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MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

BY
JEROME G. KERWIN, PH.D.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY SERIES No. 3

“Christian teaching alone, in its majestic integrity, can give full meaning and compelling motive to the demand for human rights and liberties because it alone gives worth and dignity to human personality.” — POPE PIUS XI, *Apostolic Letter on the Catholic University of America, at the opening of its Jubilee Year, October, 1938.*

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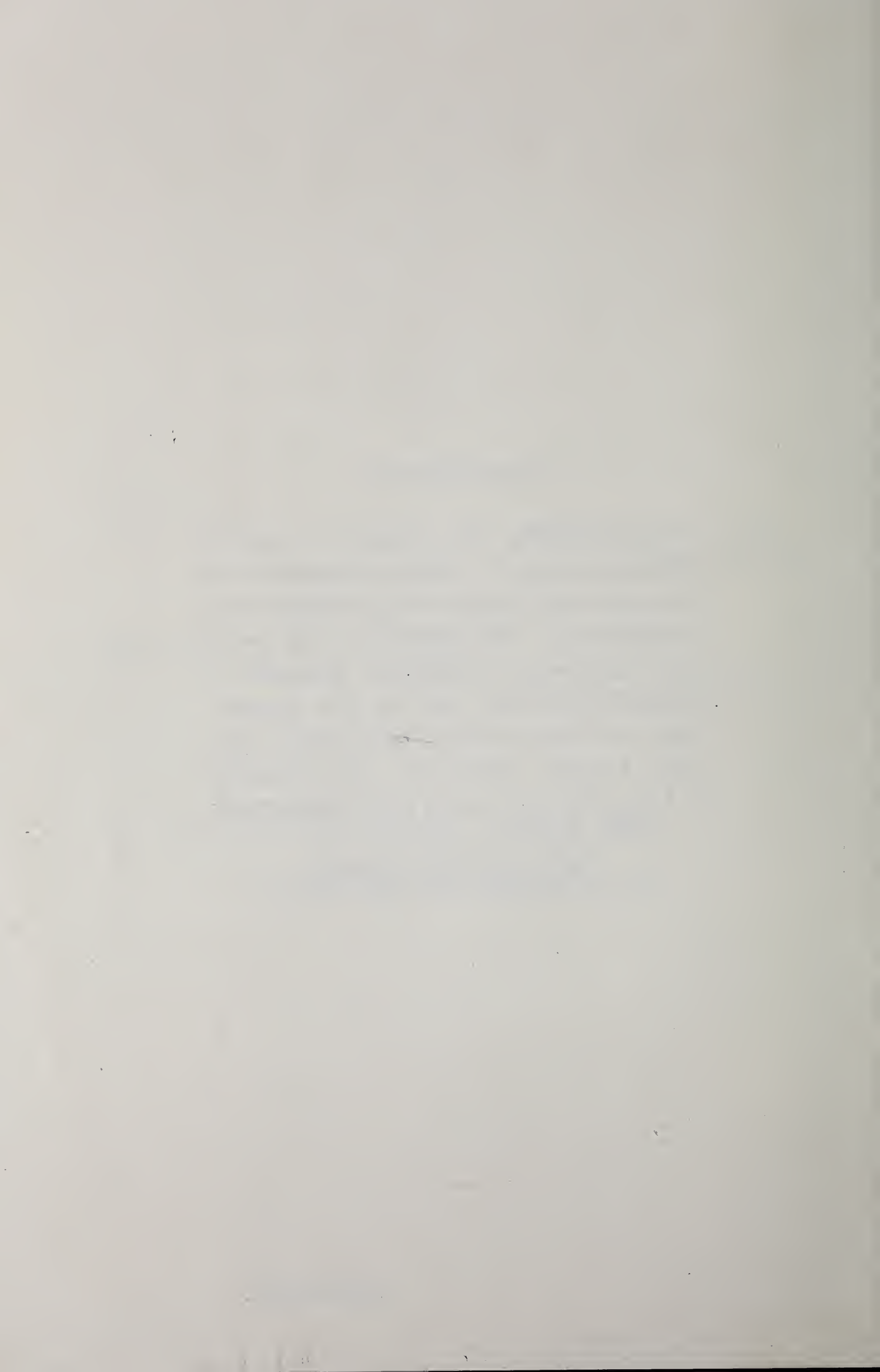
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FOREWORD

IN considering the problem of making democracy work, Dr. Kerwin examines first the nature and purpose of government and of democracy. His emphasis on the necessity for economic democracy alongside of political democracy and on the responsibility of citizens in the United States, especially Catholic citizens, for the perfecting of both, deserves interest and further study.

SOCIAL ACTION DEPARTMENT
NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE



Making Democracy Work

By

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I. GOVERNMENT AND ITS AIMS

“**M**AN’S natural instinct moves him to live in civil society, for he cannot, if dwelling apart, provide himself with the necessary requirements of life, nor procure the means of developing his mental and moral faculties,” said the great Pontiff, Leo XIII.¹ This instinct divinely implanted in man leads him to form the State, which is a necessary and perfect society ordained by God for the satisfaction of human needs. The end and purpose of the State is, therefore, the promotion of human welfare. It is especially to be noted that it exists *for man* and that man does not exist for the State. The political order, in other words, serves man’s ends and is not an end in itself. It is not a mystical entity before which men bow down in idolatrous worship. While worthy of respect and man’s service, it may not command what Divine Law forbids nor assume supremacy over all the activities and interests of men. The assertion of our modern totalitarians that nothing lies beyond the orbit of state regulation is contrary to Christian belief and to practice throughout the ages.

Men possess natural rights with which they are endowed by God Himself. They are given to men in order that they may pursue those ends which God has intended. It is noteworthy that in the Declaration of Independence the doctrine of natural rights is asserted as it came down to modern times from the great Catholic philosophers: “We hold these truths to be self evident . . . that men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights among which are the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Frequently, as in the American Constitution, the variable form appears of life, liberty and property. Men must possess all three in

¹ Encyclical, *The Christian Constitution of States*.

order to attain that higher end which God has ordained. These are man's natural rights. The State, therefore, must leave to men a certain sphere of action unconfined by civil authority. As the State does not create natural rights, the State may not divest man of them. Of these natural rights Monsignor Ryan says: "Life and liberty cover a very large part of the field of natural rights; the pursuit of happiness implies the rights of marriage and of property, which embrace the remainder of that field. Man's natural rights may, therefore, be summarized as those of life, liberty, marriage and property. Liberty is, of course, a wide conception extending to physical movement, education, religion, speech and writing. Under the head of life is included immunity from all forms of arbitrary physical assault. All these rights belong to the citizen as a human being because they are all necessary for his existence, for the development of his personality, for reasonable human living, and for attainment of the end which God commands him to attain. In the United States they are all likewise rights of the citizen as a citizen."²

