seedling.

What will be left of these Christian communities, both old and young, when the "end of tribulation," which We so earnestly pray for, will finally come? The answer to this question is an inscrutable secret of a God Who is always good. Meanwhile, in that pitiable world, the Book of Life is recording everywhere the deeds of profound constancy of soul and the countless acts of heroism inspired by the Holy Spirit for the defense of the Kingdom of God, of the Name of Jesus, our only Salvation, and of the honor of His most Holy Mother. The persecuted Christians know full well that these priceless treasures can, and often actually do, demand difficult renunciations, even the sacrifice of life itself.

We are not drawing an ideal picture. There will be today, as there have always been in times of persecution, instances of weakness and of surrender, understandable in many cases, even though

not justifiable; there will even be cases of treason. However, the reports which are publicized, for the most part only relate half-truths, even when they do not distort or completely falsify them. Thus, by a conspiracy of silence and by distortion of the facts, the bitter struggle which Bishops, priests and laity must endure for the defense of the Catholic Faith is withheld from public knowledge.

SUFFERING OF THE POOR

And now Our thoughts turn with special and affectionate concern to the suffering army of the poor, scattered throughout the world—the poor, known or unknown, in civilized countries or in regions not yet regenerated by Christian or even by merely human culture.

Before the mind's eye pass those families over which there hangs, like a menacing spectre, the danger of having the source of their livelihood dry up because of sudden unemployment; for other families to this precariousness of wages is added the insufficiency of wages which is such as not to permit them to obtain decent clothing nor even the food necessary to ward off sickness.

The situation becomes worse when these families are constrained to live in a few unfurnished rooms, completely devoid of those simple comforts which render life less irksome. And if, what is worse, there is only one room to serve for five, seven, or ten persons, everyone can comprehend the consequent hardships they must endure. And what is to be said of those families who have some little work, but no home, and who live in temporary barracks, in caves which would not be assigned even to brute animals?

Wretched, too, is the misery of those who, deprived of almost all income by the continual and, one might say, chronic devaluation of money, have fallen into the most wretched need, often after a life of saving and of hard labor, but who are now forced to end their days in the embarrassment of being reduced to the state of beggars.

But the most desolate picture is seen when it is a question of families who have simply nothing. These are the families in "utter wretchedness": the father is without work, the mother watches her children waste away, absolutely impotent to help them. They find themselves each day without bread; they continually lack the means whereby to clothe themselves, and woe to the whole family when sickness settles upon that cave, now become a human habitation.

While Our thoughts weigh these scenes of poverty and utter destitution, Our heart is filled with anxiety and is overwhelmed, We can truly say, by a sadness unto death. We are thinking of the consequences of poverty, and still more of the consequences of utter destitution. For some families there is a dying daily, a dying hourly; a dying multiplied, especially for parents, by the number of their loved ones whom they behold suffering and wasting away. Meanwhile, diseases become more serious, because they are not properly treated; they strike children in particular, because preventive measures are lacking.

To these miseries one might add the weakening and the consequent physical deterioration of whole generations, the failure to educate broad masses of the population in their duties as citizens, the prostitution of so many poor girls, pushed to the bottom of the abyss, because they believed that in their indecency they could find the only escape from their shameful poverty. Moreover, not rare is the case wherein wretched misery leads to crime. Those who, out of a sense of charity, visit our prisons, constantly affirm that not a few men, fundamentally decent, have ended up in prison because extreme poverty had led them to commit some unpremeditated act.

JESUS AND THE POOR

With all this in mind, the question proposes itself: "What has Christ's example taught men? How did Jesus act toward poverty and misery during his earthly sojourn?" Certainly His mission as Redeemer was to liberate men from the slavery of sin, the extreme form of misery. Nevertheless, the magnanimity of His most sensi-

tive heart could not allow Him to close His eyes to the suffering and to the sufferers among whom He had chosen to live.

