



'PEACE ON EARTH'

ENCYCLICAL LETTER
OF POPE JOHN XXIII

PACEM IN TERRIS

Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII

on

Peace on Earth

**Printed in U.S.A. by
OUR SUNDAY VISITOR INC.
Huntington, Indiana**



SPEC
CAPAM

This encyclical is dated Holy Thursday, April 11, 1963 and released by the Vatican Press Office on April 10, 1963 and relayed by the Press Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D. C.

The Encyclical Letter
PACEM IN TERRIS

To Our Venerable Brothers
The Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops
And Other Local Ordinaries
In Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See
To the Clergy and Faithful of the Whole World
And to All Men of Good Will

POPE JOHN XXIII

Venerable Brothers
And Beloved Children,
Health and Apostolic Benediction

Introduction

Order in the Universe

Peace on earth, which men of every era have most eagerly yearned for, can be firmly established only if the order laid down by God is dutifully observed.

The progress of learning and the inventions of technology clearly show that, both in living things and in the forces of nature, an astonishing order reigns, and they also bear witness to the greatness of man, who can understand that order and create suitable instruments to harness those forces of nature and use them to his benefit.

But the progress of science and the inventions of technology show above all the infinite greatness of God, who created the universe and man himself. He created all things out of nothing, pouring into them the abundance of His wisdom and goodness, so that the holy psalmist praises God in these words: "O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name over all the earth."¹ Elsewhere he says: "How manifold are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all."²

God also created man in His own "image and likeness,"³ endowed him with intelligence and freedom, and made him lord of creation, as the same psalmist declares in the words: "You have made him little less than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him rule over the works of your hands, putting all things under his feet."⁴

Order in Human Beings

How strongly does the turmoil of individual men and peoples contrast with the perfect order of the universe! It is

1. Ps. 8, 1.

2. Ps. 103, 24.

3. Cf. Gen. 1, 26.

4. Ps. 8, 6-8.

as if the relationships which bind them together could be controlled only by force. But the Creator of the world has imprinted in man's heart an order which his conscience reveals to him and enjoins him to obey: "They show the work of the Law written in their hearts. Their conscience bears witness to them."⁵

And how could it be otherwise? For whatever God has made shows forth His infinite wisdom, and it is manifested more clearly in the things which have greater perfection.⁶

But fickleness of opinion often produces this error, that many think that the relationships between men and States can be governed by the same laws as the forces and irrational elements of the universe, whereas the laws governing them are of quite a different kind and are to be sought elsewhere, namely, where the Father of all things wrote them, that is, in the nature of man.

By these laws men are most admirably taught, first of all how they should conduct their mutual dealings among themselves, then how the relationships between the citizens and the public authorities of each State should be regulated, then how States should deal with one another, and finally how, on the one hand individual men and States, and on the other hand the community of all peoples, should act toward each other, the establishment of such a world community of peoples being urgently demanded today by the requirements of universal common good.

5. Rom. 2, 15.

6. Cf. Ps. 18, 8-11.

PART I

Order Between Men

Every Man Is a Person with Rights and Duties

First of all, it is necessary to speak of the order which should exist between men. Any human society, if it is to be well ordered and productive, must lay down as a foundation this principle, namely, that every human being is a person, that is, his nature is endowed with intelligence and free will. By virtue of this, he has rights and duties of his own, flowing directly and simultaneously from his very nature, which are therefore universal, inviolable and inalienable.⁷

If we look upon the dignity of the human person in the light of divinely revealed truth, we cannot help but esteem it far more highly. For men are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. They are by grace the children and friends of God and heirs of eternal glory.

Rights

The Right to Life and a Worthy Standard of Living

Beginning our discussion of the rights of man, we see that every man has the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means which are necessary and suitable for the proper development of life. These are primarily food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and finally the necessary social services. Therefore a human being also has the right to security in cases of sickness, inability to work, widowhood, old age, unemployment, or in any other case in which he is deprived of the means of subsistence through no fault of his own.⁸

7. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, pp. 9-24; and Discourse of John XXIII, Jan. 4, 1963, A.A.S. LV, 1963, pp. 89-91.

8. Cf. Encycl. Divini Redemptoris of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXIX, 1937, p. 78; and Radio Message of Pius XII, Pentecost, June 1, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIII, 1941, pp. 195-205.

*Rights Pertaining
to Moral and Cultural Values*

By the natural law every human being has the right to respect for his person, to his good reputation; the right to freedom in searching for truth and in expressing and communicating his opinions, and in pursuit of art, within the limits laid down by the moral order and the common good; and he has the right to be informed truthfully about public events.

The natural law also gives man the right to share in the benefits of culture, and therefore the right to a basic education and to technical and professional training in keeping with the stage of educational development in the country to which he belongs. Every effort should be made to ensure that persons be enabled, on the basis of merit, to go on to higher studies, so that, as far as possible, they may occupy posts and take on responsibilities in human society in accordance with their natural gifts and the skills they have acquired.⁹

*The Right to Worship God
According to One's Conscience*

Every human being has the right to honor God according to the dictates of an upright conscience, and therefore the right to worship God privately and publicly. For, as Lactantius so clearly taught: "We were created for the purpose of showing to the God who bore us the submission we owe Him, of recognizing Him alone, and of serving Him. We are obliged and bound by this duty to God; from this religion itself receives its name."¹⁰

And on this point Our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, declared: "This genuine, this honorable freedom of the sons of God, which most nobly protects the dignity of the human person, is greater than any violence or injustice; it has always been sought by the Church, and always most dear to her. This was the freedom which the Apostles claimed with

9. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, pp. 9-24.

10. *Divinae Institutiones*, Book IV, ch. 28, 2; *Patrologia Latina*, 6, 535.

intrepid constancy; which the apologists defended with their writings, and which the martyrs in such numbers consecrated with their blood.”¹¹

The Right to Choose Freely One's State of Life

Human beings have the right to choose freely the state of life which they prefer, and therefore the right to set up a family, with equal rights and duties for man and woman, and also the right to follow a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life.¹²

The family, grounded on marriage freely contracted, monogamous and indissoluble, is and must be considered the first and essential cell of human society. To it must be given every consideration of an economic, social, cultural and moral nature which will strengthen its stability and facilitate the fulfilment of its specific mission.

Parents, however, have a prior right in the support and education of their children.¹³

Economic Rights

Human beings have the natural right to free initiative in the economic field and the right to work.¹⁴

Indissolubly linked with those rights is the right to working conditions in which physical health is not endangered, morals are safeguarded and young people's normal development is not impaired. Women have the right to working conditions in accordance with their requirements and their duties as wives and mothers.¹⁵

From the dignity of the human person there also arises the right to carry on economic activities according to the de-

11. *Encycl. Libertas Praestantissimum*, Acta Leonis XIII, VIII, 1888, pp. 237-238.

12. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, pp. 9-24.

13. Cf. *Encycl. Casti Connubii* of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXII, 1930, pp. 539-592; and Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, pp. 9-24.

14. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Pentecost, June 1, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIII, 1941, p. 201.

15. Cf. *Encycl. Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, Acta Leonis XIII, XI, 1891, pp. 128-129.

gree of responsibility of which one is capable.¹⁶ Furthermore — and this must be specially emphasized — there is the right to a working wage, determined according to criterions of justice, and therefore sufficient in proportion to the available resources, to give the worker and his family a standard of living in keeping with the dignity of the human person. In this regard, Our predecessor Pius XII said:

“To the personal duty to work imposed by nature, there corresponds and follows the natural right of each individual to make of his work the means to provide for his own life and the lives of his children; so profoundly is the empire of nature ordained for the preservation of man.”¹⁷

The right to private property, even of productive goods, also derives from the nature of man. This right, as We have elsewhere declared, “is a suitable means for safeguarding the dignity of the human person and for the exercise of responsibility in all fields; it strengthens and gives serenity to family life, thereby increasing the peace and prosperity of the State.”¹⁸

However, it is opportune to point out that there is a social duty essentially inherent in the right of private property.¹⁹

The Right of Meeting and Association

From the fact that human beings are by nature social, there arises the right of assembly and association. They have also the right to give the societies of which they are members the form they consider most suitable for the aim they have in view, and to act within such societies on their own initiative and on their own responsibility in order to achieve their desired objectives.²⁰

We Ourselves stated in the encyclical “Mater et Magis-

16. Cf. *Encycl. Mater et Magistra* of John XXIII, A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 422.

17. Cf. *Radio Message, Pentecost, June 1, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIII, 1941, p. 201.*

18. *Encycl. Mater et Magistra, A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 428.*

19. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 430.