The State then does not *create* these rights, despite the opinion of many economists and political scientists of our own day. The State, however, does *grant* certain rights which are generally classed as civil and political. Chief among the former are those protections guaranteed by state and federal constitutions in America, which prevent arbitrary action on the part of the organs of government in criminal trials, and which insure the exercise of democratic action through freedom of press, speech and assemblage. The political rights are those of suffrage and of holding office. Drastic modification by the State of civil and political rights are theoretically permissible, although in the democratic order such modifications create dangerous precedents from which may result the complete destruction of popular government. In the democratic State an alert citizenry will jealously guard its civil and political rights against any encroachment. Particularly are these rights protections to minority groups. They constitute a guarantee for reasonable and orderly dissent against governmental reprisals of the jail or the concentration camp. They constitute a peaceful alternative to the violent upheaval which, of necessity, characterizes movements of dissent and change in dictatorial and absolutist systems.

² *Church and State*, Ryan and Millar, p. 277.

Historical Ideas of Government

In the Middle Ages there was no conception of the State such as we have today. People in those days understood that there were two powers—spiritual and temporal. The spiritual power was exercised by the universal Church under the Pope; the temporal power was exercised theoretically by the Holy Roman Emperor and those holding title to rule in his name. In some cases the authority to rule in a temporal sense came from the Pope as feudal lord over fiefs and principalities. The ideal conception was that of one universal spiritual power and one universal temporal power.

In the temporal sphere power was exercised in loose fashion over many groups and subdivisions. As the political scientists put it, the political order was pluralistic. Men belonged very often to many groups. The primary group to which all belonged was the family. They may also have been members of trade guilds or municipal corporations and of feudal entities which governed their activities. The laws of princes and kings dealt largely with men in groups and associations.

The whole medieval system is well described by Otto von Gierke, a very able scholar of the political theory of the Middle Ages:

“The properly medieval system of thought started from the idea of the whole and of unity, but to every lesser unit down to and including the individual it ascribed an inherent life, a purpose of its own, and an intrinsic value within the harmoniously articulated organism of the world-whole filled with the Divine Spirit. Thus in accordance with the medieval scheme of things it attained a construction of the social whole which in effect was federalistic through and through. While it postulates the visible unity of mankind in Church and Empire, yet by reason of the dualism of the two Swords it not only starts throughout from the idea of two allied Orders, but it limits even this unity to those relations in which joint action is demanded by the general purpose of all mankind. Thus for it the unity is neither absolute nor exclusive, but forms the over-arching dome of a social structure organized as an independent whole. And this principle is repeated in its various gradations down to the smallest local, vocational and domestic groups. Everywhere in the Church and in the State the unitary total body consists of living memberbodies,

each of which, though itself a whole, necessarily requires connection with the larger whole. Each has a purpose of its own, and consists of parts which it procreates and dominates, and which in their turn are wholes. Between the highest Universality or 'All-Community' and the essential unity of the individual there is a series of intermediate unities, in each of which lesser and lower units are comprised and combined." ³

With the revival of the Roman Law in the twelfth century, and as a result of the growing national consciousness among people, strong centralized units of government arose to dispute the claims of one universal temporal dominion under the Emperor and one universal spiritual dominion under the Pope. Strong nation States holding a new conception of absolute State sovereignty allowed little room for the autonomy of natural groups or the check which spiritual authority sought to impose. War and conquest among States necessitated ever-increasing centralized control and uniformity in administration. The trend right down to our own day—with the exception of the establishment of such geographic federalisms as are found in Switzerland, Canada, the United States—has been towards a tightening of the reigns of temporal authority in centralized governments. Modern speed in communication has made this more possible and the extensive scope of economic problems has made necessary national solutions of matters formerly of local concern.

Catholic vs. Recent and Current Theories

In our own day the pluralistic conception of the State is not accepted among most political and economic theorists. In Catholic theory, however, the family is regarded as the primary unit for the promotion of temporal welfare. It is the first source of temporal law for man. Secondly, it is recognized by Catholic writers that there are a great many other associations, voluntary in nature, to which men belong and through which man's welfare is promoted. The sphere of the State then is to promote the common welfare in so far as that welfare may not be promoted by the family and voluntary associations.

³ *The Development of Political Theory*, translated by Bernard Freyd. New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1938.

This does not mean that the State in its functions is limited, as the *laissez-faire* individualists of the past century and many capitalists of today would have us believe. The Catholic theory of the sphere of State action is not individualistic. The theory that in their economic life men are free to do what they wish with their own, free of social and political control, does not come to us from Catholic sources. The nineteenth century idea of the State as a policeman that preserves order within the nation and enforces respect without, has had many stout defenders going back to the time of John Locke and Adam Smith. The extreme interpretations of the theory came with Herbert Spencer and the anarchists. Spencer held that all positive functions of the State should be ruled out. If people died from starvation, if men ruined the better part of their lives in factories, if disease and contagion took the lives of thousands, it was no concern of the State. Attempting to apply Darwin's biological concepts to the political order, Spencer believed that State intervention preserved the weak in society, who if left to themselves would die off. As in the animal world of the jungle so in political society the fittest would survive if government did not intervene to arrest the process.

While Spencer would have preserved the State and some of its functions, the anarchists started with the principle that the State and its government are evil and had their origin in the attempt of the strong to enslave the weak. They would, therefore, abolish the organized State and "free" man from the evil of force which, maintained by political society, degraded man and made criminals of many.

Many conservatives of our own day would deny relationship to the anarchists, but in theory they often hold that the State is an evil, and government functions should be reduced to an absolute minimum. They would make exception for that type of government action which promoted industries by tariffs and subsidies. The current idea that government is always inefficient and corrupt most frequently arises from this group, who are generally blind to the inefficiency and corruption often found in private industry. A candid examination would quite likely show as much efficiency and honesty in government administration as one finds in the business world.

The Aim of Government Action

The Catholic point of view is that of positive government action to promote the common good. If a positive human need exists and there is no adequate manner of handling it except through governmental action, then it is the positive duty of government to adopt such means suitable to the situation as will preserve life and human dignity even if through that action people of means are called upon to sacrifice some of their comforts and luxuries. The aim of State action, it should be remembered, is the *common good*, the good of all, and in the attainment of that good it may be necessary for the government to adopt such legislation as will raise the standards of living of those classes and peoples who live precarious existences in the economic sense. If in so balancing the scales, the government makes necessary the bearing of heavier burdens of taxation by the well-to-do, there can be no just opposition from the latter. It is not only the function of the State by its protective activities to make life possible, but having made life possible it becomes its function to make life good. If it improves housing conditions of the poor and in so doing removes crime-breeding slums, if it removes that horrible specter of dependent old age, if it provides wholesome recreation through the maintenance of parks and playgrounds, if it provides opportunities for cultural advancement through public concerts and instruction in the arts, if it performs these functions and divers others, it will have to call for funds from those in society who live in economic security; but in so doing it is not denying the good life to the latter class. The tendency always is to resent and resist taxation.

