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MATER ET MAGISTRA

Christianity and Social Progress

*Encyclical Letter
of POPE JOHN XXIII*

† *With extended analysis*
† *Study group outline*
† *Bibliography*

The America Press

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An Encyclical Letter
of
POPE JOHN XXIII

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THE AMERICA PRESS

920 Broadway : New York 10, N. Y.

100-1740

IMPRIMI POTES:

JOHN J. MCGINTY, S.J.

Provincial: New York Province

NIHIL OBSTAT:

BENJAMIN L. MASSE, S.J.

Censor Deputatus

IMPRIMATUR:

FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN

August 21, 1961

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MATER ET MAGISTRA

Christianity and Social Progress

AN ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF
HIS HOLINESS JOHN XXIII,
BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE POPE,
TO HIS VENERABLE BRETHREN,
THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS,
BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES
IN PEACEFUL COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE,
AND TO ALL THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF
THE CATHOLIC WORLD.
ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE
SOCIAL QUESTION CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT
OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING

POPE JOHN XXIII

VENERABLE BRETHREN AND BELOVED CHILDREN:
HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BLESSING

MOTHER AND TEACHER of all nations, the Universal Church has been established by Jesus Christ so that all who down the ages came to her loving embrace might discover the fullness of a higher life and salvation. To this Church, *the pillar and mainstay of truth*,¹ her Most Holy Founder has entrusted the double task of begetting children and of educating and guiding them, with maternal providence watching over the life both of individuals and of peoples, the lofty dignity of which she has always held in the highest respect and guarded with earnest care.

2. Christianity is in a sense a joining together of earth with heaven in that it takes man concretely, spirit and matter, intellect and will, and bids him lift his mind up from the changing con-

1. I Tim. 3:15.

ditions in which men dwell together to the heights of heavenly life—where finally one will know the joy of unending happiness and peace.

3. Hence, though Holy Church has the special task of sanctifying souls and making them partake of supernatural goods, she is also solicitous for the needs of men's daily life, not merely those having to do with bodily nourishment and the material side of life, but those also that concern prosperity and culture in all its many aspects and historical stages.

4. In this activity the Church is carrying out the command of her Founder, Christ, who refers primarily to man's eternal salvation when He says: *I am the way, and the truth and the life,*² and *I am the light of the world.*³ But when, gazing about at the hungry crowd, He sighs, as it were, and cries out: *I have compassion on this multitude,*⁴ He makes plain His concern also for the earthly needs of men. The divine Redeemer offers proof of this concern not only by His words but also in the deeds of His life, as when to alleviate the hunger of a crowd He more than once miraculously multiplies bread.

5. By means of this bread, given for the nourishment of the body, He wished to foreshadow that heavenly food of the soul which He was to bestow on men on the eve of His Passion.

6. It is no wonder then that the Catholic Church, in imitation of Christ and in fulfillment of His command, for two thousand years—from the time, that is, of the ministry of the early deacons to the present day—has held aloft the torch of charity by her teaching as well as by her widely heralded example. It has held aloft, we say, the torch of that charity which, by harmoniously blending together the precepts and the practice of mutual love, executes in a wonderful manner that twofold command to give—by word and by deed—which summarizes the social teaching and action of the Church.

7. An outstanding instance of this combination of teaching and action carried on by the Church throughout the ages is to be found beyond question in the immortal encyclical *Rerum*

2. John 14:6.

3. John 8:12.

4. Mark 8:2.

Novarum.⁵ This letter was issued seventy years ago by Our predecessor, Leo XIII of happy memory, to enunciate the principles according to which the question of improving the situation of the workingman could be settled in a Christian manner.

8. Seldom has the advice of a Pontiff received so warm a reception by the entire world as did the letter of Pope Leo. This was a reaction to the almost unmatched profundity and scope of the arguments used in it, and the incisiveness with which they were advanced. Indeed these directives and appeals have achieved such public standing that they are not likely ever to slip into oblivion. For they opened up a new avenue for action on the part of the Church. Making his own the suffering, cries and aspirations of the lowly and oppressed, the Supreme Pastor dedicated himself with special vigor to the task of fighting for and regaining their rights.

9. Even today, despite the long interval since that wonderful letter was published, its influence is still at work. It makes itself felt, for instance, in the documents of the Popes who succeeded Leo XIII and who, in their teaching on socio-economic questions, repeatedly refer to the Leonine encyclical. At one time, their purpose is to clarify or explain it; at another, to find in it a stimulus to activity on the part of Catholics. That influence is also to be encountered in the legislative codes of many states.

All this makes it abundantly clear that the solidly grounded principles, the directives and the paternally benevolent advice contained in the masterly encyclical of Our predecessor still preserve their original authority. Indeed, they may even suggest new and vital guide lines by which men can judge the nature and extent of the social question as it appears today, and can face up to their responsibilities with respect to it.

5. *Acta Leonis XIII*, XI (1891), 97-144.

Part I: Teaching of *Rerum Novarum* and Opportune Developments in the Doctrine of Pius XI and Pius XII

At the Time of *Rerum Novarum*

10. The light shed by that sage Pontiff's message to the whole human race must be hailed all the more for its brilliance because of the many shadows darkening the world at the time he wrote. It was a time, for instance, when radical transformations were taking place in economic and political circles. Civic strife and revolts were flaring up everywhere.

11. As is well known, the prevalent view of the economic world at that time, one that exercised a rather great influence in practice, was an entirely naturalistic one. It denied any connection between the laws of economics and those of morality. According to it, the only motive of economic action was personal profit. The supreme rule regulating relations between economic agents was to be found in uncontrolled free competition. Interest on capital, prices of goods and services, profits and wages were determined, in a more or less mechanical fashion, solely by the laws of the market place. Government, it was held, should be carefully restrained from any intervention in the economic field. But at the same time, trade unions, in accord with circumstances in the different countries, were either entirely forbidden, tolerated or recognized as having legal standing only in private law.

12. In the economic world of the day, as a result, the law of the strongest came to be fully justified on theoretical grounds, and in practice it likewise governed business relations between men. The upshot was a profound dislocation of the entire economic order.

13. While enormous riches accumulated in the hands of a few, workingmen in vast numbers found themselves contending daily with grinding economic hardships. Wages were insufficient or even, in some instances, at a starvation level; working conditions

imposed on wage earners in the lower brackets were oppressive and destructive of physical health, moral behavior and religious faith. Especially inhuman were the working conditions to which children and women were often subjected. The specter of involuntary unemployment was ever present to the worker's mind. Family life stood exposed to a process of gradual disintegration.

14. Hence, there was general dissatisfaction among the working classes over their lot, and a spirit of revolt against this state of affairs existed in their ranks. All these things explain why subversive theories propounding remedies worse than the evil to be cured found widespread favor among workers.

Way of Reconstruction

15. In such difficult times, it fell to Leo XIII to proclaim his social message in *Rerum Novarum*, a doctrine based on the very nature of man and animated by the principles and spirit of the Gospel. It was a message, too, that on its appearance, aside from a not unexpected measure of opposition from some quarters, aroused lively enthusiasm and universal acclaim.

This was, to be sure, not the first time that the Apostolic See descended into the arena of earthly interests to defend the needy. Earlier documents of Leo XIII had to some extent already blazed the trail for this one. But here is found formulated an organic synthesis of principles. Moreover, this synthesis was set in such a wide historical perspective that the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* has rightly come to be regarded as a summary of Catholic doctrine in the socio-economic field.

16. The publication of such a letter was not without hazard. Some alleged that the Church, when confronted with the social question, should confine herself to preaching resignation to the poor and to exhorting the rich to generosity. Leo XIII, however, had no hesitation in proclaiming and defending the legitimate rights of the worker.

At the outset of his exposition of Catholic teaching and directives on social matters, he solemnly declared: *We approach the*

*subject with confidence and in the exercise of the rights which belong to Us. For no practical solution of the question will ever be found without the assistance of religion and the Church.*⁶

17. You, Venerable Brethren, know full well those basic principles, expounded with equal clarity and authority by that remarkable Pontiff, according to which the socio-economic sector of human society should be thoroughly reorganized.

18. First and foremost, they concern work, which ought to be valued and treated not just as a commodity but as something which has on it the stamp of a human person. For the great majority of mankind, work is the only source from which they draw their means of livelihood. Thus, the question of fixing a remuneration for labor cannot be left to the mechanical play of market forces. Instead, payment should be determined by standards of justice and equity. Otherwise, justice would suffer great harm even if the work contract should have been freely entered into by both parties.

19. The right to own private property, including productive goods, is a natural one, which the state cannot suppress. Embedded in its nature is a social function; on this account it is a right to be exercised both for one's personal benefit and for the good of others.

20. The state, whose very reason for existence is the realization of the common good in the temporal order, cannot keep aloof from the economy. It should be present to promote in a suitable manner the production of a sufficient supply of material goods, *the use of which is necessary for the practice of virtue,*⁷ and to watch over the rights of all citizens, especially of the weaker among them, such as workers, women and children. It has also the inflexible duty of contributing actively to the betterment of the workers' standard of living.

6. *Acta Leonis XIII*, XI (1891), 107. 7. St. Thomas, *De Regimine Principum*, I, 15.

Situation of the Workers

21. It is further the duty of the state to see to it that labor relations are regulated in accordance with justice and equity. At the same time, it should insure that work conditions involve no damage, physical or spiritual, to the dignity of the human person. On this point the Leonine encyclical set forth guideposts to a just social order. In differing degrees these have served as a pattern for social legislation in modern nations. In addition, as Pius XI notes in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*,⁸ they have contributed in no small way to the rise and development of a new branch of jurisprudence, namely, labor law.

22. The encyclical declares that the right of workers alone, or of groups of both workers and owners, to organize is a natural one. The same is said about the right to adopt that organizational structure which the workers consider most suitable to promote their legitimate occupational interests, and the right to act freely, without hindrance from anyone, and on their own initiative—within the associations—to achieve these ends.

23. Workers and employers should regulate their mutual relations under the inspiration of the principle of human solidarity and Christian brotherhood. This should be their principle because both competition understood in the sense of economic liberalism and class struggle taken in the Marxist sense are contrary to the nature of man and the Christian conception of life.

24. These, Venerable Brethren, are the fundamental principles on which a sound socio-economic order can be built.

25. It is not surprising, therefore, that some outstanding Catholics, responsive to the appeals of the encyclical, took steps in a number of ways to put these principles into action. Indeed, impelled by the manifest needs of humanity, men of good will everywhere moved to follow the same paths.

26. For these reasons, the encyclical is rightly hailed, even to the present day, as the *Magna Charta*⁹ for the reconstruction of the socio-economic order.

8. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 185.

9. *Ibid.*, 189.

Quadragesimo Anno

27. Pius XI, Our predecessor of happy memory, forty years after the publication of that brilliant doctrinal summary, decided to issue a document in his own name, the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*.¹⁰

28. In it the Supreme Pontiff confirms the right and duty of the Catholic Church to make its irreplaceable contribution to the correct solution of the pressing and grave problems that beset the entire human family. He next reaffirms the fundamental principles and historic directives of the Leonine encyclical. In addition, he takes the opportunity to make more precise certain doctrinal points on which, even among Catholics, doubts had arisen, and to reformulate Christian social thought in response to the changed conditions of the times.

29. The doubts that had arisen concerned particularly private property, the wage system and the attitude of Catholics toward a form of moderate socialism.

30. Concerning private property, Our predecessor reaffirms its natural-law character. He likewise emphasizes its social aspect and corresponding social function.

31. Turning to the wage system, the Sovereign Pontiff first rejects the view that would declare it unjust by its very nature. But, at the same time, he condemns the inhuman and unjust forms under which it is often found. He repeats and enlarges upon the norms to be followed and the conditions to be satisfied if the wage system is not to violate justice or equity.

32. On this point, Our predecessor clearly points out that, under present circumstances, it is advisable that certain elements taken from a contract of partnership be introduced into the work contract. The result would be that *the wage earners become involved in ownership or management, or sharers to some extent in profits*.¹¹

33. Of the greatest doctrinal and practical importance is Pius XI's assertion that *where the social and individual character of*

10. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 177-228.