20. Cf. *Encycl. Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII, XI, 1891, pp. 134-142*; *Encycl. Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXIII, 1931, pp. 199-200; *Encycl. Sertum Laetitiae* of Pius XII, A.A.S. XXXI, 1939, pp. 635-644.

tra” that for the achievement of ends which individual human beings cannot attain except by association, it is necessary and indispensable to set up a great variety of such intermediate groups and societies in order to guarantee for the human person a sufficient sphere of freedom and responsibility.²¹

The Right to Emigrate and Immigrate

Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country, and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there.²² The fact that one is a citizen of a particular State does not detract in any way from his membership of the human family as a whole, nor from his citizenship of the world community.

Political Rights

The dignity of the human person involves the right to take an active part in public affairs and to contribute one’s part to the common good of the citizens. For, as Our predecessor of happy memory, Pius XII, pointed out: “The human individual, far from being an object and, as it were, a merely passive element in the social order, is in fact, must be and must continue to be, its subject, its foundation and its end.”²³

The human person is also entitled to a juridical protection of his rights, a protection that should be efficacious, impartial and inspired by the true norms of justice.

As Our predecessor Pius XII teaches: “That perpetual privilege proper to man, by which every individual has a claim to the protection of his rights, and by which there is assigned to each a definite and particular sphere of rights, immune from all arbitrary attacks, is the logical consequence of the order of justice willed by God.”²⁴

21. Cf. A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 430.

22. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1952, A.A.S. XLV, 1953, pp. 33-46.

23. Cf. Radio Message, Christmas Eve, 1944, A.A.S. XXXVII, 1945, p. 12.

24. Cf. Radio Message, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, p. 21.

Duties

Rights and Duties

Necessarily Linked in the One Person

The natural rights with which We have been dealing are, however, inseparably connected, in the very person who is their subject, with just as many respective duties. And rights as well as duties find their source, their sustenance and their inviolability in the natural law which grants or enjoins them.

For example, the right of every man to life is correlative with the duty to preserve it; his right to a decent standard of living with the duty of living it becomingly; and his right to investigate the truth freely, with the duty of seeking it and of possessing it ever more completely and profoundly.

Reciprocity of Rights

and Duties between Persons

Once this is admitted, it is also clear that in human society to one man's right there corresponds a duty in all other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question. For every fundamental human right draws its indestructible moral force from the natural law, which in granting it imposes a corresponding obligation. Those, therefore, who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other.

Mutual Collaboration

Since men are social by nature, they are meant to live with others and to work for one another's welfare. A well ordered human society requires that men recognize and observe their mutual rights and duties. It also demands that each contribute generously to the establishment of a civic order in which rights and duties are progressively more sincerely and effectively acknowledged and fulfilled.

It is not enough, for example, to acknowledge and respect every man's right to the means of subsistence. One must

also strive to obtain that he actually has enough in the way of food and nourishment.

The society of men must not only be organized but must also provide them with abundant resources. This certainly requires that they observe and recognize their mutual rights and duties. It also requires that they collaborate together in the many enterprises that modern civilization either allows or encourages or even demands.

An Attitude of Responsibility

The dignity of the human person also requires that every man enjoy the right to act freely and responsibly. For this reason, therefore, in social relations man should exercise his rights, fulfill his obligations and, in the countless forms of collaboration with others, act chiefly on his own responsibility and initiative. This is to be done in such a way that each one acts on his own decision, of set purpose and from a consciousness of his obligation, without being moved by force or pressure brought to bear on him externally.

For any human society that is established on relations of force must be regarded as inhuman, inasmuch as the personality of its members is repressed or restricted, when in fact they should be provided with appropriate incentives and means for developing and perfecting themselves.

Social Life in Truth, Justice, Charity and Freedom

A political society is to be considered well ordered, beneficial and in keeping with human dignity if it is grounded on truth. As the Apostle Paul exhorts us: "Wherefore, put away lying and speak truth each one with his neighbor, because we are members of another."²⁵ This demands that reciprocal rights and duties be sincerely recognized.

Furthermore, human society will be such as We have just described it, if the citizens, guided by justice, apply them-

25. Eph. 4, 25.

selves seriously to respecting the rights of others and discharging their own duties; if they are moved by such fervor of charity as to make their own the needs of others and share with others their own goods; if, finally, they work for a progressively closer fellowship in the world of spiritual values. Human society is realized in freedom, that is to say, in ways and means in keeping with the dignity of its citizens, who accept the responsibility of their actions precisely because they are by nature rational beings.

Human society, venerable brothers and beloved children, ought to be regarded above all as a spiritual reality in which men communicate knowledge to each other in the light of truth, in which they can enjoy their rights and fulfill their duties, and are inspired to strive for moral good. Society should enable men to share in and enjoy every legitimate expression of beauty, and encourage them constantly to pass on to others all that is best in themselves, while they strive to make their own the spiritual achievements of others. These are the spiritual values which continually give life and basic orientation to cultural expressions, economic and social institutions, political movements and forms, laws, and all other structures by which society is outwardly established and constantly developed.

God and the Moral Order

The order which prevails in society is by nature moral. Grounded as it is in truth, it must function according to the norms of justice, it should be inspired and perfected by mutual love, and finally it should be brought to an ever more refined and human balance in freedom.

Now an order of this kind, whose principles are universal, absolute and unchangeable, has its ultimate source in the one true God, who is personal and transcends human nature. Inasmuch as God is the first truth and the highest good, He alone is that deepest source from which human society can draw its vitality, if that society is to be well ordered, beneficial and in keeping with human dignity.²⁶

26. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, p. 14.

As St. Thomas Aquinas says: "Human reason is the norm of the human will, according to which its goodness is measured, because reason derives from the eternal law which is the divine reason itself. It is evident then that the goodness of the human will depends much more on the eternal law than on human reason."²⁷

Characteristics of the Present Day

Our age has three distinctive characteristics.

First of all, the working classes have gradually gained ground in economic and public affairs. They began by claiming their rights in the socio-economic sphere. They extended their action then to claims on the political level. And finally they applied themselves to the acquisition of the benefits of a more refined culture. Today, therefore, workers all over the world refuse to be treated as if they were irrational objects without freedom, to be used at the arbitrary disposition of others. They insist that they be always regarded as men with a share in every sector of human society: in the social and economic sphere, in the fields of learning and culture, and in public life.

Secondly, it is obvious to everyone that women are now taking a part in public life. This is happening more rapidly perhaps in nations of Christian civilization and, more slowly but broadly, among peoples who have inherited other traditions or cultures. Since women are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity, they will not tolerate being treated as mere material instruments, but demand rights befitting a human person both in domestic and in public life.

Finally, the modern world, as compared with the recent past, has taken on an entirely new appearance in the field of social and political life. For since all nations have either achieved or are on the way to achieving independence, there will soon no longer exist a world divided into nations that rule others and nations that are subject to others.

Men all over the world have today — or will soon have

27. *Summa Theol.*, Ia IIae, q. 19, a. 4, ; cf. a. 9.

– the rank of citizens in independent nations. No one wants to feel subject to political powers located outside his own country or ethnical group. Thus in very many human beings the inferiority complex which endured for hundreds and thousands of years is disappearing, while in others there is an attenuation and gradual fading of the corresponding superiority complex which had its roots in social-economic privileges, sex or political standing.

On the contrary, the conviction that all men are equal by reason of their natural dignity has been generally accepted. Hence racial discrimination can in no way be justified, at least doctrinally or in theory. And this is of fundamental importance and significance for the formation of human society according to those principles which We have outlined above. For, if a man becomes conscious of his rights, he must become equally aware of his duties. Thus he who possesses certain rights has likewise the duty to claim those rights as marks of his dignity, while all others have the obligation to acknowledge those rights and respect them.

When the relations of human society are expressed in terms of rights and duties, men become conscious of spiritual values and understand the meaning and significance of truth, justice, charity and freedom. They become deeply aware that they belong to this world of values. Moreover, when moved by such concerns, they are brought to a better knowledge of the true God who is personal and transcendent, and thus they make the ties that bind them to God the solid foundations and supreme criterions of their lives, both of that life which they live interiorly in the depths of their own souls and of that in which they are united to other men in society.

PART II

Relations between Individuals and the Public Authorities within a Single State

Necessity and Divine Origin of Authority

Human society can be neither well ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people invested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all.