People very often believe that money contributed to the public treasury is money thrown in the wastebasket. What we have become accustomed to, we do not appreciate. Police, fire, health protection, public education, highways, public parks, water supply and hundreds of other services, the citizen receives for his public contribution. If he is a person earning thirty-six hundred dollars a year and to all units of government pays in taxes about sixty dollars, he will often complain of the "terrific burden" of taxation. Yet the overpayment he makes for other services he regards as nothing at all. He will pay in one year eighty dollars for two commodities such

as gas and electricity to a private company, and he raises but a feeble cry against such charges. It behooves the citizen to reflect more often on his duties and obligations to his community, on the services he receives from his government, and in all charity to remember that extraordinary exactions in times of stress are imposed for the benefit of people whose very lives are dependent upon excess contributions by those who live in relative economic security.

In the present order of society, many functions are performed by the State and its subdivisions which ideally should be performed by non-profit-making voluntary associations. In the United States, however, more functions are performed by local subdivisions such as states, counties and cities than in any other country in the world. We hear a great deal about the overpowering accumulation of activities of the government at Washington, but it should be remembered that nowhere else in the world does one find such powerful local units as our states and cities. While the power of the central government has increased, so has the power of the states and cities, as the people have called for more government services. No cities anywhere have the local autonomy of the American cities; no states in any other federal system have the sphere of free action which the American states enjoy. When all is said and done, we have in this country a geographical and functional decentralization which is amazing, considering the world-wide trend towards centralized governmental control of the last hundred years.

II. ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT

The Corporative or Guild Order

When society is organized in functional groups such as professional and trade associations, each enjoying a measure of autonomy, and co-operating with the State in promoting the general welfare, a different kind of local self-government exists. Such an order is often given the name of economic federalism, or to use the term which has been applied to the system advocated in the papal encyclicals, the corporate order, or the system of autonomous occupational groups, or the guild order. Pope Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* sets out the principles of such an order, wisely omitting those details which

must vary from time to time and place to place. In the United States the adoption of the ill-fated N. R. A. brought us close to the system, the one outstanding weakness of the N. R. A., however, being its emphasis on employer control of industry as distinguished from the joint method of employer-employee supervision which one should expect in a true guild system. Under the guild or corporate order, control of economic life would be decentralized to the extent of each industry's laying down the rules and regulations for its operation, subject always to a supervisory power of co-ordination by the State among corporations. Such a system would also envisage existence of many voluntary associations for cultural interests and mutual benefit. Carried a step beyond the encyclicals it would be possible to think of the system as providing for a guild parliament which, associated with the customary kind of legislative body on a co-ordinate or co-operative basis, would provide the general laws of the State.

Within each association or "corporation" a large measure of self-government would prevail. Economic democracy within the corporation would exist side by side with political democracy such as we enjoy in this country today. However, the corporate order does contemplate a citizenry able to bear the burdens which a democratic order presupposes. Initiative, self-control, and respect for law would be essential. The importance for this order of a citizenry trained in democratic methods, is illustrated by the corporate experiment in Austria under Dolfuss. In that State while many of the features of the system of autonomous occupational groups were adopted, new organizations were created by the government in which the citizens in charge, untrained in democratic operations, spent days on end debating the most trivial matters such as the names of the corporation or the official titles of its officers. So lacking in background, in methods of self-government, were the Austrian people that little enthusiasm existed for the guild order.

Practical experience for both employees and employers in this type of guild order is already provided in the labor unions and employers' associations now existing. True enough, the experience in some cases resembles the worst features of democratic political practice with boss control, "fixed" elections, ballot-box stuffing, and the other practices of corrupt politics which exists here and there in America. Indeed these

organizations often give us cross section views of regrettable but effective machine operation. Yet these practices are not so universal as to condemn the organizations nor the effectiveness of the educative value in democratic procedure which they give. Upon the existing system of employee and employer organizations the corporate order may be built.

Of the corporate order Pope Pius XI in his encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, says: "When we speak of the reform of institutions, it is principally the State we have in mind. Not indeed as if universal salvation were to be hoped for from its intervention, but because, on account of the vice of 'individualism,' as we have called it, things have come to such a pass that the extensive social life which was at one time evolved through a variety of organically linked institutions is now shattered and almost extinct and there remain almost only individual men on the one hand and the State on the other, to the great detriment of this very State itself. The State has lost its form of social organization, and has taken on all the burdens once performed by the associations now extinct, and is overwhelmed and oppressed by an almost infinite number of charges and duties." Continuing he says: "the State should leave to the smaller groups the settlement of affairs and of cases of minor importance, on which the civil authority would otherwise use up too much effort. It will thus be able to carry out with greater freedom, power, and success all those tasks which belong to it alone because it alone can accomplish them, directing, watching, stimulating and restraining, as circumstances indicate or necessity demands."⁴

In the corporate order which His Holiness had in mind, the idea of genuine economic democracy with labor holding the position of *partner* with capital stands out significantly. In our present order of society this is a difficult idea for owners of industry to accept. While leaders of industry willingly accept the notion of political democracy, which some among them feel they can control for their own ends, they regard the partnership of labor in industry as a radical innovation depriving them of their power over what they regard as their own domain, which is theirs by way of conquest. Their attitude is understandable in a world which looks upon the eco-

⁴ Quotations from the Catholic Social Guild edition, Oxford, England, pp. 30, 31.

conomic autocracy of capitalism as being responsible in large measure for our great material advance. Catholic employers of labor, with a few exceptions, seem no more kindly disposed to the partnership of labor in industry than non-Catholic employers. Various paternalistic schemes of partnership—some adopted to promote company unions—have been indorsed by employers, but to grant labor a genuinely free and independent voice in industry is not accepted by most of the employers, Catholic or non-Catholic, in this land.