11. *Ibid.*, 199.

labor is overlooked, it can be neither equitably appraised nor properly recompensed according to strict justice.¹² Hence, he declares, justice requires that, in determining wages, besides the needs of the individual workers and their family responsibilities, one should take account of both the conditions prevailing in industries in which the workers are engaged and, in general, the demands of *the public economic good*.¹³

34. The Pope emphasizes, next, that the opposition between communism and Christianity is a fundamental one. He also makes it clear that Catholics can in no way give approval to the tenets of those who support a form of moderate socialism. The reason is that the Socialists look on the social order and human life as being bounded by time; this leads them to take as their exclusive objective man's welfare on earth. Moreover, because this theory views the social structure as being designed solely for production, it leads to an excessive restriction of human liberty and the abandonment of every sound principle of social authority.

35. Pius XI was not unaware that, in the forty years that had passed since the appearance of the Leonine encyclical, historical conditions had profoundly altered. In fact, by its own deep-seated and as it were intrinsic tendencies, free competition had almost destroyed itself. It had brought about a great accumulation of wealth and a corresponding concentration of economic power in the hands of a few, who *are frequently not the owners, but only the trustees and managers of invested funds, which they administer at their own good pleasure*.¹⁴

36. Therefore, as the Pope discerningly notes, *economic dictatorship has supplanted free competition; unbridled ambition to dominate has taken the place of desire for gain; the whole economic life has, to a ghastly degree, become harsh, relentless and savage*.¹⁵ As a result, public authority was put at the service of group interests, and an international imperialism resting on financial power emerged.

37. To remedy such a state of affairs, the Pope points out the

^{12.} *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 200. ^{13.} *Ibid.*, 201. ^{14.} *Ibid.*, 210f.
^{15.} *Ibid.*, 211.

fundamental importance of putting the economic structure back into the framework of the moral order and of bringing the pursuit of individual or group interests into line with the pursuit of the common good.

This, according to his teaching, certainly involves the reconstruction of human society by setting up intermediate bodies having their own economic and occupational goals—bodies not imposed by the state at its own discretion but created by their respective members. Next, public authority should take up once again its duties relating to the attainment of the common good of all. Finally, turning to the world family of nations, there should be co-operation on a world scale with regard to aid and planning for the economic welfare of all peoples.

38. The fundamental points that characterize the masterly encyclical of Pius XI can be reduced to two.

The first is that one cannot take as the supreme norm of economic activities and institutions the interest of individuals or of groups, unbridled competition, economic domination by the rich, craving for prestige or power on the part of a nation, and the like.

39. Instead, the supreme norms for all such activities and institutions must be social justice and charity.

40. The second is that men should strive to bring about a national and international juridical order, equipped with a complex of permanent public and private institutions operating under the banner of social justice. The establishment of such an order would make it possible for those who engage in economic activities to carry out their tasks in accordance with the demands of justice and the common good.

Radio Message of Pentecost, 1941

41. In defining and developing Christian social doctrine a great contribution has been made by Pope Pius XII, Our predecessor of venerable memory. On the feast of Pentecost, June 1, 1941, he broadcast a radio message around the globe *in order to call to the attention of the Catholic world an occasion worthy of*

being noted in letters of gold on the calendar of the Church: the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of the epoch-making social encyclical of Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*.¹⁶

He spoke on that occasion of his desire to render to almighty God, from the bottom of Our heart, Our humble thanks for the gift which . . . He bestowed on the Church in that encyclical of His Vicar on earth and to praise Him for the life-giving breath of the spirit which through it, in ever growing measure from that time on, has blown on all mankind.¹⁷

42. In the radio message the great Pontiff claims for the Church the indisputable competence to decide whether the bases of a given social system are in accord with the unchangeable order which God Our Creator and Redeemer has shown us through the natural law and revelation.¹⁸

He confirms the perennial vitality and enduring usefulness of the teaching of *Rerum Novarum*. He also takes the occasion to give some further directives about moral principles relating to three fundamental values of social and economic life. . . . These three fundamental values, which are closely connected, complementary and mutually dependent, are: the use of material goods, labor and the family.¹⁹

43. Concerning the use of material goods, Our predecessor declares that the right of every man to use them for his subsistence is prior to all other rights of an economic nature, even to the right of private property. Undoubtedly, adds Our predecessor, the right of private property is also a natural right. Nevertheless, in the objective order established by God, this right should be so arranged that it does not hinder the satisfaction of the unquestionable need that goods, which God created for all men, should flow equitably to all, according to the principles of justice and charity.²⁰

44. Taking up a point that occurs in the Leonine encyclical, Pius XII declares that work is at one and the same time a duty and a right of individual men. Consequently, it devolves pri-

16. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXIII (1941), 196. 17. *Ibid.*, 197. 18. *Ibid.*, 196.
19. *Ibid.*, 198f. 20. *Ibid.*, 199.

marily on them to regulate their mutual labor relations. Only in the event that the interested parties do not or cannot fulfill this function, does *it fall back on the state to intervene in the field of labor and in the division and distribution of work according to the form and measure that the common good properly understood demands.*²¹

45. Taking up next the question of the family, the Supreme Pontiff affirms that private ownership of material goods contributes notably to the safety and welfare of family life, that is to say, *as an apt means to secure for the father of a family the true liberty he needs in order to fulfill the duties assigned him by the Creator regarding the physical, spiritual and religious welfare of the family.*²²

Under the same head is included the family's right to emigrate. On this point Our predecessor advises that governments, both those that permit emigration and those that accept newcomers, should *try to eliminate as far as possible all obstacles to the birth and growth of real confidence among themselves.*²³ If they do, mutual advantages will result, and together they will contribute to the welfare of mankind and the advance of culture.

Further Changes

46. The situation, which had already changed greatly during the period mentioned by Pius XII, has undergone in the past two decades profound transformations. These have affected not only the internal affairs of each state but also their international relations.

47. A glance at the field of science, technology and economics reveals the following recent developments: the discovery of nuclear energy, its use in the first place for military purposes and now its increasing employment for peaceful ends; the unlimited possibilities opened up by chemistry in the production of synthetic goods; the wider use of machinery and automation in the areas of manufacturing and services; the modernization

21. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXIII (1941), 201. 22. *Ibid.*, 202. 23. *Ibid.*, 203.

of agriculture; the virtual annihilation of the distances separating peoples by the new communications media, especially radio and television; the increased speed in all modes of transportation; and the initial conquests of interplanetary space.

48. If we turn our attention to the social field, we see the following developments: the formation of systems of social insurance and, in some more economically advanced states, the introduction of comprehensive social security systems; in labor unions the formation of, and increasing stress on, an attitude of responsibility toward major socio-economic problems; a progressive improvement of basic education; an ever wider distribution of welfare benefits; increased social mobility with a consequent lessening of class distinctions; a greater interest in world events on the part of those with an average education.

Furthermore, the increased efficiency of economic systems in a growing number of states underscores the lack of socio-economic balance between agriculture on the one hand and manufacturing and services on the other; between economically developed and less-developed areas within individual states; and, on a world-wide plane, the even more pronounced socio-economic inequalities among nations of different economic advantage.

49. Similarly, when one examines the political field, a host of innovations come to light: in many states, a participation in public life by an increasing number of citizens from different social strata; more frequent and extensive intervention by public authorities in the economic and social fields. To these developments must be added, on the international level, the passing of colonial regimes and the attainment of political independence by the peoples of Asia and Africa; the increase of close relations between peoples and a deepening of their interdependence; the emergence and development of a supranational network of organizations having a world-wide scope and pursuing economic, social, cultural or common political ends.

Reasons for *Mater et Magistra*

50. Therefore, We feel it Our duty to keep ablaze the torch first lit by Our great predecessors. We exhort all, therefore, to draw from it inspiration and direction in the search for a solution to the social question adapted to our times.

For this reason, on the occasion of the solemn commemoration of the Leonine encyclical, We are happy to have the opportunity to confirm and make more specific points of doctrine already treated by Our predecessors and, at the same time, to make clear the mind of the Church with respect to new and urgent problems of the day.

Part II: Explanation and Development of the Teaching in *Rerum Novarum*

Private Initiative and State Intervention in the Economy

51. First of all, it should be affirmed that the economy is the creation of the personal initiative of private citizens. It results from their pursuit of common interests either as individuals or in various associations.

52. But in this area, for reasons pointed out by Our predecessors, public authorities also must play an active role in promoting increased productivity with a view to social progress and the welfare of all citizens.

53. This activity of public authority, which directs, stimulates, co-ordinates, supplements and completes, stems from that *principle of subsidiarity*²⁴ formulated by Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno*: *This supremely important principle of social philosophy, one which cannot be set aside or altered, remains firm and unshaken: Just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise and endeavor can accomplish, so it is likewise unjust and a*

²⁴. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 203.

*gravely harmful disturbance of right order to turn over to a greater society of higher rank functions and services which can be performed by lesser bodies on a lower plane. For a social undertaking of any sort, by its very nature, ought to aid the members of the body social, but never to destroy and absorb them.*²⁵

54. It is obvious that recent advances in scientific knowledge and productive technology provide public authorities with far greater capacities than in the past for reducing inequalities among the various sectors of production, among the various areas within the same nation and among the various peoples of the world.

This development also puts it within their competence to control fluctuations in the economy and to bring effective remedies to bear on the problem of mass unemployment. Consequently, those in authority responsible for the common good are more and more required to undertake a variety of economic activities, at once more vast and more highly organized. It is also essential for this purpose that they devise suitable structures, programs, means and methods.

55. But 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 action. Rather it should work to expand that freedom by the effective protection of each and every essential personal right. Among these must be included the right and duty of the individual to provide under normal circumstances for the support of himself and his family. This right in turn implies that every economic system ought to permit and encourage the free development of productive enterprises.

56. For the rest, the evolution of history itself teaches that there can be no well-ordered and prosperous society unless both private citizens and public authorities unite in contributing to the economy. And each, insofar as is possible under changing circumstances and the vicissitudes of human existence, must

25. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 203.

participate in this harmonious effort to the degree demanded by the common good.

57. Experience, in fact, shows that where the personal initiative of individuals is lacking, political tyranny appears. Moreover, stagnation occurs in a number of areas of the economy and shortages are felt in a wide variety of consumer goods and services—goods and services of a kind designed not only to meet material wants, but more particularly to satisfy needs of the spirit, and which thus call into play in a special manner the creative talents of individuals.

58. Where the state fails to act in economic affairs when it should, or acts defectively, incurable civil disorders are seen to follow. Likewise, unscrupulous men of power—whose breed, alas, grows in every age and place like cockle among the wheat—take advantage of the weak for their own wicked gain.

Socialization

Origin and Scope of This Trend

59. One of the characteristic features of our epoch is socialization.* By this term is meant the growing interdependence of men in society giving rise to various patterns of group life and activity and in many instances to social institutions established on a juridical basis. This development takes its rise from a host of contemporary historical factors, among which must be numbered technical and scientific progress, greater productive efficiency and a higher standard of living among citizens.

60. Socialization is, at one and the same time, an effect and a cause of the growing intervention of the state in areas which,

* The word "socialization" is not a translation of the Latin word *socializatio*. It should be noted that the expression *socializatio* does not appear in the Latin text of the encyclical. The English word "socialization" is used in paragraph 59 to translate the Latin phrase *rationum incrementa socialium*. In the light of Pope John's definition of the phenomenon he has in mind, this translation seems fully justified. It is worth noting, too, that the English, French, Italian and Spanish versions released by the Vatican Press Office agree in rendering this phrase respectively as socialization, *socialisation*, *socializzazione* and *socialización* both at this point and in subsequent paragraphs. For a fuller discussion, see "The Pope and Socialization," in AMERICA, National Catholic Weekly Review, Vol. 105 (Aug. 26, 1961), page 647.

since they touch the deepest concerns of the human person, are not without considerable importance nor devoid of danger. Among these are care of health, instruction and education of the young, control of professional careers, methods of care and rehabilitation of those physically or mentally handicapped in any way. Socialization, however, is also the fruit and expression of a natural tendency almost irrepressible in human beings—the tendency to unite for the purpose of obtaining objectives which each ambitions but which are beyond the capacity of individuals.

This sort of tendency has given rise, especially in these latter decades, to a wide range of groups, associations and institutions having economic, cultural, social, athletic, recreational, professional and political ends. They operate within a single nation and on a world-wide basis.