These, however, derive their authority from God, as St. Paul teaches in the words: "There exists no authority except from God."²⁸ These words of St. Paul are explained thus by St. John Chrysostom:

"What are you saying? Is every ruler appointed by God? I do not say that, he replies, for I am not dealing now with individual rulers, but with authority itself. What I say is, that it is the divine wisdom and not mere chance, that has ordained that there should be government, that some should command and others obey."²⁹

Moreover, since God made men social by nature, and since no society "can hold together unless some one be over all, directing all to strive earnestly for the common good, every civilized community must have a ruling authority and this authority, no less than society itself, has its source in nature, and has, consequently, God for its author."³⁰

28. Rom. 13, 1.

29. In Epist. ad Rom. c. 13, vv. 1-2, homil. XXIII: *Patrologia Graeca*, 60, 615.

30. *Encycl. Immortale Dei* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII*, V, 1885, p. 120.

But authority is not to be thought of as a force lacking all control. Indeed, since it is the power to command according to right reason, authority must derive its obligatory force from the moral order, which in turn has God for its first source and final end. Wherefore Our predecessor of happy memory, Pius XII, said:

“That same absolute order of beings and their ends which presents man as an autonomous person, that is, as the subject of inviolable duties and rights, and as at once the basis of society and the purpose for which it exists, also includes the State as a necessary society invested with the authority without which it could not come into being or live . . . And since this absolute order — as we learn from sound reason, especially from the Christian Faith — can have no origin save in a personal God who is our Creator, it follows that the dignity of the State’s authority is due to its sharing to some extent in the authority of God Himself.”³¹

Where the civil authority uses as its only or its chief means either threats and fear of punishment or promises of rewards, it cannot effectively move men to promote the common good of all. Even if it did so move them, this would be altogether opposed to their dignity as men endowed with reason and free will.

Since authority is chiefly concerned with moral force, it follows that civil authority must appeal primarily to the conscience of individual citizens, that is to each one’s duty to collaborate readily for the common good of all. Since by nature all men are equal in human dignity, it follows that no one may be coerced to perform interior acts. That is in the power of God alone, who sees and judges the hidden designs of men’s hearts. Those, therefore, who have authority in the State may oblige men in conscience only if their authority is intrinsically related with the authority of God and shares in it.³²

By this principle the dignity of the citizens is protected.

31. Cf. Radio Message, Christmas Eve, 1944, A.A.S. XXXVII, 1945, p. 15.

32. Cf. Encycl. *Diuturnum illud* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII*, II, 1881, p. 274.

When, in fact, men obey their rulers, it is not at all as men that they obey them. Through their obedience it is God, the provident Creator of all things, whom they reverence, since He has decreed that men's dealings with one another should be regulated by an order which He Himself has established. Moreover, in showing this due reverence to God, men not only do not debase themselves but rather perfect and ennoble themselves. For "to serve God is to rule."³³

Since the right to command is required by the moral order and has its source in God, it follows that if civil authorities legislate for or allow anything that is contrary to that order and therefore contrary to the will of God, neither the laws made nor the authorizations granted can be binding on the consciences of the citizens, since "we must obey God rather than men."³⁴

Otherwise, authority breaks down completely and results in shameful abuse. As St. Thomas Aquinas teaches: "Human law has the true nature of law only in so far as it corresponds to right reason, and therefore is derived from the eternal law. In so far as it falls short of right reason, a law is said to be a wicked law; and so, lacking the true nature of law, it is rather a kind of violence."³⁵

It must not be concluded, however, because authority comes from God, that men therefore have no right to choose who are to rule the state, to decide the form of government, and to determine both the way in which authority is to be exercised and its limits. It is thus clear that the doctrine which We have set forth is fully consonant with any truly democratic regime.³⁶

*Attainment of the Common Good
Is the Purpose of the Public Authority*

Individual citizens and intermediate groups are obliged

33. Cf. *Ibid.* p. 278; and *Encycl. Immortale Dei* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII*, V, 1885, p. 130.

34. *Acts*, 5, 29.

35. *Summa Theol.*, Ia-IIae, q. 93, a. 3 ad 2um; Cf. *Radio Message* of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1944, A.A.S. XXXVII, 1945, pp. 5-23.

36. Cf. *Encycl. Diuturnum illud* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII*, II, 1881, pp. 271-272; and *Radio Message* of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1944, A.A.S. XXXVII, 1945, pp. 5-23.

to make their specific contributions to the common welfare. One of the chief consequences of this is that they must bring their own interests into harmony with the needs of the community, and must dispose of their goods and services as civil authorities have prescribed, in accord with the norms of justice, in due form, and within the limits of their competence. This they must do by means of formally perfect actions, the content of which must be morally good, or at least capable of being directed towards good.

Indeed since the whole reason for the existence of civil authorities is the realization of the common good, it is clearly necessary that in pursuing this objective they should respect its essential elements, and at the same time conform their laws to the needs of a given historical situation.³⁷

Essentials of the Common Good

Assuredly, the ethnic characteristics of the various human groups are to be respected as constituent elements of the common good.³⁸ But these values and characteristics by no means exhaust the content of the common good. For the common good is intimately bound up with human nature. It can never exist fully and completely unless, its intimate nature and realization being what they are, the human person is taken into account.³⁹

In the second place, the very nature of the common good requires that all members of the political community be entitled to share in it, although in different ways according to each one's tasks, merits and circumstances. For this reason, every civil authority must take pains to promote the common good of all without preference for any single citizen or civic group.

As our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, has said: "The civil power must not serve the advantage of any

37. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, p. 13; and Encycl. *Immortale Dei* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII*, V, 1885, p. 120.

38. Cf. Encycl. *Summi Pontificatus* of Pius XII, A.A.S. XXXI, 1939, pp. 412-453.

39. Cf. Encycl. *Mit brennender Sorge* of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXIX, 1937, p. 159; and Encycl. *Divini Redemptoris*, A.A.S. XXIX, 1937, pp. 65-106.

one individual, or of some few persons, inasmuch as it was established for the common good of all.”⁴⁰

Considerations of justice and equity, however, can at times demand that those involved in civil government give more attention to the less fortunate members of the community, since they are less able to defend their rights and to assert their legitimate claims.⁴¹

In this context, We judge that attention should be called to the fact that the common good touches the whole man, the needs both of his body and of his soul. Hence it follows that the civil authorities must undertake to effect the common good by ways and means that are proper to them. That is, while respecting the hierarchy of values, they should promote simultaneously both the material and the spiritual welfare of the citizens.⁴²

These principles are clearly contained in the doctrine stated in Our encyclical, “*Mater et Magistra*,” where We emphasized that the common good of all “embraces the sum total of those conditions of social living whereby men are enabled to achieve their own integral perfection more fully and more easily.”⁴³

Men, however composed as they are of bodies and immortal souls, can never in this mortal life succeed in satisfying all their needs or in attaining perfect happiness. Therefore all efforts made to promote the common good, far from endangering the eternal salvation of men, ought rather to serve to promote it.⁴⁴

Responsibilities of the Public Authority and Rights and Duties of Individuals

It is agreed that in our time the common good is chiefly guaranteed when personal rights and duties are maintained. The chief concern of civil authorities must therefore be to

40. *Enycl. Immortale Dei*, Acta Leonis XIII, V, 1885, p. 121.

41. Cf. *Enycl. Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, Acta Leonis XIII, XI, 1891, pp. 133-134.

42. Cf. *Enycl. Summi Pontificatus* of Pius XII, A.A.S. XXXI, 1939, p. 433.

43. A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 19.

44. Cf. *Enycl. Quadragesimo Anno* of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXIII, 1931, p. 215.

ensure that these rights are acknowledged, respected, coordinated with other rights, defended and promoted, so that in this way each one may more easily carry out his duties. For “to safeguard the inviolable rights of the human person, and to facilitate the fulfilment of his duties, should be the essential office of every public authority.”⁴⁵

This means that if any government does not acknowledge the rights of man or violates them, it not only fails in its duty, but its orders completely lack juridical force.⁴⁶

Reconciliation and Protection of Rights and Duties of Individuals

One of the fundamental duties of civil authorities, therefore, is to coordinate social relations in such fashion that the exercise of one man's rights does not threaten others in the exercise of their own rights nor hinder them in the fulfilment of their duties. Finally, the rights of all should be effectively safeguarded and, if they have been violated, completely restored.⁴⁷

Duty of Promoting the Rights of Individuals

It is also demanded by the common good that civil authorities should make earnest efforts to bring about a situation in which individual citizens can easily exercise their rights and fulfill their duties as well. For experience has taught us that, unless these authorities take suitable action with regard to economic, political and cultural matters, inequalities between citizens tend to become more and more widespread, especially in the modern world, and as a result human rights are rendered totally ineffective, and the fulfilment of duties is compromised.