To deprive employees of this much control is to deprive them of a voice in the regulation of many conditions affecting their lives. Men spend at least eight hours of every day in pursuit of a living for themselves or their families. Yet over the conditions affecting those eight hours of work they have little effective control or voice. It is true that through relentless and only partially successful warfare, labor has obtained recognition for its organizations. These organizations are generally successful in defending labor's rights, but efforts to undermine the hard-won gains of the unions go on ceaselessly. The struggle of labor unions to secure some share in forming the rules affecting workers in industry today is not unlike the struggle that was bitterly waged for centuries by the middle and lower classes for suffrage. In other words, we are working out through bitter strife a satisfactory solution of labor's servile position in industry today.⁵

Pope Pius XI made an appeal to Christian conscience to acknowledge the genuine partnership of workers and owners; and while all speak in high terms of his noble appeal, not enough effort is made to put the Christian ideal into practice. There never can be a thoroughly successful political democracy functioning side by side with a powerful economic autocracy. Those who control economic power may frustrate all political efforts. We have had many evidences of this in the operations of our own political system. The tremendous pressure on government exercised in times past by the representatives of

⁵ That labor's position in industry is changing and that labor has evolved a philosophy of co-operation is evinced in many ways, *e. g.*, the A. F. of L. program *Industry's Manifest Duty*, issued in 1923; the system obtaining in most of the railroads which involves (a) acceptance of collective bargaining; (b) joint meetings of committees of employers' associations and of unions to work out and support legislation affecting labor; (c) a committee to work out plans for the good of the whole industry.—Editor.

great wealth, form part of the more distressing side of our national history.

This is not to deny that labor has made great strides. Never before has labor's position been more favorable (especially in its relations with a national administration) than at the present time. Nor have labor leaders ever shown a greater interest in the unskilled groups who in the past have been shamefully neglected by government and organized labor alike. Of the position of labor in the twenties Louis M. Hacker says:

“The gains of the working class—in higher wages, lower hours, better working conditions—were, as has been said, generally confined to the so-called aristocrats of labor, that is to say, the well-organized skilled craft workers. There was an outstanding reason for this: the upper levels of the workers also profited from the creation of expanding opportunities for capitalist enterprise outside of the boundaries of the United States. From the nineteen-hundreds on and notably with the outbreak of the World War, America had become an imperialist nation as, more and more, our exports began to consist of manufactured goods and investable capital. Skilled workers were in a superior bargaining position and with the tacit consent of employers they were able to create virtual job monopolies as a result of which they could obtain real concessions. This, of course, was a condition that could exist only during a period of growing foreign trade; and such was the case, with only minor and temporary setbacks, from 1915 to the end of the twenties.

“It was no accident, therefore, that the years in question were years of waning trade-union militancy. Class collaboration was the keynote of traditional trade unionism; and the unskilled were compelled to fend for themselves. One finds, therefore, that whereas membership in American trade unions grew fairly steadily until the end of the World War, it began thenceforth to decline. Industrial disputes also decreased in numbers and duration. In 1897, there had been 447,000 American trade unionists; in 1900, 868,500; by 1914, 2,716,900; and in 1920—the all-time peak until 1937—5,110,800. By 1922, the trade unions had lost a million members; and in 1929 the total membership was 4,330,000.”⁶

⁶ *American Problems of Today*, Louis M. Hacker. F. S. Crofts & Company, New York, 1938.

The neglect of the unskilled, especially the Negroes, threw wide open the door to radical agitators from the I. W. W. and Communist groups. In suppressing these left-wing agents and their movements the conservative labor leaders were no less active than the conservative capitalist employers. Yet very little of a constructive nature was done by the aristocracy of labor to relieve conditions among the unskilled labor proletariat. The recognition in part of this problem by the C. I. O. resulted in a phenomenal growth of this representative of industrial unionism. From the legislative point of view a series of acts both state and federal beginning with the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932,⁷ and running through the N. R. A., the Guffey Act, the Social Security Act, and the Wagner Act, a protection was given to labor such as it has never before enjoyed—and this has been true despite occasional serious setbacks administered by the Supreme Court relying upon peculiarly rigid interpretations of the federal taxing and commerce powers.⁸ However, during the present year (1939) a wave of reaction appears to have set in throughout the country with the demands for revision of the Wagner Act and with the passage by many legislatures of drastic limitations upon strikers and labor unions. The sad part about this reaction is the aid which agricultural leaders are very often giving to conservative business groups in the passage of this legislation. It is, nevertheless, safe to say that labor will not revert either in its own outlook or in the law to its unsatisfactory position before the thirties.

The Totalitarian "Corporate State"

It is charged in some circles today that the corporate or guild order is one and the same as the Fascist State or the National Socialist State. As evidence it is pointed out that totalitarian States either adopt corporativeness as part of

⁷ An act forbidding the use against labor in strikes of that peculiar American legal device, the injunction. Injunctions under this act might not be issued by the federal courts (1) when workers ceased or refused to perform work; (2) on a worker becoming a member of a trade union; (3) upon the payment of strike or unemployment benefits to strikers; (4) the giving of publicity to a strike; (5) peaceable assembly.

⁸ Among the most drastic critics of the decisions of the Supreme Court from 1933 through 1935 were such eminent authorities on constitutional law as Thomas Reed Powell of Harvard, and Edward S. Corwin of Princeton.

their system, or at least talk of adopting it. Mussolini preaches a modified corporate order and, say some people, he has adopted the idea in Italy. So in other Fascist and semi-Fascist systems, a corporate State is adopted as the ideal. Let us see what Pope Pius XI had to say about existing (totalitarian) corporate systems. This "new syndical and corporative order," he says in *Quadragesimo Anno*, "possesses too great an administrative and political complexity and . . . *it serves particular political aims* (the italics are my own) rather than leading to the launching and promoting of a better social order." In other words, one may suspect that it serves a useful purpose in Mussolini's program to adopt in his own day something like a Catholic recommendation for reforms of the social and civil order, in a country largely Catholic.

In totalitarian systems as a whole the dictatorial idea of the corporate and guild order is almost the reverse of Pope Pius' recommendations. In the case of Italy it should be remembered that Mussolini was at one time a revolutionary syndicalist. The syndicalists, following the principles of the French political theorist, Georges Sorel, believed that the political order (the State) was an evil that should be abolished. In this they were at one with the anarchists. With the State abolished, men should be organized in wholly autonomous associations according to their economic interests. In these associations men would have all the government which was needed, and except for a general congress of economic groups there would be no centralized governmental authority. These associations would own the natural resources necessary for turning out the commodities in which they were interested. Political parties and politics in the generally accepted sense of the term would not exist. These people evidently forgot that struggles for power within their economic associations would furnish a brand of politics differing in no degree of intensity from politics in the ordinary State. Some of these groups believed that the syndicalist order which they envisaged would come about by a breakdown in modern top-heavy States; most, however (and Mussolini was one), believed that the syndicalist order could only be brought about by violent revolution. The chief weapon that the syndicalists relied upon was the general strike and sabotage. Two lessons Mussolini learned from this group

which came to hand in later days were: the use of violence and the federated or corporative idea of society. He used both to accomplish his ends.