Evaluation

61. It is clear that many benefits and advantages flow from socialization thus understood. It makes possible, in fact, the satisfaction of many personal rights, especially those of a socio-economic nature. The right to the indispensable means of human subsistence, to health services, to instruction at a higher level, to more thorough professional formation, to housing, to employment, to suitable leisure and to decent recreation are typical examples. In addition, through increasing systematization of modern media of mass communications—press, motion pictures, radio, television—it becomes possible for individuals to participate, as it were, in human events even on a world-wide scale.

62. At the same time, however, socialization multiplies institutional structures and extends more and more to minute details the juridical control of human relations in every walk of life. As a consequence, it restricts the range of an individual's freedom of action. It uses means, follows methods and creates an atmosphere which make it difficult for one to reach judgments free from external pressures, to work on his own initiative, to

exercise responsibility and to assert and enrich his personality.

Ought it to be concluded, then, that socialization, growing in extent and depth, necessarily reduces men to automatons? This is a question which must be answered in the negative.

63. For socialization is not to be considered as a product of natural forces working in a deterministic way. It is, on the contrary, as We have observed, a creation of men who are free agents intended by nature to work in a responsible manner. This is so even though they are obliged to recognize and, as it were, obey the laws of economic development and social progress. Nor can they entirely escape from all the pressures of their environment.

64. Hence, We consider that socialization can and ought to be brought about in such a way as to maximize its advantages and eliminate or minimize its negative consequences.

65. For this desirable purpose, then, it is necessary that public officials should adopt a sound view of the common good. Such a view should embrace all those social conditions which permit men to pursue more readily the integral development of their personalities.

Moreover, We consider it necessary that the intermediate groups and numerous social enterprises through which socialization tends to express itself should enjoy an effective autonomy. They should, in addition, pursue their own special interests in true harmony without damage to the common good. It is no less necessary that such groups manifest the nature and aspect of a true community. They will do this only if their individual members are always treated as persons and encouraged to take an active part in the community's affairs.

66. As the interlocking organizations of modern society develop, right order will be realized more and more through a renewed balance between a demand for autonomous and active collaboration on the part of all—individuals and groups—and timely co-ordination and encouragement of private enterprise by government.

67. So long as socialization is kept within these limits of the

moral order, it will not of its nature seriously restrict individuals or overburden them. Instead, it offers hope of promoting in them the expression and development of their personal characteristics. It results, too, in an organic reconstruction of society, which Our predecessor Pius XI, in *Quadragesimo Anno*,²⁶ put forward and defended as the indispensable prerequisite for satisfying abundantly the demands of social justice.

Remuneration of Work

Standards of Justice and Equity

68. Our heart is filled with a deep sadness in contemplating the immeasurably sorrowful spectacle of vast numbers of workers in many lands and entire continents who are paid wages which condemn them and their families to subhuman conditions of life. This is doubtless due, among other reasons, to the fact that in these areas the modern process of industrialization is just beginning or is still insufficiently advanced.

69. In some of these countries, however, a harsh and offensive contrast exists between the extreme poverty of the great majority and the wealth and unbridled luxury of the privileged few. In still other countries, the present generation is compelled to undergo inhuman privations in order to increase the output of the national economy at a rate which exceeds the limits permitted by justice and humanity. In other countries, finally, a notable share of the national income is devoted to building up excessive national prestige and vast sums are spent on armaments.

70. In addition, it not infrequently happens that in economically advanced countries great, and sometimes very great, reward is paid for the performance of some small task, or one of doubtful value. At the same time, however, the diligent and profitable toil of whole classes of decent, hard-working men receives a recompense that is too small, or even totally insufficient. Moreover, it may in no way correspond to their contribution to the

²⁶. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 222f.

good of the community, to the profit of the enterprises they are employed in or to the national economy.

71. We judge it, therefore, to be Our duty to reaffirm that just as the remuneration of work cannot be left entirely to the laws of the market, so it cannot be fixed by an arbitrary decision. It must rather be determined according to justice and equity. This requires that workers should be paid a wage which allows them to live a truly human life and to face up with dignity to their family responsibilities. But it requires, too, that in the assessment of a fair wage for labor regard be had for the following: the contribution of individual workers to production; the economic health of the enterprise in which they are engaged; the demands of the national interest, especially with regard to any impact on employment of the total labor force; and finally the requirements of the universal common good, that is, of international communities of different nature and scope.

72. It is clear that these standards of judgment are valid always and everywhere. However, the degree to which they are applicable to concrete cases cannot be determined without reference to the available wealth. This wealth, to be sure, can—and in fact does—vary in quantity and quality, from country to country and even, under changing circumstances, within the same country.

Balancing Economic Development and Social Progress

73. Since the economies of various nations are evolving rapidly—especially during this postwar period—We consider it opportune to call attention to a fundamental principle of social justice, namely, that social progress should accompany and be adjusted to economic development in such a way that all classes of citizens can participate in the increased productivity. Attentive care must be taken and every effort made that socio-economic inequalities do not increase but rather are lessened as much as possible.

74. *Likewise the national economy*, observes Our predecessor Pius XII with evident justification, *as it is the product of the men*

who work together in the community of the state, has no other end than to secure without interruption the material conditions in which the individual life of the citizen may fully develop. Where this is attained in a permanent way, a people will be, in a true sense, economically rich because the general well-being, and consequently the personal right of all to the use of worldly goods, are thus realized in conformity with the purpose laid down by the Creator.²⁷

From this it follows that the economic prosperity of a people should be measured, not only in terms of its aggregate wealth, but also and much more in terms of the real distribution of wealth according to the norms of justice. That is, national wealth should be measured according to the degree in which it guarantees the personal development of all the members of society. This, indeed, is the true goal of a national economy.

75. We must here call attention to the fact that in many economic systems today medium and large enterprises frequently achieve notable expansions of production by means of self-financing. In such cases We hold that the workers, particularly when they are paid no more than the minimum salary, should be allowed to acquire shares in the firms in which they are employed.

76. In this connection, We must recall the principle proposed by Our predecessor Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno*. *It is totally false to ascribe to capital alone or to labor alone that which is obtained by the joint effort of the one and the other. And it is flagrantly unjust that either should deny the efficacy of the other and seize all the profits.*²⁸

77. Experience suggests that this demand of justice can be met in many ways. One of these, and among the most desirable, is to see to it that the workers, in the manner that seems most suitable, are able to participate in the ownership of the enterprise itself. For today more than in the times of Our predecessor *every effort . . . must be made that at least in the future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate*

27. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXIII (1941), 200.

28. *Ibid.*, XXIII (1931), 195.

*in the hands of the wealthy, and that a sufficiently ample share be supplied to the workingmen.*²⁹

78. We should remember, moreover, that adjustments between wages and profits ought to be made in conformity with the demands of the common good, both of the nation and of the entire human family.

79. When one considers it on the national level, the common good demands the following: to provide employment to the greatest number of workers; to prevent the emergence of privileged classes even among the workers; to maintain an equal balance between wages and prices; to make goods and services of a higher quality available to the greatest possible number; to eliminate or check inequalities existing between the sectors of agriculture, manufacturing and services; to effect a balance between economic expansion and the development of essential public services; to adjust so far as possible the means of production to the progress of science and technology; finally, to insure that improvements in the standard of living should not only serve the interests of the present but also look to the advantage of future generations.

80. There are also demands of the common good in the international order: to avoid all forms of unfair competition between the economies of different countries; to encourage harmony, understanding and fruitful collaboration among these national economies; to co-operate effectively in the economic development of underdeveloped nations.

81. It is obvious that the demands of the common good, both on the national and international levels, are also to be kept in mind when there is question of determining the share of revenue to be assigned as profit to management or as interest and dividends to investors.

²⁹. *Ibid.*, 198.

What Justice Demands in the Productive Structure

Structures Compatible With Human Dignity

82. Justice is to be observed not only in the distribution of wealth acquired by production, but also with respect to the conditions under which production is achieved. For there is an innate demand in human nature that when men engage in production they should have the opportunity of exercising responsibility and of perfecting their personalities.

83. It follows that if the organization and operation of an economic system are such as to compromise the human dignity of those who engage in it, or to blunt their sense of responsibility, or to impede the exercise of personal initiative, such an economic system is unjust. And this is so even if, by hypothesis, the wealth produced through such a system reaches a high level and this wealth is distributed according to standards of justice and equity.

84. It is not possible to describe in detail the sort of economic organization which is more conformed to the dignity of man and more suited to developing his sense of responsibility. Nevertheless, Our predecessor Pius XII opportunely sketches the following directive: *Small and average-sized undertakings in agriculture, in the arts and crafts, in commerce and industry, should be safeguarded and fostered by allowing them to share in the advantages of larger firms through entry into co-operative unions; in the large concerns, meanwhile, there should be the possibility of modifying the work contract by one of partnership.*³⁰

Artisan and Co-operative Enterprises

85. Artisan enterprises and family-type farms, as well as the co-operatives that serve to supplement and improve them, ought to be preserved and fostered in accord with the common good and within the limits of technical possibilities.

86. We shall return shortly to the topic of farm enterprises.

³⁰. Radio Broadcast, Sept. 1, 1944. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXVI (1944), 254.

Here We think it appropriate to touch briefly on the subject of artisan enterprises and co-operatives.

87. Above all, it is necessary to emphasize that for both types of undertaking to survive and prosper, they must constantly be adapted in structure, function and output to new situations. Such situations arise out of the advance of science and technology, as well as out of the steadily changing demands and preferences of the consumer. This adaptation by right ought to be effected first of all by the craftsmen themselves and the members of the co-operatives.

88. To accomplish this the two groups must have a good training in both technology and general culture, and they must be organized professionally. It is no less imperative that the government, in addition to fitting policies on taxes, credit and social security, take appropriate measures regarding the formation of such organizations.

89. Moreover, the measures taken by public agencies on behalf of craftsmen and members of co-operatives are also justified by the fact that these two categories of citizens uphold true human values and contribute to the advance of civilization.

90. For these reasons, We paternally invite Our beloved sons, artisans and members of co-operatives throughout the world, to realize the dignity and social significance of their occupation. This implies that it is within their power to arouse a greater sense of responsibility and a spirit of co-operation in the community, and to keep alive men's desire to work with dedication and originality.

Participation of Workers in Average-Sized and Large Enterprises

91. Following the line of thought of Our predecessors, We defend the desire of employees to participate actively in the management of enterprises in which they are employed. It is not feasible to define a priori the manner and extent of participation of this sort. Such matters must be decided with an eye to specific

conditions prevailing in each enterprise. These conditions vary from enterprise to enterprise, and, indeed, within the same enterprise frequently undergo sudden and profound changes.

We have no doubt, however, that workers should be allowed to play an active part in the affairs of an enterprise—private or public—in which they are employed. At any rate, every effort should be made that industrial enterprises assume the characteristics of a true human community whose spirit influences the dealings, duties and role of each of its members.

92. This indeed demands that relations between employers and directors on the one hand, and employees on the other, be marked by respect, appreciation, understanding, loyal and active co-operation, and devotion to their common undertaking. It also requires that the work be viewed and carried out by all the members of the enterprise, not merely as a source of income, but also as the fulfillment of a duty and the performance of a service to others. As a result, the workers should have a timely say in, and be able to make a welcome contribution to the efficient development of the enterprise.

Our predecessor, Pius XII, remarked that *the economic and social function which every man aspires to fulfill demands that the activity of each be not completely subjected to the will of others.*³¹ A humane view of the enterprise ought undoubtedly to safeguard the authority and necessary efficiency associated with unity of direction. It does not follow that those who are daily involved in an enterprise must be reduced to the level of mere silent performers who have no chance to bring their experience into play. They must not be kept entirely passive with regard to the making of decisions that regulate their activity.

93. Finally, attention must be called to the fact that the desire for a greater exercise of serious responsibility on the part of the workers in various productive units corresponds to lawful demands inherent in human nature. It is also in conformity with progressive historical developments in the economic, social and political fields.