It is therefore necessary that the administration give

45. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Pentecost, June 1, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIII, 1941, p. 200.

46. Cf. Encycl. *Mit brennender Sorge* of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXIX, 1937, p. 159; and Encycl. *Divini Redemptoris*, A.A.S. XXIX, 1937, p. 79; and Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, pp. 9-24.

47. Cf. Encycl. *Divini Redemptoris* of Pius XI, A.A.S. XXIX, 1937, p. 81; and Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, pp. 9-24.

wholehearted and careful attention to the social as well as to the economic progress of citizens, and to the development, in keeping with the development of the productive system, of such essential services as the building of roads, transportation, communications, water supply, housing, public health, education, facilitation of the practice of religion, and recreational facilities. It is necessary also that governments make efforts to see that insurance systems are made available to the citizens so that, in case of misfortune or increased family responsibilities, no person will be without the necessary means to maintain a decent standard of living.

The government should make similarly effective efforts to see that those who are able to work can find employment in keeping with their aptitudes, and that each worker receives a wage in keeping with the laws of justice and equity. It should be equally the concern of civil authorities to ensure that workers be allowed their proper responsibility in the work undertaken in industrial organization, and to facilitate the establishment of intermediate groups which will make social life richer and more effective. Finally, it should be possible for all the citizens to share as far as they are able in their country's cultural advantages.

Harmonious Relation between Public Authority's Two Forms of Intervention

The common good requires that civil authorities maintain a careful balance between coordinating and protecting the rights of the citizens, on the one hand, and promoting them, on the other. It should not happen that certain individuals or social groups derive special advantage from the fact that their rights have received preferential protection. Nor should it happen that governments in seeking to protect these rights, become obstacles to their full expression and free use.

“For this principle must always be retained: that State activity in the economic field, no matter what its breadth or depth may be, ought not to be exercised in such a way as to curtail an individual's freedom of personal initiative. Rather

it should work to expand that freedom as much as possible by the effective protection of the essential personal rights of each and every individual.”⁴⁸

The same principle should inspire the various steps which governments take in order to make it possible for citizens more easily to exercise their rights and fulfill their duties in every sector of social life.

Structure and Operation of the Public Authority

It is impossible to determine, once and for all, what is the most suitable form of government, or how civil authorities can most effectively fulfill their respective functions, i.e., the legislative, judicial and executive functions of the State. In determining the structure and operation of government which a State is to have, great weight has to be given to the historical background and circumstances of given political communities, circumstances which will vary at different times and in different places.

We consider, however, that it is in keeping with the innate demands of human nature that the State should take a form which embodies the threefold division of powers corresponding to the three principal functions of public authority. In that type of State, not only the official functions of government but also the mutual relations between citizens and public officials are set down according to law, which in itself affords protection to the citizens both in the enjoyment of their rights and in the fulfilment of their duties.

If, however, this political and juridical structure is to produce the advantages which may be expected of it, public officials must strive to meet the problems which arise in a way that conforms both to the complexities of the situation and the proper exercise of their function. This requires that, in constantly changing conditions, legislators never forget the norms of morality or constitutional provisions or the objective requirements of the common good.

Moreover, executive authorities must coordinate the ac-

48. *Encycl. Mater et Magistra* of John XXIII, A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 415.

tivities of society with discretion, with a full knowledge of the law and after a careful consideration of circumstances. And the courts must administer justice impartially and without being influenced by favoritism or pressure. The good order of society also demands that individual citizens and intermediate organizations should be effectively protected by law whenever they have rights to be exercised or obligations to be fulfilled. This protection should be granted to citizens both in their dealings with each other and in their relations with government agencies.⁴⁹

Law and Conscience

It is unquestionable that a legal structure in conformity with the moral order and corresponding to the level of development of the political community is of great advantage to achievement of the common good.

And yet, social life in the modern world is so varied, complex and dynamic that even a juridical structure which has been prudently and thoughtfully established is always inadequate for the needs of society.

It is also true that the relations of citizens with each other, of citizens and intermediate groups with public authorities, and finally of the public authorities with one another are often so complex and so sensitive that they cannot be regulated by inflexible legal provisions. Such a situation therefore demands that the civil authorities have clear ideas about the nature and extent of their official duties if they wish to maintain the existing juridical structure in its basic elements and principles, and at the same time meet the exigencies of social life, adapting their legislation to the changing social scene and solving new problems. They must be men of great equilibrium and integrity, competent and courageous enough to see at once what the situation requires and to take necessary action quickly and effectively.⁵⁰

49. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, p. 21.

50. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1944, A.A.S. XXXVII, 1945, pp. 15-16.

Citizens' Participation in Public Life

It is in keeping with their dignity as persons that human beings should take an active part in government, although the manner in which they share in it will depend on the level of development of the political community to which they belong.

Men will find new and extensive advantages in the fact that they are allowed to participate in government. In this situation, those who administer the government come into frequent contact with the citizens, and it is thus easier for them to learn what is really needed for the common good. The fact too that ministers of government hold office only for a limited time keeps them from growing stale and allows for their replacement in accordance with the demands of social progress.⁵¹

Characteristics of the Present Day

In modern times, where there is a question of organizing political communities juridically, there is observable first of all the tendency to write in concise and limpid phraseology a charter of fundamental human rights, which is, as often as not, inserted in State constitutions or is an integral part of them.

Secondly, there is also an inclination to determine, by the compilation of a document called the constitution, the procedures through which the governing powers are to be created, along with their mutual relations, the spheres of their competence, the forms and systems they are obliged to follow in the performance of their office.

The relations between the government and the governed are then set forth in terms of rights and duties. And it is clearly laid down that the paramount task assigned to government officials is that of recognizing, respecting, reconciling, protecting and promoting the rights and duties of citizens.

It is of course impossible to accept the theory which professes to find the original and single source of civic rights

51. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1942, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, p. 12.

and duties, of the binding force of the constitution, and of a government's right to command, in the mere will of human beings, individually or collectively.⁵²

The tendencies to which We have referred, however, do clearly show that the men of our time have become increasingly conscious of their dignity as human persons. This awareness prompts them to claim a share in the public administration of their country, while it also accounts for the demand that their own inalienable and inviolable rights be protected by law. It also requires that government officials be chosen in conformity with constitutional procedures and perform their specific functions within the limits of law.

52. Cf. Apostolic letter *Annum ingressi* of Leo XIII, *Acta Leonis XIII*, XXII, 1902-1903, pp. 52-80.

PART III

Relations between States

Subjects of Rights and Duties

Our predecessors have constantly maintained, and We join them in reasserting, that political communities are reciprocally subjects of rights and duties. This means that their relationships also must be harmonized in truth, in justice, in a working solidarity and in liberty. The same moral law which governs relations between individual human beings serves also to regulate the relations of political communities with one another.

This will be readily understood when one reflects that the individual representatives of political communities cannot put aside their personal dignity while they are acting in the name and interest of their countries; and that they cannot therefore violate the very law of their being, which is the moral law.

It would be absurd, moreover, even to imagine that men could surrender their own human attributes, or be compelled to do so, by the very fact of their appointment to public office, whereas they have been given that noble assignment precisely because the wealth of their human endowments has earned them their reputation as outstanding members of the body politic.

Furthermore, authority is a necessary requirement of the moral order in human society. It may not therefore be used against that order; and the very instant such an attempt were made, it would cease to be authority, as the Lord has warned us:

“Hear, therefore, kings and understand; learn, you magistrates of the earth’s expanse! Hearken, you who rule the

multitude and lord it over throngs of peoples! Because authority was given you by the Lord and sovereignty by the Most High, who shall probe your works and scrutinize your counsels!"⁵³

Lastly it is to be borne in mind that also in the regulating of relations between political communities, authority is to be exercised for the achievement of the common good, which constitutes the reason for its existence.

But a fundamental factor of the common good is acknowledgment of the moral order and respect for its prescriptions.