It is very important, however, that one should grasp the difference between the corporate order as effective in totalitarian States and the corporate order of Pope Pius' encyclical. In the Catholic theory a deflation of State activities and functions is contemplated. In the totalitarian version, the State is supreme in all ways of life—spiritual and temporal. Such economic groups as exist in Germany or Italy are centrally controlled by the State. Their officials are to all intents and purposes named by the State. They are simply arms of the central power, and true autonomy for them does not exist. The corporations, as used by Mussolini, are instruments of extending State control over workers and employers alike, but particularly over workers. He could not even tolerate, in his new Italy, the Catholic Popular Party which would have brought about in time an order of free, voluntary economic associations resulting in genuine economic democracy. It is well-nigh impossible to conceive of the Catholic economic federalism in the regimented order of the totalitarian State. It would seem that only in a State where the natural rights of man and most of the civil and political rights which we recognize in this country are accepted and guaranteed, will the corporative order possess the best chances for success and perpetuation.

A Guild Order for the United States

Government Units

In the United States what elements already exist and what institutions should be encouraged to aid us in at least approximating the corporative order? The decentralization of power effected in this country by our federal system should be preserved as a principle of action. However, it should be remembered that politics is a practical philosophy wherein the pragmatic test of workableness must be constantly used. Certain political war cries, such as "States' rights," only tend to hinder us from arriving at solutions beneficial to the common good. In our day and age there are certain problems of social and economic life that can only be worked out satisfactorily

on a national scale. Every grant of power to the national government is not *in se* contrary to the public good. Means of communication by travel or otherwise can be effectively regulated satisfactorily in the United States only on a nation-wide scale. The same holds true of many other matters now before us. The sole question to be asked in any case of extension of federal powers is: "Is this the most effective means of control for the general good?" In our own day and for generations to come, our local governments will retain enough power to make of them strong and virile units of control.

Co-operatives

Besides the federal plan of government now in operation, various schemes of consumer and producer co-operation are now in operation or are about to be put in operation. While in this country we have not gone as far in the operation of co-operatives as the peoples of certain European states have gone, co-operatives deserve serious consideration from Catholics. Credit unions, hospitalization and medical-care groups are all institutions that should be encouraged by Catholic citizens. Very often State, local, or federal governments may give a helping hand to such organizations by supplying plans and directions and even by the use of limited funds for initially aiding them. In the United States it is often said that our men and women are great "joiners." They take to association with their fellows for any kind of enterprise. This is not to be deplored. Upon it we may build a federated society such as is found nowhere else in the world.

Labor-Capital Co-operation

More difficult of attainment will be the education of all people in this country to a realization of the importance and necessity of the trade union as an integral part of our industrial system. At the present time the union is an army organized for battle against the entrenched forces of Bourbon Capitalism. It is a force that often spends valuable time on the sole item of the wage scale to the neglect of building up a constructive labor philosophy. Its members are not generally recognized as partners in industry, and many an otherwise well-disposed employer would oppose to the death

such partnership after one or two encounters with bullying labor bosses and labor racketeers. Unfortunately in this country, labor has to set its own house in order by terminating its senseless civil war, cleaning out the racketeers⁹ and adopting a program of ultimate aims, chief of which will be to establish the dignity of labor in a society where everyone now expects to be a carefree capitalist.¹⁰

There are people in this country today who would condemn the whole labor movement due to the activities of unworthy representatives of a good cause. The unfairness of such a point of view should be obvious. Efforts have been made and continue to be made with no little success to purge labor's ranks of bosses and labor racketeers. These efforts have not received the publicity which they deserve. On the contrary, employers' associations, crime commissions and the like, tend to give more publicity to the things that remain undone in the reform of labor unions. Great emphasis will be laid upon unethical practices in, let us say, the Building Trades Group, wherein reform has moved slowly. These things should indeed receive publicity. But one cannot escape the conclusion that the underlying motive in all this publicity is far too often the discrediting of the whole labor movement. Business has too many skeletons in its own closet to take such an attitude.

Needless to say, hoping for a better understanding between labor and capital and the ultimate partnership of labor with capital in industry is insufficient. Some legislative action will be necessary to bring this about. That legislation will normally have to follow in general the lines laid down for the late N. R. A. With the principle of the Jones, Laughlin Steel Case before us, which in effect states that the national government may regulate conditions of labor in firms that draw raw material from outside of the State and export finished products across State lines, it is probably safe to say that a new N. R. A. including the larger industries and those holding government contracts would be regarded as constitutional, under the commerce clause of the Constitution. Care would have to be taken that industrial codes received Congressional

⁹ See Denis T. Lynch, *Criminals and Politicians*, Macmillan, New York, 1932.

¹⁰ For a program of aims emphasizing labor's dignity see *Industry's Manifest Duty*, American Federation of Labor, Washington, 1923.

approval, inasmuch as administrative approval seems to be blocked by the Supreme Court decision in the N. R. A. case. The Legislature may not evidently delegate the power to approve and draw up codes to the executive authority. Greatest attention of all will have to be given to the role of labor in both the drawing up and the approval of the codes.

One lesson learned from our first experience with this type of industrial set-up, was that we were too ambitious and too much was attempted. As a result we were caught up in a whirl of dizzy activity in which reasonable direction seemed out of the question. In addition the multiple rules and regulations and consequent red tape tried the patience of the best disposed employers and government officials. In time the tangled skein would have been unraveled, but we are an impatient people when it comes to getting things done. The action of the Supreme Court in declaring the N. R. A. unconstitutional brought an end to the necessity of waiting. Nevertheless, such a system as the N. R. A. would provide the necessary education in co-operation for both employers and workers. The realization in time would come to both that they have common ends and common responsibilities. On a smaller scale state and local N. R. A.'s might be provided for small industries.

Agriculture

Interesting developments in the field of self-government in agriculture may ensue from the practice established in the 1938 Agricultural Adjustment Act where a marketing quota for tobacco, corn, wheat, cotton and rice may be fixed upon approval in a referendum of two-thirds of the producers in any one of these commodities.

III. THE CITIZEN AND GOOD GOVERNMENT

Political Duties

In democratic theory the importance of the individual citizen is always stressed; in democratic action the individual citizen bears the grave responsibilities attendant upon the choice of officials and public policies. In no other form of government does the citizen bear such a burden. To participate

effectively in the democratic process he must be alert to public needs; he must inform himself as best he can on public affairs; he must use the suffrage given him when the State, through its election process, provides the means for his doing so. The success of the democratic system largely depends upon all citizens carefully and honestly exercising the voting privilege. It is neither wise nor patriotic for the citizen to neglect his political privileges—privileges which generations have fought for and for which men have given their lives. What would be the consternation among vote-slackers if they were suddenly informed they had lost the privilege of participation in elections!