31. Address given Oct. 8, 1956. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XLVIII (1956), 799-800.

94. Unfortunately, today there are numerous economic and social inequalities which are opposed to justice and humanity. Deep-rooted errors have made their way into the world of economic affairs and have had a grievous impact on its activity, purposes, structure and functioning. Nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that today, thanks to the stimulus of scientific and technical discoveries, productive systems are improved and modernized at a far more rapid pace than in the past. This in turn places a demand on workers for greater skill and professional competence. Consequently, workers must be given more means and more time to acquire suitable and up-to-date instruction and to pursue cultural studies and receive moral and religious training.

95. It also becomes possible today to allot a longer period of years to the basic education and the professional training of the younger generation.

96. Thus is created a situation that opens the way for the workers to assume greater responsibility within their own enterprises. Furthermore, as to political life, it is of no little importance that citizens of every class should show a growing awareness of their duty to safeguard the common good.

Workers' Participation at All Levels

97. Modern times have seen a widespread increase in worker associations organized with juridical status in many countries and across national lines. They no longer unite workers for the sake of conflict, but rather for joint effort—principally in the field of collective bargaining. But We cannot fail to emphasize how imperative or at least highly opportune it is that the workers should be able freely to make their voices heard, and listened to, beyond the confines of their individual productive units and at every level of society.

98. The reason is that individual productive units, regardless of how extensive, efficient or significant they may be, form a

vital part of the national economic and social complex and are in turn influenced greatly by it.

99. But it is not the decisions made within each individual productive unit which have the greatest bearing on this complex. Instead it is those made by public authorities, or by institutions that function on a world-wide or national scale in regard to some economic sector or category of production. Hence it is appropriate and necessary that, besides the holders of capital or their representatives, the workers also, or those who represent their rights, demands and aspirations, should have some place in such authorities or institutions.

100. Our affectionate thought, therefore, and Our paternal encouragement go out with all propriety to professional groups and workers' associations founded on Christian principles and existing and functioning on more than one continent. In the midst of many and frequently grave difficulties, these, Our sons, have been striving and continue to strive for the effective promotion of the interests of the working classes and for their material and moral improvement. This they do within the area of a single political unit as well as on an international scale.

101. Moreover, We wish to single out for praise the fact that their work is not directed exclusively to immediate and visible results, but to the world-wide field of human toil, where it spreads correctly oriented principles and furnishes a stimulus to Christian reform.

102. We believe further that one must praise in the same way the outstanding endeavors performed in a true Christian spirit by Our beloved sons in other professional groups and workers' associations which take their inspiration from natural-law principles and show respect for freedom of conscience.

103. We are also happy to express our heartfelt appreciation to the International Labor Organization (ILO), which for decades has been making its effective and precious contribution to the establishment in the world of a socio-economic order marked by justice and humanity and one in which the lawful demands of the workers are recognized and defended.

Private Property

Changed Conditions

104. During these last decades, as is known, in the larger economic units there has come to be an increasingly pronounced separation of the ownership of productive goods from managerial responsibility. We know that this creates difficult problems of supervision for public authorities. For they have the duty to make certain that the aims pursued by the directors of leading companies, especially those having the greatest impact on the national economy, are not contrary to the demands of the common good. It brings about problems which, experience shows, arise regardless of whether the capital that makes possible these vast undertakings belongs to private citizens or to public agencies.

105. It is also true that there are many citizens today—and their number is on the increase—who, through belonging to insurance groups or through social security, have reason to face the future with serenity. Formerly such serenity depended on the ownership of properties, however modest.

106. Finally, it is noted that today men strive to acquire professional skills rather than to become owners of property. They have greater confidence in income derived from work or rights founded on work than in income derived from capital or rights founded on capital.

107. Moreover, this is in conformity with the superior nature of work since it is the immediate product of a human person. Capital, on the contrary, must be regarded as by its nature merely an instrument. Such a view of work may no doubt be considered a step forward in the process of human civilization.

108. The aspects of the economy just alluded to have certainly contributed to spreading a doubt whether, in the present state of affairs, a principle of the socio-economic order consistently taught and defended by Our predecessors has diminished in or lost its importance. The principle in question is that of the natural right of private ownership, including ownership of productive goods.

Confirmation of the Right of Ownership

109. There is no reason for such a doubt to persist. The right of private ownership of goods, including productive goods, has a permanent validity. This is so because it is a part of the natural law, which teaches us that individuals are prior to society and that society has as its purpose the service of man.

Moreover, it would be useless to insist on free, private initiative in the economic field, if the same initiative does not include the power to dispose freely of the means indispensable to its exercise. Further, history and experience testify that where governments fail to recognize private ownership of goods, productive goods included, the fundamental manifestations of freedom are suppressed or stifled. Hence one may justifiably conclude that the exercise of freedom finds both a guarantee and an incentive in the right of ownership.

110. This helps to explain the following phenomenon: until recently some movements which have for their purpose the reconciliation of justice and liberty in society were clearly opposed to private ownership of productive goods; but now, being more fully enlightened concerning actual social conditions, they have modified their stand and are taking an essentially positive attitude toward that right.

111. Accordingly, We make Our own the insistence of Our predecessor Pius XII: *In defending the principle of private property the Church is striving after an important ethico-social goal. She does not intend solely and merely to uphold the present state of affairs as if it were an expression of the Divine Will or to protect on principle the rich and plutocrats against the poor and indigent. . . . The Church rather aims at seeing to it that the institution of private property is such as it should be according to the plan of Divine Wisdom and the dispositions of nature.*³² And thus this natural right ought to be both the guarantee of the essential freedom of the individual and an indispensable element in the structuring of a sound social order.

³². Radio Broadcast, Sept. 1, 1944. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXVI (1944), 253.

112. Further, as We have observed, the economy in many states today is expanding and increasing in productive efficiency. With this increase, justice and fairness demand that wages should likewise be increased within the limits allowed by the common good. This in turn allows workers more easily to save and thus acquire property of their own. Indeed, it is incomprehensible how anyone can call in question the innate character of this right. It derives its main force and continuing support from the fruitfulness of work. It serves as an effective safeguard of human dignity, and helps one to shoulder freely his responsibility in every field of endeavor. Finally, it makes for solidarity and security in family life and the peaceful and prosperous development of the commonwealth.

Effective Distribution

113. It is not enough to assert the natural character of the right of private property, including productive property; strenuous efforts also must be made to see that the ability to exercise this right is extended to all social classes.

114. As our predecessor Pius XII states, on the one hand the dignity of the human person *ordinarily demands as a natural basis for living, the right to the use of the goods of the earth, to which corresponds the fundamental obligation of granting private property to all as far as possible.*³³ On the other hand, the inherent dignity of work demands among other things: *the conservation and perfection of a social order which makes it possible for all citizens of every class to enjoy a secure, even if modest measure of ownership.*³⁴

115. Today more than ever the wider distribution of private ownership ought to be forcefully championed. As We have noted, the economies of an increasing number of nations are in the process of rapid development. Making wise use of proven techniques, these communities will not find it difficult to adjust their socio-economic order in such a way as to facilitate the widest

33. Christmas Message, Dec. 24, 1942. *Ibid.*, XXXV (1943), 17.

34. *Ibid.*, 20.

possible spread of private ownership in goods of this sort: durable consumer goods, housing, farms, one's own equipment in artisan enterprises and family-type farms, shares in middle-sized and large corporations. Such a policy has already been tried with success in some nations that have more advanced economic and social systems.

Public Ownership

116. The doctrine that has been set forth above obviously does not prohibit the state and other public agencies from lawfully possessing productive goods, particularly when they *carry with them an opportunity for domination that is so great that it cannot be left in the hands of private individuals without injury to the community at large.*³⁵

117. In modern times there is an evident tendency toward a progressive transfer of property to the state or other agencies of public law. The explanation of this tendency is to be found in the ever-widening activity which the common good requires that public authorities undertake. But even in this eventuality the principle of subsidiarity stated above is to be faithfully observed. Accordingly, the state and other agencies of public law should not extend their ownership except where evident and real needs of the common good dictate it. And they should be on guard against extending it to the point where private property is excessively reduced or, even worse, abolished.

118. Nor is one to forget that the economic activities of the state and other agencies of public law are to be entrusted to those who embody exceptional ability, tested probity and a keen sense of responsibility toward their country. Further, their behavior ought to be subject to sound and constant inspection in order to prevent the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few within the state's own organization. This would evidently conflict with the highest purpose of the state.

35. *Quadragesimo Anno. Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 214.

Social Function

119. Another doctrinal point constantly set forth by Our predecessors is that a social function is intrinsic to the right of private property. As a matter of fact, in the plan of Creation the earth's goods are destined above all for the worthy support of all human beings. As Our predecessor Leo XIII clearly warned in *Rerum Novarum*: *Whoever has received from the Divine Bounty a large share of blessings—whether they be external or corporal, or gifts of the spirit—has received them to perfect his own nature and, at the same time, to employ them as the minister of God's providence for the benefit of others. "He that hath a talent" [says St. Gregory the Great] "let him see that he hideth it not; he that hath abundance, let him arouse himself to mercy and generosity; he that hath art and skill, let him do his best to share the use and utility thereof with his neighbor."*³⁶

120. Although the state and public agencies of law have extended their sphere of activity, and are continuing to do so, this is no reason to deduce that the social function of private property has become obsolete, as some seem inclined to believe. For the social function of property derives its validity from the very nature of the right of ownership.

Further, since there is always a wide range of tragic situations and needs which demand tactful handling and yet at the same time are urgent, and which public assistance agencies cannot reach or cannot assist, there will always remain a vast sphere for the individual exercise of sympathy and Christian charity. Finally, it has also been noted that the efforts of individuals or of civic groups are often more effective in promoting spiritual values than those of state agencies.

121. We should like to note at this point that in the Gospel the right of private ownership is clearly regarded as lawful. But at the same time, Christ Jesus frequently extends to the rich an insistent invitation to convert their material goods into spiritual wealth by conferring them on the needy: *Do not lay up for your-*

36. *Acta Leonis XIII*, XI (1891), 114.

*selves treasures on earth, where rust and moth consume, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither rust nor moth consumes, nor thieves break in and steal.*³⁷

And the Divine Master will consider as given or refused to Himself the charity given or refused to the needy. *As long as you did it for one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it for Me.*³⁸

Part III: New Aspects of the Social Question

122. The historical evolution of human affairs brings into ever greater relief the fact that the demands of justice and equity have a bearing not only on relations between dependent workmen and contractors or employers, but also on relations between different economic sectors, between areas economically more advanced and those that are underdeveloped within the same nation, and, from a world point of view, on relations among countries at different stages of socio-economic development.

A Just Balance Among Economic Sectors

Agriculture: A Depressed Sector

123. In the first place, to say a few words of advice about agriculture, We remark that the rural-farm population, taken in absolute numbers, does not appear to have decreased. But it is undeniable that a considerable movement of farm peoples from the countryside to more thickly settled districts or urban centers is taking place. This movement is taking place in almost all countries and sometimes assumes massive proportions. Where this happens, it gives rise to complex human problems that are quite difficult to solve.

124. We all know that as an economy develops and flourishes, the labor force engaged in agriculture decreases. At the same

37. Matt. 6:19-20.

38. Matt. 25:40.

time, the percentage of the labor force employed in industry and the services rises. Nevertheless, We think that the shift from farming to other productive sectors is often due to a variety of factors over and above those directly linked to economic development.

Chief among these factors may be listed a desire to escape from an environment considered as confining and devoid of prospects; the longing for novelty and adventure that has taken such a hold on the present generation; greed for quickly amassed riches; a yearning and thirst for a freer way of life and enjoyment of the comforts that more heavily settled areas and urban centers commonly afford. But it is undoubtedly true also that one of the motives behind this shift is the fact that the farm area, almost everywhere, is a depressed one—whether one looks at the index of productivity of the labor force or the standard of living of farm populations.

125. Thus, a fundamental question that arises in practically all states today, and that merits special consideration, is the following: how to proceed in order to reduce the disproportion in productive efficiency between the agricultural sector on one side and the industrial and service sectors on the other; what to do in order that the standard of living of the rural-farm population may approximate as closely as possible that of city dwellers, who draw their income from industry and the services; how, finally, to strive that tillers of the soil may not have an inferiority complex, but rather may be persuaded that also in a rural environment they can assert and develop their personality through toil and at the same time look forward to the future with confidence.