"Order between the political communities must be built upon the unshakable and unchangeable rock of the moral law, made manifest in the order of nature by the Creator Himself and by Him engraved on the hearts of men with letters that may never be effaced. . . Like the rays of a gleaming beacon, its principles must guide the plans and policies of men and nations. These are the signals—of warning, safety and smooth sailing — they will have to heed, if they would not see all their laborious efforts to establish a new order condemned to tempest and shipwreck."⁵⁴

In Truth

First among the rules governing the relations between States is that of truth. This calls, above all, for the elimination of every trace of racism, and the consequent recognition of the principle that all States are by nature equal in dignity. Each of them accordingly is vested with the right to existence, to selfdevelopment, to the means fitting to its attainment, and to be the one primarily responsible for this selfdevelopment. Add to that the right of each to its good name and to the respect which is its due.

Very often, experience has taught us, individuals will be found to differ considerably in knowledge, virtue, talent and

53. Wis., 6, 1-4.

54. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIV, 1942, p. 16.

wealth. Yet these inequalities must never be held to excuse any man's attempt to lord it over his neighbors unjustly. They constitute rather a source of greater responsibility in the contribution which each and everyone must make towards mutual improvement.

Similarly, political communities may have reached different levels of culture, civilization or economic development. Neither is that a sufficient reason for some to take unjust advantage of their superiority over others. Rather should they see in it an added motive for more serious commitment to the common cause of social progress.

It is not true that some human beings are by nature superior and others inferior. All men are equal in their natural dignity. Consequently there are no political communities which are superior by nature and none which are inferior by nature. All political communities are of equal natural dignity, since they are bodies whose membership is made up of these same human beings. Nor must it be forgotten, in this connection, that peoples can be highly sensitive, and with good reason, in matters touching their dignity and honor.

Truth further demands that the various media of social communications made available by modern progress, which enable the nations to know each other better, be used with serene objectivity. That need not, of course, rule out any legitimate emphasis on the positive aspects of their way of life. But methods of information which fall short of the truth, and by the same token impair the reputation of this people or that, must be discarded.⁵⁵

In Justice

Relations between political communities are to be further regulated by justice. This implies, over and above recognition of their mutual rights, the fulfilment of their respective duties.

Political communities have the right to existence, to self-development and to the means necessary for this. They have

⁵⁵. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1940, A.A.S. XXXIII, 1941, pp. 5-14.

the right to play the leading part in the process of their own development and the right to their good name and due honors. From which it follows as a simultaneous consequence that they have also the corresponding duty of respecting these rights in others and of avoiding any act of violation. Just as an individual man may not pursue his own interests to the detriment of other men, so, on the international level, one State may not develop itself by restricting or oppressing other States. St. Augustine rightly says: "What are kingdoms without justice but bands of robbers?"⁵⁶

Not only can it happen, but it actually does happen, that the advantages and conveniences which nations strive to acquire for themselves become objects of contention. Nevertheless, the resulting disagreements must be settled not by force, nor by deceit or trickery, but rather in the only manner which is worthy of the dignity of man, i.e., by a mutual assessment of the reasons on both sides of the dispute, by a mature and objective investigation of the situation, and by an equitable reconciliation of differences of opinion.

The Treatment of Minorities

Since the 19th century there has been a rather widespread tendency in historical evolution for political communities to equate themselves with national communities. For various reasons, however, it has not always been possible to make geographical boundaries coincide with ethnic ones. This gives rise to the phenomenon of minorities and to the relative complex problems.

In the first place, it must be made clear that justice is seriously violated by whatever is done to limit the strength and numerical increase of these minority peoples. The injustice is even more serious if such sinful projects are aimed at the very extinction of these groups.

On the other hand, the demands of justice are admirably observed by those civil authorities who promote the natural

⁵⁶. De civitate Dei, Book IV, ch. 4; Patrologia Latina, 41, 115; cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1939, A.A.S. XXXII, 1940, pp. 5-13.

betterment of those citizens belonging to a smaller ethnic group, particularly when that betterment concerns their language, the development of their natural gifts, their ancestral customs, and their accomplishments and endeavors in the economic order.⁵⁷

It should be noted, however, that these minority groups, either because of a reaction to their present situation or because of their historical difficulties, are often inclined to exalt beyond due measure anything proper to their own people, so as to place them even above human values, as if that which is proper to humanity were to be at the service of that which is proper to the nation.

Reason rather demands that these very people recognize also the advantages that accrue to them from their peculiar circumstances. For instance, no small contribution is made toward the development of their particular talents and spirit by their daily dealings with people who have grown up in a different culture. This, however, will be true only if they will know how to act as a bridge, which facilitates the circulation of life in its various expressions among different traditions or civilizations, and not a zone of discord which can cause great damage and choke natural development.

Active Solidarity

Certainly relations between States must be regulated by the norms of truth and justice, but they also derive great benefits from active solidarity, through mutual cooperation on various levels, such as, in our own times, has already taken place with laudable results in the economic, social, political, educational, health and sport spheres. We must remember that, of its very nature, civil authority exists not to confine its people within the boundaries of their nation, but rather to protect, above all else, the common good of that particular civil society, which certainly cannot be divorced from the common good of the entire human family.

⁵⁷. Cf. Radio Message of Pius XII, Christmas Eve, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIV, 1942, pp. 10-21.

This entails not only that civil societies should pursue their particular interests without hurting others, but also that they should join forces and plans whenever the efforts of an individual government cannot achieve its desired goals. But in the execution of such common efforts, great care must be taken lest what helps some nations should injure others.

Furthermore, the universal common good requires that in every nation friendly relations be fostered in all fields between the citizens and their intermediate societies.

There are groupings of people of more or less different racial backgrounds. However, the elements which characterize an ethnic group must not be transformed into a watertight compartment in which human beings are prevented from communicating with their fellowmen belonging to different ethnic groups. That would contrast with our contemporary situation, in which the distances separating peoples have been almost wiped out. Nor can one overlook the fact that, even though human beings differ from one another by virtue of their ethnic peculiarities, they all possess certain essential common elements and are inclined by nature to meet each other in the world of spiritual values, whose progressive assimilation opens to them the possibility of perfection without limits. They have the right and duty, therefore, to live in communion with one another.

The Proper Balance between Population, Land and Capital

As everybody knows, there are countries with an abundance of arable land and a scarcity of manpower, while in other countries there is no proportion between natural resources and the capital available. This demands that peoples should set up relationships of mutual collaboration, facilitating the circulation from one to the other of capital, goods and manpower.⁵⁸

Here We deem it opportune to remark that, whenever

58. Cf. *Encycl. Mater et Magistra* of John XXIII, A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 439.

possible, the work to be done should be taken to the workers, not vice versa.

In this way a possibility of a better future is offered to many persons without their being forced to leave their own environment in order to seek residence elsewhere, which almost always entails the heartache of separation and difficult periods of adjustment and social integration.

The Problem of Political Refugees

The sentiment of universal fatherhood which the Lord has placed in Our heart makes Us feel profound sadness in considering the phenomenon of political refugees, a phenomenon which has assumed large proportions and which always hides numberless and acute sufferings.

Such expatriations show that there are some political regimes which do not guarantee for individual citizens a sufficient sphere of freedom within which their souls are allowed to breathe humanly. In fact, under those regimes even the lawful existence of such a sphere of freedom is either called into question or denied. This undoubtedly is a radical inversion of the order of human society, because the reason for the existence of public authority is to promote the common good, a fundamental element of which is the recognition of that sphere of freedom and the safeguarding of it.

At this point it will not be superfluous to recall that such exiles are persons, and that all their rights as persons must be recognized, since they do not lose those rights on losing the citizenship of the States of which they are former members.

Now among the rights of a human person there must be included the one by which a man may enter a political community where he hopes he can more fittingly provide a future for himself and his dependents. Wherefore, as far as the common good rightly understood permits, it is the duty of that State to accept such immigrants and to help to integrate them into itself as new members.

Wherefore, on this occasion, We publicly approve and

commend every undertaking founded on the principles of human solidarity and Christian charity which aims at making the migration of persons from one country to another less painful.

And We will be permitted to single out for the attention and gratitude of all right-minded persons the manifold work which specialized international agencies are carrying out in this very delicate field.

Disarmament

On the other hand, it is with deep sorrow that We note the enormous stocks of armaments that have been and still are being made in the more economically developed countries with a vast outlay of intellectual and economic resources. And so it happens that, while the people of these countries are loaded with heavy burdens, other countries as a result are deprived of the collaboration they need in order to make economic and social progress.

The production of arms is allegedly justified on the grounds that in present-day conditions peace cannot be preserved without an equal balance of armaments. And so, if one country increases its armaments, others feel the need to do the same. And if one country is equipped with nuclear weapons, other countries must produce their own, equally destructive.