Politics and Public Servants

The democratic process is carried on by means of the peaceful struggle among political parties for control of the government offices. Our party process is a peaceful substitution for the violent means that was formerly and is even now used in certain parts of the world. The purpose of a political party is the seizure of the main offices of government for the purpose of carrying out a definite program. Yet to many high-minded people anything savoring of the political is low, disgusting, and dishonest. Some citizens nonchalantly proclaim, "Oh, I never engaged in politics!" Since politics is the process of forming policy, such people have made the damaging admission that they are totally negligent in their public duties and not a little ignorant of what they are saying. In any group where intelligent human beings come together for the purpose of organization there is politics.

Politics is not peculiar to government. It happens to be the dynamic force behind government, but it is found also elsewhere. In our great business organizations, for instance, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Manufacturers Association; in our trade unions; in our professional groups such as the American Medical Association and the Bar Association; in the D. A. R.; in the American Legion; in the Parent-Teacher groups; in our schools, colleges, and churches there is politics. In fact, wherever two or three are gathered together, different opinions as to the proper course of action are bound to arise, and the struggle to bring about the acceptance of one course as against another is politics—

nothing more. Many people who boast of the fact that they shun their public duties by never participating in politics would make an ordinary ward politician turn green with envy if he could but observe their political prowess in business activities. One might very reasonably raise the question whether there breathes a soul so dead that he never has participated in politics.

There exists a feeling among many good people that politics in the public sense is a dirty game. There are those who believe that politics in this reprehensible sense pervades all of government.¹¹ As a matter of sober fact, partisan politics (Republican versus Democratic) plays a comparatively small role in the day to day operation of government. (The larger part of the legislation passed in Congress and in the state legislatures is not passed on party lines.)

The routine operation of governmental administration in city, state and nation goes on quite undisturbed by party warfare. Most of the people connected with government serve for many years very faithfully and with low compensation, with little or no consideration of party battles. One might grow rhapsodic in praise of the public servant, whose number is legion, whose name never appears in the daily press because no suspicion of scandal surrounds him. While no statistics exist to substantiate this fact, many and good authorities hold that there is less dishonesty and inefficiency in government administration than in business at large. Social scientists whose life-long studies have brought them constantly into contact with public administration have felt that the public at large has little appreciation of the excellence of the public service. We are constantly made aware of governmental inadequacies because the full spotlight of publicity penetrates the remotest corners of our governmental halls. Political campaigns keep before us the shortcomings of our public officials to such an extent that in our urban centers particularly, the ordinary voter goes to the polls with the cynical reflection that one group of gangsters is going out and a new group of the same genus but of different species is coming in. All due allowance must be made for the exaggerations of election campaigns. Serving as popular checks upon

¹¹ For an interesting article against the party system of today see "Parties and the Common Good," by Mortimer J. Adler, *Review of Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 51-83, January, 1939.

public officials, elections are full of drama and fiction with all the necessary villains and heroes thrown in. Yet, taking all things together the American public has shown that it not only knows the game, but that in the long run it knows how to get what it wants.

Political and Economic Corruption

Looking back over American political history one sees many stirring battles in which the forces of progress, honesty and wisdom have gone down to temporary defeat, but the victory of the forces of reaction and corruption has been short-lived. The period of the 1870's and 1880's reeked with charges of corruption, real and fancied, but for the most part, real. In 1888 the British commentator on American institutions, Lord Bryce, wrote that democracy in American cities was a conspicuous failure. The states and the national governments provided scandals that reached into executive offices and legislative halls. The extent of the spoils system may be judged from the fact that in one department of the national government bunks had to be provided for the scores of extra and useless people appointed so that they would not get in the way of the regular employees who were working. Wealthy barons of industry bought legislators, governors and mayors. Political bosses stuffed ballot boxes and in addition paid liberally for votes that voters thought little of selling. Boss Tweed could dare those who would expose him and with a shrug of the shoulders declare: "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

Let it not be thought, however, that this corruption infested public life only. This was the period of the great industrial expansion, when in the economic field success rewarded the efforts of the unscrupulous. Corruption existed in government, but it also characterized to an even greater degree the activities of the leaders of business. Men played for high stakes no matter in what field they played. The efforts of reformers in those days apparently yielded few or no lasting results, as the late Lincoln Steffens shows in his *Autobiography*; but it is to the everlasting credit of American democracy that this dismal picture has changed. The ceaseless struggle for reform put forward by such men as Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, Golden Rule Jones, Tom Johnson,

Brand Whitlock, Carl Schurz and many others brought definite results. Considering the vast operations of government today carried on by ordinary individuals with all the human weaknesses, moral and intellectual, that plague the human race, it is amazing that corruption and inefficiency exist on the small scale that it does in these United States. The loud protest that greets any hint of public scandal in itself proves not only the rarity of malfeasance, but the wholesome resentment of the great mass of Americans toward the public defaulter and corruptionist.

All this is said not to deny or excuse the corruption that exists. There is still enough of it in our cities and counties. At least we know it. The Nazi leaders surrounding Hitler have accumulated sufficient wealth to keep themselves and their descendants in luxury and comfort; the German people may know this, but what can they do about it? In other words, we not only have the means of knowing officials who profit illicitly from public office, but we can and very often do take a just vengeance upon them. If, however, democracy in this land is ever overthrown during the present and immediate future generations, it will not be because of the preachings of visionary radicals, but largely because of the machinations of unfaithful public servants who think more of their own enrichment than they do of the public welfare. A political order rotten from within is easily overthrown in a crisis. And corruption in public life has a way of creating among citizens, particularly of the younger generation, a cynical attitude towards public life which results in the disastrous shirking of public responsibility. The Roman Empire is used too often perhaps as a horrible example of everything a person wishes to decry, but it is interesting to note how the cities of the early Empire, having still a remnant of Greek democracy, lost all self-government by reason of the political bosses of the day having bought off the citizens from taking any effective part in public life.