126. It seems to Us opportune, therefore, to indicate certain directives that can contribute to a solution of the problem, directives which remain valid whatever may be the situation in which one labors. This presupposes, obviously, that the directives will be applied in the manner and to the degree that circumstances permit, suggest or flatly demand.

Providing the Essential Public Services Equitably

127. It is above all indispensable that great care be taken, especially by public authorities, to insure that the essential public services are adequately developed in rural areas: good roads, transportation, means of communication, drinking water, housing, health facilities, elementary education, technical and professional training, provision for the practice of religion and for recreation, and finally, a good supply of those products needed to insure that farm homes are furnished and equipped to be run on modern lines.

Whenever such services, which are essential for a decent standard of living on the farm, are lacking to rural dwellers, socio-economic progress becomes almost impossible, or takes place too slowly. The consequence is that the drift of population away from the farms becomes almost impossible to check and difficult to control.

Balanced Development of the Economic System

128. In addition, the economic systems of nations ought to be developed gradually and a balance maintained among all the sectors of production. That is to say, agriculture should receive special help, in order to permit it to use the newly-devised methods of production, types of farm management and cultivation that the economic system as a whole allows or requires. As far as possible, all these innovations should be introduced in agriculture as much as in the industrial and service sectors.

129. In this way, the agricultural economy comes to absorb a larger amount of industrial goods and to demand a higher quality of services. In turn, it offers to the other two sectors and to the whole community products which best meet, in quality and quantity, the needs of the consumer. In this way, it contributes to the stability of the purchasing power of money—a very helpful factor in the orderly development of the entire economic system.

130. If such steps are taken, the following advantages, among others, will ensue: it will be easier to determine the source and the direction of the movement of workers who have been released from the farm labor force by the progressive modernization of agriculture. It will be less difficult to give them the professional training they need to fit profitably into other sectors of production. Finally, they can be given the economic aid, orientation and spiritual assistance required to integrate them smoothly into a new social environment.

Appropriate Public Policy

131. To insure a pattern of economic development that preserves a harmonious balance among all the sectors of production, government authorities must formulate a prudent agricultural policy. Such a public policy should cover questions of taxation, credit, social insurance, price protection, the fostering of processing industries and the adjustment of farm managerial structures.

Taxation

132. The fundamental principle in a system of taxation based on justice and equity is that the burdens imposed should be proportionate to the capacity of people to contribute.

133. In the assessment of taxes in rural areas, the common good requires that the government bear in mind that agricultural income flows in more slowly and is exposed to greater risks in the process of production, and that consequently there is greater difficulty in obtaining the capital necessary to increase income.

Capital at Suitable Interest

134. For these reasons, those who possess capital have little inclination to invest in agriculture; they are more inclined to invest in other sectors.

For the very same reasons agricultural investments cannot yield a high rate of interest. Nor can agriculture normally earn large enough profits to furnish the capital it needs for growth and the orderly conduct of its affairs.

It is therefore necessary, for the sake of the common welfare, that a special credit policy be evolved for farmers and that credit institutions be created which will provide capital for agriculture at a suitable rate of interest.

Social Insurance and Social Security

135. In agriculture the creation of two forms of insurance seems essential: one covering agriculture produce, the other covering the farm labor force and their families.

Because, as is considered certain, the return per capita is generally less in agriculture than in the industry and service sectors, it is scarcely in keeping with the standards of social justice and equity to set up systems of social insurance or of social security in which the allowances granted to farmers are substantially lower than those allotted to persons engaged in other sectors of the economy. For social policy should aim at guaranteeing that, whatever the economic sector they work in, and whatever the source of their income, the insurance allowances offered to citizens should not vary materially.

136. Systems of social insurance and social security can contribute effectively to the redistribution of national income according to standards of justice and equity. These systems can therefore be looked on as instruments for restoring balance between standards of living among different categories of the population.

Price Protection

137. In view of the special nature of agricultural products, farm prices should be protected with the help of some of the many devices which economic experts have discovered. It is very desirable that such regulation be primarily the work of the inter-

ested parties; supervision by public authority, however, cannot be dispensed with.

138. On this subject it must not be forgotten that the price of agricultural commodities usually represents compensation for the farmer's work rather than a return on capital.

139. Our predecessor of happy memory Pius XI, speaking in *Quadragesimo Anno* of the demands of the common good of society, rightly observes that *a right proportion between different wages is also of moment*. But he immediately adds: *Intimately connected with this is a reasonable relationship between the prices obtained for the products of the various economic groups: agrarian, industrial and others.*³⁹

140. It is true that farm products are destined above all to satisfy the primary needs of man; hence, their price should be within the reach of all consumers. Still, this fact cannot be used as an argument for compelling a whole class of citizens to live in a permanent state of socio-economic inferiority by depriving them of the purchasing power that a decent standard of living requires. For this would be diametrically opposed to the common good.

Supplementing Farm Income

141. It is desirable, too, that industries and services pertaining to the preservation, processing and transportation of farm products be established in farm areas, and that enterprises connected with other economic sectors and other professional activities also be developed there. In this way farm families can supplement their income in the same environment in which they live and work.

Correcting the Structure of Farm Enterprises

142. In view of the diversity of rural conditions within each nation, and the even greater differences from nation to nation, it is impossible to determine a priori what the structure of farm enterprises ought to be. But if we hold to a sound natural, and

³⁹. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXIII (1931), 202.

even more so a Christian concept of man and the family, we are forced to adopt as our ideal of a farm unit especially a family-type farm, one that resembles a community of persons, whose inner relations and structure conform to the standards of justice and Christian teaching. With this in mind, we should exert every effort to realize this ideal, as far as circumstances permit.

143. If a family-type farm is to survive, it must produce sufficient income to enable the family to live in decent comfort. To do this, it is very necessary that farmers be given special instructions, be kept constantly up-to-date and be supplied with technical assistance in their profession. It is also essential that they form a flourishing system of co-operatives and professional organizations. They ought likewise to take an effective interest in public affairs that concern not only administrative agencies, but also political movements.

Need for Initiative Among Rural Workers

144. It is Our opinion that farmers themselves as the interested parties ought to take the initiative and play an active role in promoting their own economic advancement, social progress and cultural betterment. These workers can readily perceive and appreciate the fundamental nobility of their work. It is carried on in the majestic cathedral of nature. It constantly deals with plants and animals, whose life is inexhaustible in its modes of expression, inflexible in its laws, rich in allusions to God, the Creator and Provider. And finally, it produces not only the variety of food needed to nourish the human family but also an increasing supply of raw materials for manufacturing.

145. Furthermore, farming has its own professional dignity, since indeed it involves the use of many things borrowed from technology, chemistry and biology, and these must constantly be adjusted to meet the demands of change, because scientific progress clearly has an important effect on farming.

It is also a work characterized by its own moral dimension. For it demands of the farmer a capacity for orientation and

adaptation, patience in the face of an uncertain future, a sense of responsibility toward the demands of the task at hand, a spirit of perseverance and initiative.

Solidarity and Co-operation

146. One should remember that in agriculture, as in every other sector of production, association is a vital need. This is especially so where family-type farms are involved. Rural workers should feel a sense of solidarity one with another, and should unite to form co-operatives and professional associations. Both types of organization are quite necessary if farmers are to benefit from scientific and technical progress in methods of production. The same is true if they are to contribute effectively toward maintaining prices for their products or if they are to attain an equal footing with other economic and professional classes, which are likewise usually organized. Then, too, if farmers organize they can exercise an influence on the conduct of public affairs proportionate to their status. For today almost nobody hears, much less pays attention to, isolated voices.

Awareness of the Demands of the Common Good

147. However, farm workers—like workers in every other productive sector—must be governed by moral and juridical principles when using their organizations to exert influence. They must try to reconcile their rights and interests with those of other economic and professional classes. Indeed, they must be ready to subordinate them to the common good.

Rural workers who are doing their share in expanding agricultural production have a right to demand that public authorities assist them and supplement their efforts so long as they show respect for the common interests and contribute to their fulfillment.

148. So, We wish to bestow well-deserved praise on Our sons in various parts of the world who are actively engaged in estab-

lishing and furthering co-operatives and other types of associations to the end that farm workers in every community may enjoy both an adequate share of economic blessings and a decent life.

Vocation and Mission

149. In farm work the human personality finds many aids to self-expression, self-development and cultural enrichment. Therefore, the farmer should consider his work as a vocation and a mission. Moreover, he ought, as it were, to consecrate his labor to God, whose Providence directs all events to man's salvation. He ought finally to accept the assignment to elevate himself and others to a higher level of culture.

Measures to Aid Underdeveloped Regions

150. Among citizens of the same country there often exists a marked socio-economic inequality. For the most part, this follows from the fact that some live and work in areas that are more affluent than others.

When this situation obtains, justice and equity demand that public authorities try to eliminate or reduce such inequality. To accomplish this, they should see to it that the underdeveloped areas are provided with all essential public services.

These services ought to match in kind and extent the locally prevailing norms and in so far as possible conform to the national standard of living. Moreover, a suitable socio-economic policy should be formulated to provide carefully for the supply of labor, the dislocation of population, wages, taxes, credit, investments and especially expanding industries. In short, there should be a policy capable of promoting full employment of the labor force, stimulating managerial initiative, and developing the natural resources of an area.

151. But governmental action along these lines must always be justified by the demands of the common good. These require that

all three areas of production—agriculture, industry and services—be developed, as far as possible, simultaneously and harmoniously, with an eye to the national interest. Special effort must also be made to see to it that workers in underdeveloped areas are conscious of playing a key role in the promotion of their personal socio-economic and cultural betterment. For it is a mark of good citizenship to shoulder a major share of the burden connected with one's own development.

152. Finally, it is necessary that private enterprise, also, should contribute its share to bringing about a just economic balance among the different regions of the same country. And indeed public authorities, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, ought to encourage and aid the efforts of private enterprise. As far as circumstances allow, this should involve permitting private citizens to carry on to completion the task of economic development.

Correcting the Imbalance Between Land and Population

153. It is in place here to remark that a gross disproportion between land and population exists in not a few countries. In some, there is a scarcity of population and tillable land abounds. In others, the population is large, while arable land is scarce.

154. Furthermore, there are some countries where, in spite of abundant natural resources, not enough food can be produced to satisfy the basic needs of the population because of the primitive and obsolete methods of agriculture employed. On the other hand, in some countries the introduction of modern methods of agriculture has resulted in the piling up of farm surpluses. These surpluses, in turn, have become a national economic problem.

155. It is obvious that the solidarity of the human race and a sense of Christian brotherhood demand that an active and varied program of co-operative aid be established among the peoples of the world. They demand a co-operation which permits and encourages the movement of goods, capital and men with a view

to reducing the above-mentioned imbalance. Later on, We shall treat this point in more detail.

156. At this point, however, We must express Our warm approval of the work which the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has been doing. This organization has as its special objective to promote fruitful accord among nations; to encourage the modernization of agriculture in underdeveloped nations; and to alleviate the suffering of hunger-stricken peoples.

Just Relations Between Nations in Different Stages of Economic Development

Problem of the Modern World

157. One of the most difficult problems facing the modern world concerns relations between nations that are economically advanced and those in the earlier stages of development. The former enjoy a high standard of living, while the latter countries suffer from extreme poverty.

The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members, in a sense, of the same family requires that nations enjoying an abundance of material goods should not remain indifferent to those nations whose citizens suffer from internal problems that result in poverty, hunger and an inability to enjoy even the more elementary human rights. This obligation is all the more urgent since, given the growing interdependence among nations, it is impossible to preserve a lasting and beneficial peace while glaring socio-economic inequalities persist among them.

158. Mindful of Our role of Universal Father, We feel obliged to repeat solemnly what We have stated elsewhere: *We are all equally responsible for the undernourished peoples. . . .*⁴⁰ [Therefore] *it is necessary to awaken men's consciences to a sense of the responsibility which weighs upon everyone, especially upon those who are more richly blessed with this world's goods.*⁴¹

⁴⁰. Address to directors of the FAO, May 3, 1960. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, LII. 41. *Ibid.* (1960), 465.