Consequently, people live in constant fear lest the storm that threatens every moment should break upon them with dreadful violence. And with good reason, for the arms of war are ready at hand. Even though it is difficult to believe that anyone would deliberately take the responsibility for the appalling destruction and sorrow that war would bring in its train, it cannot be denied that the conflagration may be set off by some incontrollable and unexpected chance. And one must bear in mind that, even though the monstrous power of modern weapons acts as a deterrent, it is to be feared that

the mere continuance of nuclear tests, undertaken with war in mind, will have fatal consequences for life on the earth.

Justice, right reason and humanity, therefore, urgently demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control.

In the words of Pius XII, Our predecessor of happy memory: "The calamity of a world war, with the economic and social ruin and the moral excesses and dissolution that accompany it, must not be permitted to envelop the human race for a third time."⁵⁹

All must realize that there is no hope of putting an end to the building up of armaments, nor of reducing the present stocks, nor still less of abolishing them altogether, unless the process is complete and thorough and unless it proceeds from inner conviction; unless, that is, everyone sincerely cooperates to banish the fear and anxious expectation of war with which men are oppressed. If this is to come about the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another, which declares that the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone.

We believe that this can be brought to pass, and We consider that it is something which reason requires, that it is eminently desirable in itself and that it will prove to be the source of many benefits.

In the first place, it is an objective demanded by reason. There can be, or at least there should be, no doubt that relations between States, as between individuals, should be regulated not by the force of arms but by the light of reason, by the rule, that is, of truth, of justice and of active and sincere cooperation.

59. Cf. Radio Message, Christmas Eve, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIV, 1942, p. 17; and Exhortation of Benedict XV to the rulers of peoples at war, Aug. 1, 1917, A.A.S. IX, 1917, p. 418.

Secondly, We say that it is an objective earnestly to be desired in itself. Is there anyone who does not ardently yearn to see war banished, to see peace preserved and daily more firmly established?

And finally, it is an objective which will be a fruitful source of many benefits, for its advantages will be felt everywhere – by individuals, by families, by nations, by the whole human family. The warning of Pius XII still rings in our ears: “Nothing is lost by peace; everything may be lost by war.”⁶⁰

Since this is so, We, the Vicar on earth of Jesus Christ, Savior of the World and Author of Peace, and as interpreter of the very profound longing of the entire human family, following the impulse of Our heart, seized by anxiety for the good of all, feel it Our duty to beseech men, especially those who have the responsibility of public affairs, to spare no labor in order to ensure that world events follow a reasonable and human course.

In the highest and most authoritative assemblies, let men give serious thought to the problem of a peaceful adjustment of relations between political communities on a world level – an adjustment founded on mutual trust, on sincerity in negotiations and on faithful fulfilment of obligations assumed. Let them study the problem until they find that point of agreement from which it will be possible to commence to go forward toward accords that will be sincere, lasting and fruitful.

We, for Our part, will not cease to pray God to bless these labors so that they may lead to fruitful results.

In Liberty

It has also to be borne in mind that relations between States should be based on freedom, that is to say that no country may unjustly oppress others or unduly meddle in their affairs. On the contrary, all should help to develop in others a sense of responsibility, a spirit of enterprise, and an earnest desire to be the first to promote their own advancement in every field.

60. Cf. Radio Message, Aug. 24, 1939, A.A.S. XXXI, 1939, p. 334.

The Evolution of Economically Underdeveloped Countries

Because all men are joined together by reason of their common origin, their redemption by Christ and their supernatural destiny, and are called to form one single family, We appealed in the encyclical "Mater et Magistra" to economically developed nations to come to the aid of those which were in the process of development.⁶¹

We are greatly consoled to see how widely that appeal has been favorably received. And We are confident that even more so in the future it will contribute to the end that the poorer countries, in as short a time as possible, will arrive at that degree of economic development which will enable every citizen to live in conditions in keeping with his human dignity.

But it is never sufficiently repeated that the cooperation to which reference has been made should be effected with the greatest respect for the liberty of the countries being developed, for these must realize that they are primarily responsible, and that they are the principal artisans in the promotion of their own economic development and social progress.

Our predecessor Pius XII already proclaimed that "in the field of a new order founded on moral principles, there is no room for violation of freedom, integrity and security of other nations, no matter what may be their territorial extent or their capacity for defense. It is inevitable that the powerful States, by reason of their greater potential and their power, should pave the way in the establishment of economic groups comprising not only themselves but also smaller and weaker States as well. It is nevertheless indispensable that in the interests of the common good they, as all others, should respect the rights of those smaller states to political freedom, to economic development and to the adequate protection, in the case of conflicts between nations, of that neutrality which is theirs according to the natural, as well as international, law."

61. A.A.S. LIII, 1961, pp. 440-441.

In this way, and in this way only, will they be able to obtain a fitting share of the common good, and assure the material and spiritual welfare of their people.”⁶²

It is vitally important, therefore, that the wealthier States, in providing varied forms of assistance to the poorer, should respect the moral values and ethnic characteristics peculiar to each, and also that they should avoid any intention of political domination. If this is done, “a precious contribution will be made towards the formation of a world community, a community in which each member, while conscious of its own individual rights and duties, will work in a relationship of equality towards the attainment of the universal common good.”⁶³

Signs of the Times

Men are becoming more and more convinced that disputes which arise between States should not be resolved by recourse to arms, but rather by negotiation.

It is true that on historical grounds this conviction is based chiefly on the terrible destructive force of modern arms. And it is nourished by the horror aroused in the mind by the very thought of the cruel destruction and the immense suffering which the use of those armaments would bring to the human family. And for this reason it is hardly possible to imagine that in the atomic era war could be used as an instrument of justice.

Nevertheless, unfortunately, the law of fear still reigns among peoples, and it forces them to spend fabulous sums for armaments: not for aggression, they affirm — and there is no reason for not believing them — but to dissuade others from aggression.

There is reason to hope, however, that by meeting and negotiating men may come to discover better the bonds — deriving from the human nature which they have in common — that unite them, and that they may also come to discover

62. Cf. Radio Message, Christmas Eve, 1941, A.A.S. XXXIV, 1942, pp. 16-17.

63. *Enycl. Mater et Magistra* of John XXIII, A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 443.

that one of the most profound requirements of their common nature is this: that between them and their respective peoples it is not fear which should reign but love, a love which tends to express itself in a collaboration that is loyal, manifold in form and productive of many benefits.

PART IV

Relationship of Men and of Political Communities with the World Community

Interdependence between Political Communities

Recent progress in science and technology has profoundly affected human beings and influenced men to work together and live as one family. There has been a great increase in the circulation of ideas, of persons and of goods from one country to another, so that relations have become closer between individuals, families and intermediate associations belonging to different political communities, and between the public authorities of those communities.

At the same time the interdependence of national economies has grown deeper, one becoming progressively more closely related to the other, so that they become, as it were, integral parts of the one world economy. Likewise the social progress, order, security and peace of each country are necessarily connected with the social progress, order, security and peace of all other countries.

At the present time no political community is able to pursue its own interests and develop itself in isolation, because the degree of its prosperity and development is a reflection and a component part of the degree of prosperity and development of all the other political communities.

Insufficiency of Modern States to Ensure the Universal Common Good

The unity of the human family has always existed be-

cause its members were human beings all equal by virtue of their natural dignity. Hence there will always exist the objective need to promote in sufficient measure the universal common good, that is the common good of the entire human family.

In times past, one could be justified in feeling that the public authorities of the different political communities might be in a position to provide for the universal common good either through normal diplomatic channels or top-level meetings, or by making use of juridical instruments such as conventions and treaties, for example juridical instruments suggested by the natural law and regulated by the law of nations and international law.

As a result of the far-reaching changes which have taken place in the relations of the human family, the universal common good gives rise to problems which are complex, very grave and extremely urgent, especially as regards security and world peace. On the other hand, the public authorities of the individual political communities — placed as they are on a footing of equality one with the other — no matter how much they multiply their meetings or sharpen their wits in efforts to draw up new juridical instruments, they are no longer capable of facing the task of finding an adequate solution to the problems mentioned above. And this is not due to a lack of good will or of a spirit of enterprise, but because of a structural defect which hinders them.

It can be said, therefore, that at this historical moment the present system of organization and the way its principle of authority operates on a world basis no longer correspond to the objective requirements of the universal common good.