Son of God, and Herald of His heavenly kingdom, He found His greatest delight in bending compassionately over the wounds of human flesh and the tattered rags of poverty. He was not satisfied with merely proclaiming the law of justice and charity; nor was He content with condemning with withering anathemas the hard-hearted, the inhuman, and the selfish, or with admonishing men that the final sentence of the Last Day will take as the norm and the expression of its judgment the exercise of charity towards one's fellow man, as the proof of the love of God. Rather He spent Himself personally in order to help, to heal, to feed.

Certainly, He did not ask whether, and to what extent, the misfortune which confronted Him had come about because the political and economic order of His time was defective or lacking. This is not to say that He was indifferent to these orders. On the contrary, He is the Lord of the world and of its order. But just as His work as Saviour was personal, so too He wished to meet life's other misfortunes with a love that was wholly personal. The example of Jesus is today, as it has always been, a strict duty for all.

THE ALLEVIATION OF MISERY

During the so arduous years of Our Pontificate, it has been Our wish that whatsoever was showered upon Us from various parts of the world, through the generosity of the wealthier faithful, should be turned back in an unending stream in order to help Our poor and abandoned children. We have wished to be at the side of the refugees and to help them return to their homes. We have sought out orphans to assure them of a roof over their heads, of bread and of another mother. We have been anxious to reach the imprisoned, the sick, the prisoners of war who are still kept far from their homeland, and the victims of the terrifying floods.

Unfortunately, on every occasion, to Our great sorrow, We have been faced with the realization that Our efforts were and still

are unequal to the gravity and to the multitude of the needs. For this reason, it is Our wish that a more intense and multiplied love for the poor should stir up, as it were, a flood of help, raging in its holy impetuosity, which may penetrate into those places wherever there is an old person abandoned, a sick person in need, a child who suffers, or a mother desolate because she can do nothing to help it.

Beloved children, you poor and wretched throughout the entire world! We pray Jesus to make you realize how near We are to you with Our paternal anxiety, full of anguish and concern. The Lord knows how We would like to possess His omnipresence and His omnipotence so that We might enter into each of your dwellings to bring you help and comfort, bread and work, serenity and peace. We should like to be near you, while you are weary in the fields and in your workshops, while you are laid low by the diseases which afflict you, or tormented with the pangs of hunger.

Finally, We cannot conclude without observing that the very best charitable organization would not suffice to itself alone to assist those in need. Personal action must necessarily be added, full of solicitude, and anxious to overcome the distance between the alleviator and the alleviated, personal action which draws one near to the poor man because he is Christ's brother and Our own.

The great temptation in an age that calls itself social—an age in which, besides the Church, the State, the municipalities and other public bodies are devoting themselves to so many social problems—is that when the poor man knocks on their door, people, including the faithful, may simply refer him to an agency, a social center or to some organization, in the belief that their personal obligation has already been sufficiently satisfied by their contributions in taxes or in voluntary offerings to those institutions.

Undoubtedly, the poor man will receive your help in this latter way. But often he counts also on you yourselves, at least on a word of kindness and comfort from you. Your charity ought to resemble God's, Who came in person to bring His help. This is the meaning

of the message of Bethlehem. Finally, social agencies cannot always extend their assistance in a sufficiently individual way; accordingly, charitable institutions must be complemented, and necessarily so, by voluntary helpers!

EXHORTATION

All these considerations encourage Us to call upon your personal collaboration. The poor, those whom life has cruelly reduced to straitened circumstances, the unfortunates of every kind await it. In so far as it is in your power to do so, strive to see to it that no one shall any longer feel constrained to say, as once did the man in the Gospel who had been infirm for thirty-eight years: "Lord, I have no one" (John 5, 7).

With the wish that genuine Christian love, nourished by a deep and living Catholic Faith, may mitigate the material and spiritual sufferings and may conquer the enmity of hearts, We affectionately impart to you all, beloved sons and daughters, who are listening to Us, and to those who are near to you in their Faith in one true and personal God and to your families and to all persons and things that are dear to your hearts, Our Apostolic Blessing.