159. It is obvious and the Church has always made it perfectly clear that the obligation to help the poor and suffering ought to be felt most strongly by Catholics, in view of the fact that they are members of Christ's Mystical Body. John, the Apostle, said: *In this we have come to know His love, that He laid down His life for us, and we likewise ought to lay down our life for the brethren. He who has the goods of this world and sees his brother in need and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God abide in him?*⁴²

160. We note with satisfaction, therefore, that the more highly organized and productive states are providing aid to economically handicapped nations so that the latter may encounter less hardship in raising their standard of living.

Emergency Aid

161. Everyone is aware that some countries have a surplus of consumer goods—especially farm produce—while in other lands large segments of the population suffer from hunger and want. Justice and humanity demand, then, that the rich come to the aid of the poor. To destroy or to squander goods that other people need for survival goes against all canons of equity and human kindness.

162. It is true that surplus production of goods, especially in agriculture, can hurt a certain section of the population. Still, this does not mean that prosperous nations are exonerated from the obligation of extending emergency aid to the indigent and hungry. Rather, every ounce of ingenuity should be employed to cut down the unfavorable effects resulting from a surplus of goods and to distribute the burden equitably over the entire population.

Scientific, Technical and Financial Co-operation

163. In the case of many nations, nevertheless, emergency aid will not suffice to eliminate the permanent factors causing hunger

⁴². I John 3: 16-17.

and want. These derive for the most part from the primitive nature of an economy. The remedy for such situations cannot be found except by trying all possible approaches. A partial answer is to help the workers to acquire technical skills and professional competence. Another is to make available the capital needed to step up economic development with the help of modern methods and techniques.

164. We are well aware that in recent years many people have felt a deepening conviction that efforts should be made to foster economic development and social progress in countries which face great difficulties and are scarcely equipped for the task.

165. With such aims in view, world and regional organizations individual states, foundations and private societies today are offering such countries generous help and greater technical co-operation in all spheres of production. They are assisting thousands of young people to study in the universities of more advanced countries and to acquire an up-to-date scientific and professional formation. Meanwhile world banking institutions, single states and private persons often furnish capital and thus make possible the rise of a network of economic enterprises in the underdeveloped nations.

We are happy to profit by the present occasion to express Our sincere appreciation of such generous plans. But it is Our hope that in the years ahead the wealthier nations will redouble their efforts to promote the scientific, technical and economic progress of the underdeveloped nations.

Avoiding the Errors of the Past

166. On this matter We consider it opportune to offer some reflections and words of caution.

167. Wise prudence demands that nations which have taken only the first, or only a few steps toward economic development learn from the experience of already developed nations.

168. Prudent planning and urgent necessity dictate an increased and more efficient production. However, it is no less

necessary and conformable to justice that the riches produced be equitably distributed among all citizens. Hence an effort should be made to see that social progress keep pace with economic development. This economic advance ought to be assured simultaneously in all sectors of production, in agriculture, industry and services.

Respect for the Characteristics of Individual Nations

169. Countries in the process of economic development often manifest their own unmistakable traits. These may reflect the specific character of their natural environment, or traditions rich in human values or some distinctive quality in their citizens.

170. Now economically advanced countries, when lending their help, must recognize and respect this individuality and take pains not to yield to the temptation of imposing their own way of life while aiding such nations.

Disinterested Aid

171. But the more highly developed nations face an even greater temptation. They must take care lest, while giving help to less developed nations, they turn the political situation that prevails there to their own profit or imperialistic aggrandizement.

172. If such an attempt be made, it must be explicitly labeled as an effort to introduce a new form of colonialism, which, however cleverly disguised, would be only a repetition of that old, outdated type from which many peoples have recently escaped. It would, too, have a harmful impact on international relations and constitute a threat to world peace.

173. Necessity and justice alike demand that technical and financial aid be given with sincere political disinterestedness and for the purpose of bringing those underdeveloped nations to the point where they can advance themselves economically and socially.

174. In this way, a precious contribution would be made to

the formation of a world community, a community in which all members, aware of their duties and rights, strive on a basis of equality to achieve universal prosperity.

Respect for a Proper Hierarchy of Values

175. Scientific and technical progress, economic development and the betterment of living conditions, if they occur together, certainly represent a positive contribution to human civilization. But we must realize fully that they are not the supreme values; for in comparison with the latter they are seen to be essentially instrumental in character.

176. We observe with sadness that many people in the economically advanced countries have no concern for a genuine hierarchy of values. These persons wholly neglect, put aside or flatly deny the existence of spiritual values. Meanwhile they energetically pursue scientific and technological research and seek economic development. Material well-being is in many instances their chief goal in life. This constitutes an insidious poisoning of the aid which economically advanced peoples can give to the underprivileged, in whom ancient tradition has often preserved a living and operative consciousness of the most important values at the base of human culture.

177. To undermine this consciousness is essentially immoral. One must respect it and, where possible, develop and refine it so that it will remain what it is: a foundation for true civilization.

The Church's Contribution

178. The Church is universal by divine right. And she is universal by reason of the historical fact that she exists today all over the globe and seeks to embrace all peoples.

179. History and contemporary experience show that the entrance of the Church among a people never fails to bring in its wake advantages in the social and economic fields. For when men become Christians they feel bound to work vigorously for the

improvement of institutions in the temporal environment, trying to prevent them from debasing the human dignity of man, or to eliminate all obstacles in the way of a wholesome life and multiply incentives and invitations to its attainment.

180. Moreover, the Church, in entering the life of the people, is not nor does she consider herself to be an institution imposed from outside. The fact is that her presence is brought about by the rebirth or resurrection of each person in Christ. And he who is reborn or rises again in Christ never feels himself constrained by an outside pressure. On the contrary, he feels liberated in the depths of his being and thus able to tend toward God in full freedom. Whatever in him is of worth, whatever be its nature, is reaffirmed and ennobled.

181. *The Church of Jesus Christ*, as Our predecessor Pius XII wisely observes, *the faithful depository of divine wisdom, is certainly too wise to disdain or belittle the particular characteristics which mark off one nation from another. It is quite legitimate and laudable for nations to treat those differences as a sacred inheritance and guard them at all costs. The Church indeed aims at unity, a lofty unity which is characterized by that supernatural love which should actuate all men. She does not aim at a uniformity which would only be external and thus would cramp natural tendencies. Every nation has its own genius, its own qualities, springing from the hidden roots of its being. The wise development, the encouragement within limits, of that genius and those qualities does no harm. And if a nation cares to take precautions and to lay down rules for that end, it has the Church's approval. She is mother enough to befriend such projects with her prayers provided that they are not opposed to the duties incumbent on men from their common origin and shared destiny.*⁴³

182. It is a great satisfaction to note that Catholics in the underdeveloped countries are second to none of their fellow citizens in support of the efforts their countries are making to advance themselves in the economic and social fields.

183. Furthermore, Catholic citizens of the wealthier nations

43. *Summi Pontificatus. Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXI (1939), 428-29

are multiplying their efforts to increase the effectiveness of the aid being given to needy lands for their economic and social progress. In this connection the following should be singled out for special approval: the various forms of assistance increasingly given to students from African and Asian countries for their liberal and technical training in the great universities of Europe and America, and the extensive efforts devoted to preparing thoroughly those ready to go to less-developed regions where they will practice their technical and professional skills.

184. We are pleased, therefore, to express Our appreciation and gratitude to all Our beloved children who, in every corner of the world, bear witness to the enduring and effective energy of the Church by so skillfully promoting genuine progress and breathing life into civilization. We wish to address a word of appreciation and encouragement.

Population Increase and Economic Development

185. In recent years the question of bringing economic development and the available means of subsistence into balance with population expansion, whether on a world plane or as it confronts the economically underdeveloped nations, has come increasingly to the fore.

Imbalance Between Population and Means of Subsistence

186. Looking at the question on a world-wide scale, some consider that, according to sufficiently reliable statistics, the human race, in a few decades, will experience a notable increase in numbers, while the rate of economic growth will be considerably slower. Some take this to mean that unless something is done to check population growth, the lack of balance between size of population and the means of subsistence will make itself felt more acutely in the not too distant future.

187. It is clear that in the less-developed nations—still relying on statistical data—the rapid spread of modern hygienic methods

and medical remedies reduces the death rate among infants, and thus lengthens the life-span. At the same time, the number of births, where it is now normally high, tends to remain more or less constant, at least for a considerable period of time. But, while the number of births exceeds the number of deaths in the same year, the productive efficiency of the respective economic systems does not increase proportionately. Accordingly, an improvement in the standard of living in these underdeveloped states is almost impossible. Indeed, it is rather inevitable that things will get worse. Hence, to avoid a situation which will result in extreme hardship, there are those who would have recourse to drastic measures of birth control or birth prevention.

Terms of the Problem

188. The truth is that the relation between the size of the world population and the available world resources does not seem—at least for the moment and in the near future—to create a serious difficulty. For the elements from which one might draw conclusions on this question are too uncertain and controversial.

189. Besides, God in His goodness and wisdom has implanted in nature inexhaustible resources and has endowed man with a sufficient measure of intelligence to create instruments fit to turn its products to the satisfaction of his needs and wants.

Hence, the real solution of the problem is not to be found in expedients that offend against the moral order established by God and do violence to the very origin of human life. It will be had, instead, from a renewed scientific and technical effort on the part of man to deepen and extend his mastery over nature. The progress of science and technology achieved to date opens up limitless horizons in this direction.

190. We appreciate the fact that in certain underdeveloped areas and states serious problems and difficulties of this nature can and do present themselves. These problems frequently result from a defective economic and social organization which does not provide means of subsistence in a measure proportionate to

the rate of population increase, and also from the fact that a sense of solidarity among peoples is not operative to a sufficient degree.

191. But even in such an hypothesis, We must immediately make clear, these problems should not be approached or solved by having recourse to methods and means which are unworthy of man and which are advocated by those who entertain an utterly materialistic conception of man and of human life.

192. In Our judgment this question can be solved only when the socio-economic betterment of both individuals and society as a whole respects and promotes true human values. In other words, the solution is to be found only in socio-economic progress achieved in a moral atmosphere befitting the dignity of mankind and the immense value of a single human life. Furthermore, it must also embrace world-wide co-operation that permits and favors an orderly and fruitful international exchange of useful knowledge, capital and manpower.

Respect for the Laws of Life

193. On this point We solemnly proclaim that human life is propagated and transmitted by means of the family, founded on marriage, which is one and indissoluble, and has been raised for Christians to the dignity of a sacrament. And since the transmission of human life is effected by a personal and conscious act, it is therefore subject to the laws of God, which are sacred, inviolable and immutable. These laws must be recognized and observed by all men. Therefore, it is not permissible here for anyone to use means and methods that can be legitimate for the transmission of plant or animal life.

194. Human life is sacred. From its very beginnings it calls for the creative action of God. By the violation of His laws, the Divine Majesty is offended, individuals themselves and humanity become degraded and likewise the community of which they are members is gravely enfeebled.

195. It is of the greatest importance that the younger generation be brought up with an adequate cultural and religious for-

mation. Parents have the duty and right to see to this formation and to equip the young with a profound sense of responsibility in all life's deeds, including those connected with setting up a family and the conception and education of children. These children ought to be taught not only an abiding trust in Divine Providence, but also a resolute willingness to undergo inevitable fatigue and sacrifices in the fulfillment of a mission so noble and often so arduous as is the co-operation with God in the transmission of human life and the education of offspring. Toward such education no institution provides more efficacious help than the Church by its guidance and spiritual resources. For this reason, too, the Church's right to full liberty in fulfilling her mission must be recognized.

In the Service of Life

196. Genesis relates how God imposed on the first human beings two complementary commands: the first, *Increase and multiply*;⁴⁴ the other, *Fill the earth and subdue it*.⁴⁵

197. Now certainly the divine command to dominate nature is not aimed at destructive purposes. Instead, it is directed to the betterment of human life.

198. We observe with profound sadness one of the contradictions of our epoch: while on the one hand material scarcity is presented in such dark terms that the specter of misery and hunger is raised to haunt us, on the other, scientific discoveries, technical inventions and economic resources are being used to fashion terrible instruments of ruin and death.

199. God, in His providence, has bestowed on the human race sufficient resources to shoulder with dignity the burdens attendant upon bringing children into the world. But this task becomes difficult or even impossible when men are led astray or become twisted in mind and so turn to means that are opposed to human reason, or to man's social nature, and thus to the plans of God Himself.