Connection between the Common Good and Political Authority

There exists an intrinsic connection between the common good on the one hand and the structure and function of public authority on the other. The moral order, which needs public authority in order to promote the common good in human

society, requires also that the authority be effective in attaining that end. This demands that the organs through which the authority is formed, becomes operative and pursues its ends, must be composed and act in such a manner as to be capable of bringing to realization the new meaning which the common good is taking on in the historical evolution of the human family.

Today the universal common good poses problems of worldwide dimensions which cannot be adequately tackled or solved except by the efforts of public authorities endowed with a breadth of powers, structure and means of the same proportions: that is, of public authorities which are in a position to operate in an effective manner on a worldwide basis. The moral order itself, therefore, demands that such a form of public authority be established.

Public Authority Instituted by Common Consent and Not Imposed by Force

A public authority, having worldwide power and endowed with the proper means for the efficacious pursuit of its objective, which is the universal common good in concrete form, must be set up by common accord and not imposed by force.

The reason is that such an authority must be in a position to operate effectively, while at the same time its action must be inspired by sincere and real impartiality. In other words, it must be an action aimed at satisfying the objective requirements of the universal common good.

The difficulty is that there would be reason to fear that a supernational or worldwide public authority imposed by force by the more powerful political communities might be or might become an instrument of one-sided interests. And even should this not happen, it would be difficult for it to avoid all suspicion of partiality in its actions, and this would take away from the efficaciousness of its activity.

Even though there may be pronounced differences be-

tween political communities as regards the degree of their economic development and their military power, they are all very sensitive as regards their juridical equality and their moral dignity. For that reason, they are right in not easily yielding in obedience to an authority imposed by force, or to an authority in whose creation they had no part, or to which they themselves did not decide to submit by conscious and free choice.

The Universal Common Good and Personal Rights

Like the common good of individual political communities, so too the universal common good cannot be determined except by having regard to the human person. Therefore, the public authority of the world community, too, must have as its fundamental objective the recognition, respect, safeguarding and promotion of the rights of the human person. This can be done by direct action when required, or by creating on a world scale an environment in which the public authorities of the individual political communities can more easily carry out their special functions.

The Principle of Subsidiarity

Just as within each political community the relations between individuals, families, intermediate associations and public authority are governed by the principle of subsidiarity, so too the relations between the public authority of each political community and the public authority of the world community must be regulated by the light of the same principle. This means that the public authority of the world community must tackle and solve problems of an economic, social, political or cultural character which are posed by the universal common good. For, because of the vastness, complexity and urgency of those problems, the public authorities of the individual States are not in a position to tackle them with any hope of a positive solution.

The public authority of the world community is not intended to limit the sphere of action of the public authority

of the individual political community, much less to take its place. On the contrary, its purpose is to create, on a world basis, an environment in which the public authorities of each political community, its citizens and intermediate associations, can carry out their tasks, fulfill their duties and exercise their rights with greater security.⁶⁴

Modern Developments

As is known, the United Nations Organization (U.N.O.) was established on June 26, 1945, and to it there were subsequently added intergovernmental agencies with extensive international tasks in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields. The United Nations Organization had as its essential purpose the maintenance and consolidation of peace between peoples, fostering between them friendly relations based on the principles of equality, mutual respect, and varied forms of cooperation in every sector of human society.

An act of the highest importance performed by the United Nations Organization was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved in the General Assembly of December 10, 1948. In the preamble of that declaration, the recognition and respect of those rights and respective liberties is proclaimed as an ideal to be pursued by all peoples and all countries.

Some objections and reservations were raised regarding certain points in the declaration. There is no doubt, however, that the document represents an important step on the path toward the juridical-political organization of the world community. For in it, in most solemn form, the dignity of a person is acknowledged to all human beings. And as a consequence there is proclaimed, as a fundamental right, the right of free movement in the search for truth and in the attainment of moral good and of justice, and also the right to a dignified life, while other rights connected with those mentioned are likewise proclaimed.

⁶⁴. Cf. Address of Pius XII to youths of Catholic Action from the dioceses of Italy gathered in Rome, Sept. 12, 1948, A.A.S. XL, p. 412.

It is Our earnest wish that the United Nations Organization—in its structure and in its means—may become ever more equal to the magnitude and nobility of its tasks, and in that the day may come when every human being will find therein an effective safeguard for the rights which derive directly from his dignity as a person, and which are therefore universal, inviolable and inalienable rights. This is all the more to be hoped for since all human beings, as they take an ever more active part in the public life of their own political communities, are showing an increasing interest in the affairs of all peoples, and are becoming more consciously aware that they are living members of a world community.

PART V

Pastoral Exhortations

Duty of Taking Part in Public Life

Once again We deem it opportune to remind Our children of their duty to take an active part in public life and to contribute toward the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as to that of their own political community. They should endeavor, therefore, in the light of the Faith and with the strength of love, to ensure that the various institutions—whether economic, social, cultural or political in purpose—should be such as not to create obstacles, but rather to facilitate or render less arduous man's perfecting of himself both in the natural order as well as in the supernatural.

Scientific Competence, Technical Capacity and Professional Experience

Nevertheless, in order to imbue civilization with sound principles and enliven it with the spirit of the Gospel, it is not enough to be illumined with the gift of faith and enkindled with the desire of forwarding a good cause. For this end it is necessary to take an active part in the various organizations and influence them from within. And since our present age is one of outstanding scientific and technical progress and excellence, one will not be able to enter these organizations and work effectively from within unless he is scientifically competent, technically capable and skilled in the practice of his own profession.

Apostolate of a Trained Laity

We desire to call attention to the fact that scientific

competence, technical capacity and professional experience, although necessary, are not of themselves sufficient to elevate the relationships of society to an order that is genuinely human, that is to an order whose foundation is truth, whose measure and objective is justice, whose driving force is love, and whose method of attainment is freedom.

For this end it is certainly necessary that human beings carry on their own temporal activities in accordance with the laws governing them and following the methods corresponding to their nature. But at the same time it is also necessary that they should carry on those activities as acts within the moral order and, therefore, as the exercise or vindication of a right, as the fulfilment of a duty or the performance of a service, and as a positive answer to the providential design of God directed to our salvation.

In other words, it is necessary that human beings, in the intimacy of their own consciences, should so live and act in their temporal lives as to create a synthesis between scientific, technical and professional elements on the one hand, and spiritual values on the other.

Integration of Faith and Action

It is no less clear that today, in traditionally Christian nations, secular institutions, although demonstrating a high degree of scientific and technical perfection and efficiency in achieving their respective ends, not infrequently are but slightly affected by Christian motivation or inspiration.

It is beyond question that in the creation of those institutions many contributed and continue to contribute who were believed to be and who consider themselves Christians; and without doubt, in part at least, they were and are. How does one explain this? It is Our opinion that the explanation is to be found in an inconsistency in their minds between religious belief and their action in the temporal sphere. It is necessary, therefore, that their interior unity be re-established, and that in their temporal activity faith should be pres-

ent as a beacon to give light, and charity as a force to give life.

Integral Education

It is Our opinion, too, that the above-mentioned inconsistency between the religious faith, in those who believe, and their activities in the temporal sphere, results—in great part if not entirely—from the lack of a solid Christian education. Indeed, it happens in many quarters and too often that there is no proportion between a scientific training and religious instruction. The former continues and is extended until it reaches higher degrees, while the latter remains at elementary level.

It is indispensable, therefore, that in the training of youth, education should be complete and without interruption, namely that in the minds of the young religious values should be cultivated and the moral conscience refined in a manner to keep pace with the continuous and ever more abundant assimilation of scientific and technical knowledge. And it is indispensable, too, that they be instructed regarding the proper way to carry out their actual tasks.⁶⁵

Constant Endeavor

We deem it opportune to point out how difficult it is to understand clearly the relation between the objective requirements of justice and concrete situations, that is to perceive the degrees and forms in which doctrinal principles and directives ought to be applied to reality.

And the perception of those degrees and forms is all the more difficult in our times, which are marked by a pronounced dynamism. For this reason, the problem of bringing social reality into line with the objective requirements of justice is a problem which will never admit of a definitive solution. Meanwhile, Our children must watch over themselves lest they relax and feel satisfied with objectives already achieved.

65. Cf. *Encycl. Mater et Magistra* of John XXIII, A.A.S. LIII, 1961, p. 454.

In fact, all human beings ought rather to reckon that what has been accomplished is but little in comparison with what remains to be done. This is so because organs of production, trade unions, associations, professional organizations, insurance systems, legal systems, political regimes, and institutions for cultural, health, recreational or sporting purposes must all be adjusted to the era of the atom and of the conquest of space, an era which the human family has already entered, wherein it has commenced its new advance towards limitless horizons.