The most ominous signs which we possess today are the existence of city machines that live on the profit gathered from the underworld of prostitution, vice, and gambling, or on the more "refined" sources of income from the sale of privileges to large corporations, the blackmailing of business, especially the utilities (This latter is generally done by introducing an ordinance "in the interest of public safety" that

would lay a great burden in taxes or regulation upon the utility. If the people who run the utility see the proper person in the political organization and come to terms the ordinance is killed in committee of the council.), and of letting city contracts to favorite bidders, of fixing real estate assessments for a consideration, of assessing office-holders, and of buying land for the purpose of selling it later to the city at a huge personal profit. Such organizations are led by astute and unscrupulous leaders, occasionally demagogues, that buy off church and business leaders with large gifts to charity and adornment of the city with public buildings. It is true, however, that the rise of the W. P. A., the P. W. A., and the organized charities has diminished to some extent the importance of gifts from questionable public figures.

When one thinks of such situations, one's mind runs back to the great St. Ambrose of Milan with his public condemnation of the Roman Emperor himself. What would St. Ambrose have said about the depredations of predatory politicians who use the Church and their Faith to shield their crimes? The Catholic citizen, or any citizen, should know that the conscious approval of corrupt politicians and machines constitutes a grave crime against the State and, under the moral law, a serious sin. It is all the more serious in that the political malefactor poses as an outstanding patriot; wrapped in the American flag he inveighs against the Communist and all subversive forces, while he himself does more to undermine the foundations of the established political order than any left-wing leader in the country.

Civic Groups and Political Organizations

To offset the activity of corrupt politicians every patriotic citizen should be aligned with some group or some activity that makes for the improvement of public morals and efficient public administration. One does not have to be a reformer in the odious sense of that term. Nor does one have to align himself with those organizations, well-meaning and honest though they be, that are ever engaged in crusades and man-hunts to find who are less American than they are. Granted that one can have a lot of fun in a very serious way by working with the aforementioned societies, yet the records will generally show that such societies are generally engaged in spread-

ing hatred, in catching the wrong man, and in doing the wrong thing in the wrong way at every turn. Organizations formed for the improvement of civil service, clean elections, beneficial social legislation and the like indulge in little drama and flag-waving, but in a quiet way are responsible for untold benefits to our democratic order. Volumes might be written on the role of these civic groups in the democratic order. It is sufficient to say that in the United States they have given us a long honor roll of self-sacrificing heroes whose deeds are known but whose names are completely forgotten. They have labored in our cities, in our states, and at the nation's capital with patriotic devotion and without hope for any reward. They are the hope of those who believe in good government through this democratic process.

Previously, I said that politics is necessary for the operation of the democratic order. Or, to put it in another way, political parties are necessary. The popular myth about political parties is that they are run by a group of selfish and cunning professionals who gain fortunes at the expense of the poor defenseless taxpayer. We have never had in this country a real national political boss because of the decentralized nature of our system of government. Few of those who have come near to that high standing have been wealthy men in the popularly accepted meaning of that term. If one goes down the list of outstanding national political leaders, such as Marcy, Hanna, Platt, Penrose, Barnes, Roger Sullivan, Farley, one cannot distinguish one wealthy man amongst them. The same holds true of the greater number of our local leaders. As a matter of fact many of these political leaders have died poor men. Compared to our tycoons of industry, our political leaders are engaged in a thankless and profitless occupation as self-sacrificing angels.

Why do men devote time and effort to political organizations? It is true that for many of them it is a means of livelihood, but to the greater number it is the game itself that attracts. Some people are so constituted that they can sniff the smoke of party battle from afar and cannot resist entering the fray. Party politics has a fascination that attracts thousands who have not the slightest thought of personal reward. During an ordinary presidential election almost three million citizens are engaged in some manner of party work; with the exception of a very small group of office workers no

compensation comes to these workers. Some are motivated by the thought of future jobs in the government service. By far the larger number picture themselves engaged in a crucial battle for the right and are idealistic in their motives. Postmaster General Farley, the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee and one of the greatest political leaders the country has ever seen, says in his recent book, *Behind the Ballots*: "But those people who are inclined to imagine that patronage, and patronage alone, is the only thing that keeps a political party knit together are off on a tangent that is about as far wrong as anything humanly could be. I am convinced that with the help of a few simple ingredients like time, patience, and hard work, I could construct a major political party in the United States without the aid of a single job to hand out to deserving partisans. In fact, untold thousands of loyal soldiers in the Democratic army have been toiling for years without receiving tangible reward for their services and without asking for any such reward" [page 237].

In another place he says: "Moreover, I am perfectly conscious of the fact that when political organizations begin thinking about jobs and nothing else, when they forget that the public business should come first, they have commenced their own death chant without realizing it" [page 237].

IV. CATHOLICS IN OUR DEMOCRACY

For the most part Catholics have fared well in modern times in democratic States in the great number of which they have also been minority groups. They have carried on their religious activities free of hampering government restrictions. Their numbers have increased and they have shown a vitality born of independence that has not always had the respect of all classes and have been a force to be reckoned with in secular and religious affairs alike. In the democratic State the Catholic viewpoint meets not only with tolerance but with the full protection of the law. While much is tolerated that Catholics cannot accept, Catholics realize that they do not live in a Catholic State and that the peace, good order, and good will of the community requires that the point of view of no one religious group can be imposed upon the people.

While error may be asserted, truth may also be asserted to combat it. Following the law of charity and the spirit of democracy as well, we Catholics live in harmony with those who disagree with us. Democracy, incorporating as it does in the philosophy that underlies it so much of genuine Catholic truth (it is understood, however, that there is strictly speaking no such thing as a Catholic form of government), particularly in its respect for the dignity of man and his natural rights, deserves the whole-hearted devotion, allegiance, and gratitude of Catholics everywhere living under its inestimable benefits. Their association with any group with totalitarian aims is little short of suicidal. In the words of the great Italian priest, Father Sturzo, now in exile in England because of Italian totalitarianism: "Nor can he (*i. e.*, the Catholic), in my modest opinion, associate himself with parties that seek to establish dictatorial forms of government and to suppress civil and political liberties. For thus he would co-operate in making the State the master of bodies and souls, persons and things, in the public and private domain, and in creating a permanent discrimination between the dominant party and those subject to it."¹²

In an article a short time ago I wrote of democracy: "It is the sole form of government today where the sanctity of the individual, the responsibility of the individual, and the freedom of the individual is recognized and respected. Men under the democratic form may be free to become great sinners, but they are also free to become great saints. Men are free to abuse the liberty given them as men abuse the free will that God has given them, but without that freedom men do not attain to that fully developed temporal or spiritual maturity—responsible citizens of the State, and responsible sons of the Church. Only in the democratic States today is the thoroughly Catholic doctrine of natural rights recognized in theory and in practice. Only in the democratic States does man still possess a sphere of action free of governmental control and interference. Surely in this, our day, Catholic preference for democracy should be widely known—for that