44. Gen. 1:28.

45. *Ibid.*

Co-operation on a World Scale

World Dimensions of Every Important Human Problem

200. The relations among nations everywhere have lately multiplied and increased under the impact of science and technology. In turn, their populations necessarily become more and more interdependent.

201. As a result, it can be said that contemporary problems of any importance, whatever their content may be—scientific, technical, economic, social, political or cultural—today commonly present supranational and often global dimensions.

202. Hence, individual nations can no longer adequately solve their major problems in their own environment and with their own resources. This is true even in instances where they are communities notable for the high level of their culture and humaneness, for the number and industriousness of their citizens, for the efficiency of their economic systems and the vast size and richness of their territories. Nations, indeed, must perforce supplement and develop one another. And it may be said that each succeeds in developing itself by contributing to the development of the others. Hence, mutual understanding and co-operation are a prime necessity.

Mutual Distrust

203. Individuals, and even all people, grow more and more convinced of this every day. Nevertheless, it seems that men, especially those entrusted with greater responsibility, are unable to achieve the understanding and co-operation which the general public ambitions.

The root of such inability is not to be sought in any shortage of scientific knowledge, technical skill or economic proficiency, but in the absence of mutual trust. Men, and consequently states, fear one another. Each fears that the other harbors plans of conquest and is cunningly waiting for the right moment to put these

plans into effect. Hence, each organizes its own defenses and arms itself, so it says, to deter other nations from launching an invasion.

204. As a consequence, vast human energies and gigantic resources are employed for destructive rather than constructive purposes. Meanwhile, individuals and peoples suffer from an oppressive uneasiness that lessens the spirit of initiative for more significant undertakings.

Failure to Acknowledge the Moral Order

205. The lack of mutual trust finds its explanation in the fact that men, especially those in more responsible positions, are motivated in their conduct of affairs by different conceptions of life. Some do not hesitate to deny the existence of a code of morality which is transcendent, absolute, universal, equally binding on all. Thus, these men cannot arrive at any complete and guaranteed understanding on any point, since there is no single law of justice which commands the acceptance of all.

206. It is true that the term "justice" and the phrase "demands of justice" are on the lips of all. However, these words take on quite different and even opposite meanings when used by different men.

Indeed, repeated appeals to "justice" and the "demands of justice" by national leaders, instead of offering a possibility of understanding, frequently occasion and intensify serious disputes. In consequence, the belief spreads that to enforce one's rights and pursue one's interests, no other means is left than recourse to violence, the root of very serious evils.

The True God, Foundation of the Moral Order

207. Mutual trust among the heads of nations cannot stand firm and become deep-rooted without initial recognition of and respect for a just moral order from both sides.

208. The moral order, however, cannot be built except on God. Cut off from God, it disintegrates. Man, in fact, is not only a

material organism but is also a spirit endowed with an awareness of his reasoning power and freedom. In virtue of this composite nature, therefore, he demands a moral order, rooted in religion, which contributes more than any material value to the solution of problems relating to individual and group life, to the affairs of individual nations and of all of them taken together.

209. It has been claimed, none the less, that in an era of scientific and technical triumphs, men can construct on their own a perfect civilization without God. But the truth is that these same scientific and technical advances often present human problems of world-wide dimensions, which can be solved only through proper recognition of the authority of God, Who is the fashioner and master of man's whole being.

210. The scientific process itself, by opening up almost limitless vistas, seems to show that this is true. As a result, many have formed the opinion that the mathematical sciences, far from being able to fathom the nature of changing reality and to express it adequately, can scarcely divine it. The tragic realization that the gigantic forces placed at the disposal of technology can be used for both constructive and destructive purposes forces men to recognize the overwhelming importance of spiritual values if scientific and technical advances are to preserve their essential character as instruments at the service of civilization, rather than as tools for the annihilation of the human race.

211. Further, the sense of increasing dissatisfaction which spreads among men in countries with a higher standard of living destroys the illusion of a dreamed-of paradise on earth. But at the same time, men grow ever more conscious of inviolable and universal human rights and strive to establish mutual relations more in accord with the demands of justice and human dignity. These are all motives which contribute toward making human beings more conscious of their limitations and toward creating in them an eager longing for things of the spirit. This in turn cannot fail to be a happy presage of a trend toward mutually profitable co-operation between individuals and among nations.

Part IV: Reconstruction of Social Relations in Truth, Justice and Love

Incomplete and Erroneous Ideologies

212. Scientific and technical progress, today as in the past, exercises a powerful influence on social relations. For that reason, it is necessary to bring about a more civilized balance in the relations within nations and throughout the world community.

213. In the modern era, different ideologies have been devised and spread abroad with this in mind. Some have already been dissolved as clouds by the sun. Others have undergone profound changes. In the case of still others, their hold on the minds of men today grows steadily weaker. And all this follows from the fact that they are ideologies which take into account only certain aspects of man, and these the less significant. Moreover, they overlook certain inevitable human imperfections, such as sickness and suffering, which even the most highly organized socio-economic systems obviously cannot totally remedy. Then there is that profound and imperishable religious instinct which stirs the hearts of man everywhere and which cannot be stamped out by violence or smothered by cunning.

214. In fact, the most fundamental modern error is that of considering this religious instinct of the human soul as a product of feeling or fantasy, which should be rooted out, therefore, as an anachronism and an obstacle to human progress. Yet it is by this very inner religious bent that man reveals himself for what he really is: a being created by God, and irrevocably destined for Him. As St. Augustine once wrote: *You made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You.*⁴⁶

215. Moreover, whatever the technical and economic progress, there will be neither justice nor peace in this world until men return to a sense of their dignity as creatures and sons of God. For He must be accepted as the initial and ultimate explanation of the existence of all His creatures. Man separated from God

46. *Confessions*, I, 1.

becomes inhuman to himself and to those about him, because the proper ordering of social relations presupposes the proper ordering of one's conscience to God, the source of all truth, justice and love.

216. It is well known that for decades many of Our dearly beloved brothers and sons have suffered a ruthless persecution in many countries—including some with an ancient heritage of Christian civilization. This unhappy fact reveals to the eyes of the world the superior dignity of the persecuted in contrast to the cultivated barbarity of the persecutors. Even if it does not lead the latter to repentance, it does stir many men to deep reflection.

217. However, no folly is more characteristic of the modern era than the absurd attempt to reconstruct a solid and prosperous temporal order while prescind from God, the only foundation on which it can endure. It is equally foolish to seek to exalt man's greatness by drying up the font from which his greatness springs and from which it is nourished; that is, by restraining and, if possible, checking his quest for God. Daily events, which bring bitter disillusionment to many and even bloodshed to others, support the truth of the statement: *Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.*⁴⁷

Perennial Relevance of the Social Doctrine of the Church

218. The Church is the standard bearer and herald of a social doctrine which is unquestionably relevant at any moment to man's needs.

219. The fundamental principle in this doctrine is that individual men are of necessity the foundation, the cause and the reason for the existence of all social institutions, insofar as men are social by nature and have been raised to the level of the supernatural realm.

220. From this bedrock principle, which safeguards and guar-

47. Ps. 126:1.

antees the sacred dignity of the individual, the Church has evolved, with the co-operation of enlightened priests and laymen, especially during the past century, a clear body of social doctrine. This doctrine points out the sure way to arrange men's social relations according to universal norms that conform with the nature of things, with the varying dimensions of the temporal order and the special characteristics of contemporary society. Here, then, are norms which all men can accept.

Education

221. But it is indispensable, today more than ever, that this doctrine be known, assimilated and translated into social reality in the form and manner which different situations allow or demand. Surely this is no easy task, but it is an exalted one. Our warm invitation to join in executing it goes out, not only to Our brothers and sons scattered throughout the world, but also to all men of good will.

222. We reaffirm strongly that Christian social doctrine is an integral part of the Christian conception of life.

223. On this account, We ardently desire that more and more attention be given to the study of this doctrine. While We note with satisfaction that in some schools it has been taught with success for years, We strongly urge that it be included as an item in the required curriculum in Catholic schools of every kind, particularly in seminaries. It is to be inserted into the religious instruction programs of parishes and of associations of the lay apostolate. It should be publicized by every modern means of mass communication—daily newspapers and periodicals, publications of both a scientific and a popular nature, radio and television.

224. In this task of communication, Our beloved sons of the laity can make a great contribution. They can do this by acquainting themselves with this doctrine, by making their actions conform to it and by zealously striving to make others understand its significance.

225. They should be convinced that the truth and efficacy of this teaching can most easily be demonstrated when they can show that it offers an effective solution for present-day difficulties. In this way they might bring it to the attention of those who oppose the doctrine through ignorance. Indeed, they may even cause a ray of its light to penetrate the minds of such men.

226. It is not enough merely to publicize a social doctrine; it has to be translated into action. This is particularly true of Christian social doctrine, whose light is truth, whose objective is justice and whose driving force is love.

227. Hence it is most important not only that Our sons have an understanding of this social teaching, but that they be trained in it.

228. Christian education, if it is to be called complete, should concern itself with every kind of obligation. Hence it is essential that it should inspire the faithful to carry on their economic and social activities in accordance with the Church's teaching.

229. The transition from theory to practice is of its very nature difficult. This is notably true when one tries to reduce to concrete terms the Church's social doctrine. And no wonder, in view of the deep-rooted selfishness of human beings, the materialism that pervades so much of modern society and the difficulty of determining the demands of justice in particular cases.

230. Consequently, for this type of education it is not enough that men be taught, in the light of the Church's doctrine, what their obligations as Christians are in the economic and social fields. They must also be given, through practical instruction, the means that will enable them properly to fulfill these duties.

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A Task for Lay Apostolate Associations

231. Education to act in a Christian manner in economic and social matters will hardly succeed, in Our opinion, unless those being educated play an active role in their own formation, and unless formal instruction is supplemented by activity undertaken for the sake of gaining experience.

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232. Just as, in the words of an old saying, one cannot acquire the correct use of liberty except by using liberty correctly, so one learns how to act as a Christian in social and economic matters only by practical Christian action in those fields.

233. In social education, therefore, organizations of the lay apostolate must be accorded an important role, especially those that have as their purpose the Christianization of the economic and social sectors of the temporal order. For members of these associations can profit from their daily experiences in order to prepare themselves more thoroughly for this apostolate and then contribute to the formation of the younger generation.

~~234. It is not out of place to remind everyone—mighty and lowly alike—that integral elements in the Christian conception of life are a spirit of moderation and a willingness to suffer with the help of God.~~

235. Unfortunately, a hedonistic outlook is widely prevalent today. This view reduces the whole meaning of life to a panting search after pleasure and the gratification of all desires. It unquestionably involves great harm to body and soul alike.

Looked at on the purely natural level, simplicity of life and self-control are generally admitted to be the marks of the wisely prudent man. From the point of view of the supernatural, the gospel of Christ and the whole ascetic tradition of the Church clearly call for a constant rein on all desires and exceptional patience in the face of adversity. These virtues, besides offering a sure and steady mastery of the spirit over the flesh, also offer an efficacious means of expiating the punishment due to sin, from which no one, except Jesus Christ and His Immaculate Mother, is exempt.

Practical Suggestions

236. In reducing social principles and directives to practice, one usually goes through three stages: reviewing the actual situation, judging it in the light of these principles and directives and deciding what can and what should be done to apply these

traditional norms to the extent that the situation will permit. These three stages are usually expressed in the three terms: observe, judge, act.

237. It is particularly ^{high 3 point process} important that young people should reflect often on ~~this program~~ and even more, as far as possible, follow it in practice, so that the doctrine they have learned will not be viewed merely as a set of abstract ideas but as something capable of being translated into deeds.

238. In the applications of this doctrine, however, there can sometimes arise—even among sincere Catholics—differences of opinion. When this happens, they should be alert to preserve and give evidence of their mutual esteem and respect. At the same time, they should strive to find points of agreement for efficacious and suitable action. They should take special care, moreover, not to exhaust themselves in interminable discussions and, under pretext of seeking the better or the best, fail meanwhile to do the good that is possible and is thus obligatory.