Relations between Catholics and Non-Catholics in Social and Economic Affairs

The doctrinal principles outlined in this document derive from or are suggested by requirements inherent in human nature itself, and are, for the most part, dictates of the natural law. They provide Catholics, therefore, with a vast field in which they can meet and come to an understanding both with Christians separated from this Apostolic See, and also with human beings who are not enlightened by faith in Jesus Christ, but who are endowed with the light of reason and with a natural and operative honesty.

“In such relations let the faithful be careful to be always consistent in their actions, so that they may never come to any compromise in matters of religion and morals. At the same time, however, let them be, and show themselves to be, animated by a spirit of understanding and detachment, and disposed to work loyally in the pursuit of objectives which are of their nature good, or conducive to good.”⁶⁶

However, one must never confuse error and the person who errs, not even when there is question of error or inadequate knowledge of truth in the moral or religious field.

The person who errs is always and above all a human being and retains in every case his dignity as a human person. And he must always be regarded and treated in accordance with that lofty dignity. Besides, in every human being

66. *Ibid.*, p. 456.

there is a need that is congenital to his nature and never becomes extinguished that compells him to break through the web of error and open his mind to the knowledge of truth. And God will never fail to act on his interior being, with the result that a person, who at a given moment of his life lacks the clarity of faith or even adheres to erroneous doctrines, can at a future date be enlightened and believe the truth.

Meetings and agreements in the various sectors of daily life between believers and those who do not believe, or believe insufficiently because they adhere to error, can be occasions for discovering truth and paying homage to it.

It must be borne in mind, furthermore, that neither can false philosophical teachings regarding the nature, origin and destiny of the universe and of man be identified with historical movements that have economic, social, cultural or political ends, not even when these movements have originated from those teachings and have drawn and still draw inspiration therefrom.

This is so because the teachings, once they are drawn up and defined, remain always the same, while the movements, working in historical situations in constant evolution, cannot be influenced by these latter and cannot avoid, therefore, being subject to changes, even of a profound nature. Besides, who can deny that those movements, in so far as they conform to the dictates of right reason and are interpreters of the lawful aspirations of the human person, contain elements that are positive and deserving of approval?

It can happen, then, that a drawing nearer together or a meeting for the attainment of some practical end, which was formerly deemed inopportune or unproductive, might now or in the future be considered opportune and useful.

But to decide whether this moment has arrived and also to lay down the ways and degrees in which work in common might be possible for the achievement of economic, social, cultural and political ends which are honorable and useful, are problems which can only be solved with the virtue of

prudence, which is the guiding light of the virtues that regulate the moral life, both individual and social.

Therefore, as far as Catholics are concerned, this decision rests primarily with those who live and work in the specific sectors of human society in which those problems arise, always, however, in accordance with the principles of the natural law, with the social doctrine of the Church, and with the directives of ecclesiastical authority. For it must not be forgotten that the Church has the right and the duty not only to safeguard the principles of ethics and religion, but also to intervene authoritatively with her children in the temporal sphere when there is a question of judging the application of those principles to concrete cases.⁶⁷

Little by Little

There are some souls, particularly endowed with generosity, who, on finding situations where the requirements of justice are not satisfied or not satisfied in full, feel enkindled with the desire to change the state of things, as if they wished to have recourse to something like a revolution.

It must be borne in mind that to proceed gradually is the law of life in all its expressions. Therefore, in human institutions, too, it is not possible to renovate for the better except by working from within them, gradually.

Pius XII proclaimed: "Salvation and justice are not to be found in revolution, but in evolution through concord. Violence has always achieved only destruction, not construction; the kindling of passions, not their pacification; the accumulation of hate and ruin, not the reconciliation of the contending parties. And it has reduced men and parties to the difficult task of rebuilding, after sad experience, on the ruins of discord."⁶⁸

67. Ibid. p. 456; cf. Encycl. Immortale Dei of Leo XIII, Acta Leonis XIII, V, 1885, p. 128; Encycl. Ubi Arcano of Pius XI, A.A.S. XIV, 1922, p. 698; and Address of Pius XII to Delegates of the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues gathered in Rome for a joint convention, Sept. 11, 1947, A.A.S. XXXIX, 1947, p. 486.

68. Cf. address to workers from the dioceses of Italy gathered in Rome, Pentecost, June 13, 1943, A.A.S. XXXV, 1943, p. 175.

An Immense Task

There is an immense task incumbent on all men of good will, namely, the task of restoring the relations of the human family in truth, in justice, in love and in freedom—the relations between individual human beings; between citizens and their respective political communities; between political communities themselves; between individuals, families, intermediate associations and political communities on the one hand, and the world community on the other. This is a most exalted task, for it is the task of bringing about true peace in the order established by God.

Admittedly, those who are endeavoring to restore the relations of social life according to the criterions mentioned above are not many. To them We express Our paternal appreciation, and We earnestly invite them to persevere in their work with ever greater zeal. And We are comforted by the hope that their number will increase, especially among those who believe. For it is an imperative of duty; it is a requirement of Love.

Every believer in this world of ours must be a spark of light, a center of love, a vivifying leaven amidst his fellow-men. And he will be this all the more perfectly the more closely he lives in communion with God in the intimacy of his own soul.

In fact, there can be no peace between men unless there is peace within each one of them, unless, that is, each one builds up within himself the order wished by God. Hence St. Augustine asks:

“Does your soul desire to overcome your lower inclinations? Let it be subject to Him who is on high and it will conquer the lower self: there will be peace in you; true, secure and well ordered peace. In what does that order consist? God commands the soul; the soul commands the body; and there is nothing more orderly than this.”⁶⁹

69. *Miscellanea Augustiniana . . . Sermones post Maurinos reperti of St. Augustine, Rome, 1930, p. 633.*

The Prince of Peace

These words of Ours, which We have wished to dedicate to the problems that most beset the human family today, and on the just solution of which the ordered progress of society depends, are dictated by a profound aspiration which We know is shared by all men of good will: the consolidation of peace in the world.

As the humble and unworthy Vicar of Him whom the Prophet announced as the Prince of Peace,⁷⁰ We have the duty to expand all Our energies in an effort to protect and strengthen this gift. However, peace will be but an empty-sounding word unless it is founded on the order which this present document has outlined in confident hope: an order founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom.

This is such a noble and elevated task that human resources, even though inspired by the most praiseworthy goodwill, cannot bring it to realization alone. In order that human society may reflect as faithfully as possible the Kingdom of God, help from on high is necessary.

For this reason, during these sacred days, Our supplication is raised with greater fervor towards Him who by His painful Passion and death overcame sin—the root of discord and the source of sorrows and inequalities—and by His Blood reconciled mankind to the Eternal Father. “For he himself is our peace, he it is who has made both one . . . And coming, he announced the good tidings of peace to you who were afar off, and of peace to those who were near.”⁷¹

And in the liturgy of these days we hear the announcement: “Our Lord Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, stood in the midst of His disciples and said ‘Peace be to you,’ al-leluia: the disciples rejoiced seeing the Lord.⁷²

He leaves us peace, He brings us peace. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do

70. Cf. Is. 9, 5.

71. Eph. 2, 14-17.

72. Responsory at Matins on the Friday after Easter.

I give to you.”⁷³ This is the peace which We implore of Him with the ardent yearning of Our prayer.

May He banish from the hearts of men whatever might endanger peace. May He transform them into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love. May He enlighten the rulers of peoples so that in addition to their solicitude for the proper welfare of their citizens, they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace. May He enkindle the wills of all so that they may overcome the barriers that divide, cherish the bonds of mutual charity, understand others, and pardon those who have done them wrong. By virtue of His action, may all people of the earth become as brothers, and may the most longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always between them.

As a pledge of this peace, and with the ardent wish that it may shine forth on the Christian communities entrusted to your care, especially for the benefit of those who are most lowly and in the greatest need of help and defense, We are glad to impart to you, venerable brothers, to priests both secular and Religious, to religious men and women and to the faithful of your dioceses particularly to those who make every effort to put these exhortations of Ours into practice, Our apostolic blessing in propitiation of heavenly favors. Finally, upon all men of good will, to whom this encyclical letter is also addressed, We implore from Almighty God health and prosperity.

Given at Rome at St. Peter’s, on Holy Thursday, the 11th day of April, in the year 1963, the fifth of Our pontificate.

JOHN XXIII

73. Jn. 14, 27.