¹² Don Luigi Sturzo was founder of the Popular Party in Italy, a party founded on Catholic principles. In the short time of its existence after the War until the coming of Mussolini, it grew to be the second largest party in Italy and, no doubt, would have come into control of the government had it not been for the seizure of power by the Fascists.

democracy where our churches and schools flourish, where our people freely attend the divine services, where our priests are free to teach the Gospel, where our press suffers no oppression from governmental censors, where our voices are heard in the councils of the nation, and where our youth may be reared in the fear and love of God without bowing down in idolatry before a mere man who calls himself leader and who thinks of himself as God.”¹³

N. C. W. C. STUDY CLUB OUTLINE

I. GOVERNMENT AND ITS AIMS (pp. 5-8)

1. Why does man live in civil society? In the State?
2. What is the purpose of the State?
3. Why are men endowed with natural rights which cannot be touched by the State? What are they?
4. What political and civil rights does the State grant in this country?
5. What was the ideal conception of spiritual and temporal power in the Middle Ages?
6. Describe the “pluralistic” political order of the Middle Ages.
7. What caused the growth of strong centralized units of government and what is the trend today?

Suggested paper: Review of “The End of the State” in “The State and the Church,” by Ryan and Millar. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

II. CATHOLIC VS. RECENT AND CURRENT THEORIES (pp. 8-11)

1. What place do the family and voluntary organizations hold in the Catholic theory of the State?
2. Was the nineteenth century idea of the State as a policeman a Catholic one? Explain the extreme interpretations of this idea advanced by (a) Spencer, (b) the anarchists.
3. What is the Catholic view as to the aim of government action?
4. In considering taxes what elements concerning the public good should the citizen bear in mind?
5. Does the State today do too much? How does the United States compare with other governments?

Suggested paper: Review of “The History of Democratic Theory,” by Moorhouse F. X. Millar, S.J., in “The State and the Church,” by Ryan and Millar. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

¹³ “Public Concerns of an American Catholic,” *Social Problems*, Vol. 1, No. 7, September, 1938.

III. ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT

The Corporative or Guild Order (pp. 11-16)

1. How would control of economic life be decentralized under the corporative or guild order advocated by Pope Pius XI?
2. Would a corporative order be possible among persons untrained in democratic operations?
3. How do the unions and employers' associations furnish a possible basis for the guild order?
4. When Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical, "Reconstructing the Social Order," says that the State should be reformed what relation to economic institutions did he have in mind?
5. What is the position of labor in the corporate order? The position of labor today?
6. May there be a thoroughly successful political democracy without economic democracy? Why?
7. What reasons are advanced by Louis Hacker for the recent growth in trade unionism?
8. How were the unskilled workers benefited by the rise of the C. I. O.?
9. What recent acts of Congress guarantee protection to the workers?
Suggested paper: "The Guilds" (see Chapter I in "Toward Social Justice," N. C. W. C., 15c, and "The Sound Old Guilds," by Matthew Clancy, The Paulist Press, 5c.).

IV. ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT (Cont'd.) (pp. 16-21)

1. Why do some people identify the corporative or guild order with the "Corporative State"? What does the Pope have to say on this?
2. What are the syndicalist and anarchist ideas of a federated or corporative society?
3. Contrast the Pope's idea of a corporate order and that effective in totalitarian states?
4. Discuss the following as institutions which can help the United States to attain to the guild order: (a) Units of local government; (b) Co-operatives; (c) Labor-capital partnership; (d) Agricultural legislation.
5. Why do the following difficulties stand in the way of recognition of the unions as an integral part of our industrial system? (a) Racketeering; (b) Civil War.
6. What is frequently the motive in concentrating public attention on the defects of the labor movement?
7. Is legislative action necessary to bring about the partnership of capital and labor? What lines should this action take?
8. What was the fundamental defect of the late N. R. A. in this regard?
9. What should be the place of labor in this legislation?
Suggested paper: "A New Guild Order." (See "Organized Social Justice," The Paulist Press, 5c, and "New Guilds," The Paulist Press, 5c.)

V. THE CITIZEN AND GOOD GOVERNMENT (pp. 21-28)

1. What are the duties of the citizen with regard to: (a) public needs; (b) public affairs; (c) voter's privilege.
2. How is the political democratic process carried on?
3. What is politics? What is the general record with regard to the honesty of public servants?
4. Describe (a) political, (b) economic corruption rampant in the 1870's and 1880's.
5. What is the danger to democracy from corruption in public life?
6. What are the worst indications of political corruption today?
7. With what sort of groups should citizens align themselves in order to offset the activities of corrupt politicians?
8. Are political parties dominated by selfish and cunning professionals?

Suggested paper: Review of "The Duties of the Citizen" in "The State and the Church," by Ryan and Millar. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

VI. CATHOLICS IN OUR DEMOCRACY (pp. 28-30)

1. How do Catholics fare in democratic states?
2. In a democracy in which they are a minority, what is the Catholic point of view toward toleration of what Catholics cannot accept in principle?
3. What are Father Sturzos' views as to the morality of a Catholic's support of groups which seek to establish totalitarianism?
4. What are some of the advantages to Catholics in a democracy?

Suggested paper: Review of "Catholicism and Americanism," by Most Rev. John Ireland, D.D., in "The State and the Church," by Ryan and Millar. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY CLUBS ON CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

1. The study club is not a group to listen to lectures. It is for informal discussion. It is small—ten or twelve to twenty or so—so as to permit general discussion.
2. There is a discussion leader.
3. The group may consist of persons of various occupations and interests or of special groups. A number of small study groups established within each organization is desirable.
4. Meetings are once a week or once every two weeks or once a month.
5. Every member should have at least the text and the outline.
6. Reference Shelf or Table is helpful.
7. The discussion, as a rule, follows the outline point by point. The section of the text to be discussed should be read before the meeting by each member.
8. Use questions at the end of the meeting to recapitulate.
9. Reports or papers called for by the outline should be brief.
10. Short summary of previous meeting by different member each time ensures continuity.
11. Begin meeting and close it on time.
12. The purposes of the group are:
 - (a) So its members will know the teaching of the Church on social and political relations.
 - (b) So they can speak at Catholic meetings.
 - (c) So they can be leaders in the activity of Catholic organizations.
 - (d) So they can apply the teachings in their civic life.
 - (e) So they can guide the civic and political organizations to which they belong.
 - (f) So they will be better Catholics.
 - (g) So they will be better citizens.
13. If the group is an offshoot or a part of another organization they should report their conclusions to the parent organization, because one of the chief purposes of the club or committee is to pass on their information, point of view and enthusiasm to the Catholics of their community and to make the club's work definitely a part of the parent organization's work.

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