239. In their socio-economic activities Catholics often find themselves in close contact with others who do not share their view of life. In these circumstances, those who bear the name of Catholics should be very careful to be consistent and to avoid compromises that will involve a watering down of religion or morality. At the same time, however, let them show themselves animated by a spirit of understanding and disinterestedness, ready to co-operate loyally in achieving objectives that of their nature are good or at least reducible to good. It is clear, however, that when the hierarchy has issued a precept or decision on a point at issue, Catholics are bound to obey their directives. The reason is that the Church has the right and obligation, not merely to guard the purity of ethical and religious principles, but also to intervene authoritatively when there is question of judging the application of these principles to concrete cases.

Manifold Action and Responsibility

240. From instruction and education one must pass to action. This is a task that belongs particularly to Our sons, the laity, since their work generally involves them in temporal activities and in the formation of institutions dealing with such affairs.

241. In performing such a noble task, it is essential that Our sons be professionally qualified and carry on their occupation in conformity with its own proper laws in order to secure effectively the desired ends.

It is equally necessary, however, that they act within the framework of the principles and directives of Christian social teaching and in an attitude of loyal trust in and filial obedience to ecclesiastical authority. Let them remember that when they fail to harmonize their activities with the social principles and directives taught by the Church and confirmed by Us, they fail in their obligations and often violate the rights of others. But they can even cast discredit on that very doctrine which appears as if it were noble enough in itself, but lacking in real power to control and regulate affairs.

A Grave Danger

242. As We have already noted, modern man has greatly deepened and extended his knowledge of the laws of nature and has fashioned instruments that make him lord of nature's forces. He has produced and toils unremittingly at producing gigantic and spectacular achievements. Nevertheless, in his striving to master and transform the external world, he is in danger of forgetting himself and of sapping the forces of his own soul and body. As Pope Pius XI, Our predecessor, observes with deep sadness in *Quadragesimo Anno*: *And so, bodily labor, which was decreed by Providence for the good of man's body and soul, even after original sin, has everywhere been changed into an instrument of strange perversion: for dead matter leaves the*

*factory ennobled and transformed, where men are corrupted and degraded.*⁴⁸

243. In a similar manner Pope Pius XII, Our predecessor, rightly asserted that our age is marked by a sharp contrast between immense scientific and technical progress and fearful human decline. This is shown by *its monstrous masterpiece of transforming man into a giant of the physical world at the expense of his spirit, which is reduced to that of a pygmy in the supernatural and eternal world.*⁴⁹

244. Evidence of what was asserted of the pagans by the Psalmist is verified today in a most striking manner. Men frequently lose sight of themselves in the rush of activity and come to admire their own products to the point of idolatry: *The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the work of the hands of men.*⁵⁰

Hierarchy of Values

245. In Our paternal care as universal pastor of souls, We urgently invite Our sons to take care that in the pursuit of duty they keep alive a sense of their personal obligations. As they engage in temporal affairs and seek more immediate ends, they should keep in focus a hierarchy of ultimate values.

246. Certainly, the Church has always taught and continues to teach that scientific and technical progress and the resultant material well-being are truly good and, as such, must be regarded as an important sign of progress in human civilization. Nevertheless, in the Church's view, these things should be valued according to their true worth: i.e., as means for achieving more effectively a higher end—that of facilitating and promoting a man's perfection, both in the natural and the supernatural order.

247. For this reason, We desire that the warning words of the Divine Master should ever sound in the ears of men: *For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?*⁵¹

48. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXIII (1931), 221f.
1953. *Ibid.*, XLVI (1954), 10.

50. Ps. 113:4.

49. Christmas Message.
51. Matt. 16:26.

Sanctification of Holydays

248. In connection with this warning, it seems appropriate to raise the question of a day of Sabbath rest.

249. To safeguard the dignity of man as a creature endowed by God with a soul in His own image, the Church has always demanded an exact observance of the third precept of the decalogue: *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.*⁵² God has a right to demand of man that he dedicate one day of the week to the proper and fitting worship of the eternal Godhead. This should be a day in which the spirit is freed from material preoccupations and enabled to rise up to heavenly concerns. It should be a day when man can examine the secrets of his conscience and thus grasp the binding force of his sacred relations to the Creator.

250. In addition, man has the right and the need to periodic rest. This permits him to renew the bodily strength used up by hard daily work and likewise to enjoy a decent measure of recreation. It also permits him to promote family unity by making it possible for all the members of the family to enjoy more frequent and harmonious contacts with one another.

251. Thus, religion, morality and hygiene, all unite in proclaiming the law of periodic rest. This the Catholic Church has for centuries translated into the sanctification of Sunday through participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, a memorial and application of the redemptive work of Christ for souls.

252. It is with great sorrow that We note and deplore the ever increasing neglect of, if not downright disrespect for, this sacred law. This necessarily results in harm to the physical and spiritual health of Our beloved workingmen.

253. In the name of God and for the sake of the material and spiritual welfare of men, We call upon all—public authorities, employers and workers—to observe the precepts of God and His Church. We also remind each one of his responsibilities before God and society in this regard.

⁵². Exodus 20:8.

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Renewed Dedication

254. From what We have briefly touched on above, it would be an error to conclude that Our sons, especially the laity, should consider it more prudent to lessen their personal Christian commitment to the shifting affairs of this world. Rather, they should strive earnestly and constantly to renew and increase it.

255. Our Lord, in the course of His sublime prayer for the unity of the Church, made this request of the Father on behalf of His disciples: *I pray not that thou take them out of the world, but that thou keep them from evil.*⁵³

We should not foolishly dream up an artificial opposition—where none really exists—between one's own spiritual perfection and one's active contact with the everyday world, as if a man could not perfect himself as a Christian except by putting aside all temporal activity, or as if, whenever he engages in such activity, a man is inevitably led to compromise his personal dignity as a human being and as a believer.

256. Far from this being so, it is perfectly in keeping with the plan of Divine Providence that a man should develop and perfect himself through his daily work. And this work, for almost all human beings, is of a temporal nature.

Today, the Church is confronted with the immense task of giving a human and Christian tone to modern civilization. This is a labor that is urged on the Church and indeed is almost begged for by our age itself for the sake of its further development and even for its continued existence free from harm. As We have already emphasized, the Church turns for help in fulfilling this mission especially to her lay sons. They are thus committed to carry on their activities in such a way that they constitute the performance of a service done to others, but in intimate union with God, through Christ and for His greater glory. As St. Paul points out: *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God,*⁵⁴ and *Whatever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the*

⁵³. John 17:15.

⁵⁴. I Cor. 10:31.

*Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*⁵⁵

Greater Efficiency in Temporal Affairs

257. Whenever temporal affairs and institutions serve to further man's spiritual progress and advance him toward his supernatural goal, it can be taken for granted that they become at the same time more capable of achieving their immediate, specific ends. Indeed, the words of our divine Master are still true: *But seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be given you besides.*⁵⁶ For the man who has become, as it were, the *light of the world*⁵⁷ and goes about *as a son of light*,⁵⁸ has a surer instinct for grasping the fundamental demands of justice in different areas of human endeavor, even in those which are further complicated by the existence of widespread individual, group or racial selfishness. It should be added that one who is animated by Christian charity cannot help loving others and thus feeling the needs, suffering and joys of others as his own.

Consequently, aid from such a person, no matter what the circumstances in which it may be proffered, cannot but be more steadfast, more energetic, more humane and more disinterested. For *charity is patient, is kind; charity does not envy, is not pretentious, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, is not self-seeking, is not provoked; thinks no evil, does not rejoice over wickedness, but rejoices with the truth; bears with all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*⁵⁹

Living Members of Christ's Mystical Body

258. And so We cannot conclude Our encyclical, Venerable Brothers, without recalling that most sublime and true tenet of Catholic doctrine which teaches us that we are living members of the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church: *For as the body is one and has many members; and all the members of the*

55. Col. 3:17.

56. Matt. 6:33.

57. Eph. 5:8.

58. *Ibid.*

59. I Cor. 13:4-7.

*body, many as they are, form one body: so also is it with Christ.*⁶⁰

259. For this reason We strongly urge Our children everywhere, both clerical and lay, to remain thoroughly conscious of the extent of their dignity and high rank. These, in fact, are based on their oneness with Christ as branches with a vine: *I am the vine, you are the branches,*⁶¹ and on their ability to share in His divine life.

Hence, when Christians put themselves to work—even if it be in a task of a temporal nature—in conscious union with the divine Redeemer, every effort becomes a continuation of the effort of Jesus Christ and is penetrated with redemptive power: *He who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit.*⁶² It thus becomes a more exalted and more noble labor, one which contributes to a man's personal spiritual perfection, helps to reach out and impart to others on all sides the fruits of Christian redemption. It further follows that the Christian message leavens, as it were, with the ferment of the Gospel the civilization in which one lives and works.

260. Our era, it must be admitted, is penetrated and shot through by radical errors; it is torn and convulsed by deep disorders. Nevertheless, it is also an era which opens up immensely hopeful apostolic possibilities to those who toil in the Church.

261. Beloved Brethren and sons, in your company We have been able to review the various weighty problems of modern social life, taking our start with the teaching of Pope Leo XIII. In the process, We have noted norms and directives. These We invite you to dwell on and make the subject of deep meditation. But We urge you as well to bend every effort to see that they are put into practice. For if all co-operated courageously, no little advance would be made toward the realization on earth of the Kingdom of Christ: *A kingdom of truth and of life; a kingdom of holiness and grace; a kingdom of justice, love and peace,*⁶³ a starting place on the way to that enjoyment of heavenly goods for which God made us and which we so desire.

60. I Cor. 12.12.

61. John 15:5.

62. *Ibid.*

63. Preface in the Mass

of the Feast of Christ the King.

262. Our attention, to be sure, is on the teaching of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, mother and teacher of all nations. Her light illumines, enkindles and inflames. Her warning voice, filled with heavenly wisdom, has a message for all times. Her strength ever includes efficacious and suitable remedies for satisfying the increasing needs of men and dealing with the deprivations and anxieties of the present life.

The Church's voice utters, in wonderful harmony with that of the Psalmist of old, a message which never fails to fortify our spirits and lift up our minds: *I will hear what God proclaims; the Lord—for he proclaims peace to his people, and to his faithful ones, and to those who put in him their hope. Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him, glory dwelling in our land. Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven. The Lord himself will give his benefits; our land shall yield its increase. Justice shall walk before him, and salvation, along the way of his steps.*⁶⁴

263. Such are the wishes We express at the close of this letter, one to which We have given much time and attention because of Our concern for the Universal Church. We express them in order that the divine Redeemer of mankind, *who has become for us God-given wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption,*⁶⁵ may reign gloriously in triumph, throughout all ages, in all and over all. We express them, likewise, in order that when right order and harmony have been restored in society, all nations may at last enjoy prosperity, happiness and peace.

264. As a portent of these wishes and a pledge of Our paternal good will, may the apostolic blessing, which We bestow from Our heart in the Lord, descend on you, Venerable Brethren, and on all the faithful entrusted to your care and especially on those who will reply with generosity to Our appeals.

265. Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, May 15, in the year 1961, the third of Our Pontificate.

64. Ps. 84:9ff.

65. I Cor. 1:30.

Editor's Note

The preceding text of *Mater et Magistra* is a revision of the English version released by the Vatican Press Office on July 14, 1961. With help from my colleagues on the staff of AMERICA, I have attempted to rework that translation so as to bring out perhaps more clearly the sense of the official Latin text. Constant reference to the Italian and French versions of the encyclical proved helpful in this task.

The paragraph numbering conforms to the standard practice of basing divisions on the paragraphing in the official Latin text of the encyclical as it appears in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*. Section and subsection headings are taken from the modern-language versions furnished by the Vatican.

DONALD R. CAMPION, S.J.

Since we live in an age of rapid change, Pope John's encyclical will not be the last word in Catholic social teaching. But with *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, it completes a guidebook for our times.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ENCYCLICAL

by Benjamin L. Masse, S. J.

DATED MAY 15, 1961—the 70th anniversary of Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, the 30th of Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno*—Pope John's *Mater et Magistra* ("Mother and Teacher") completes for this generation the Catholic bible of socio-economic affairs.

One of the bulkiest encyclicals in the history of the Church—some 25,000 words in length—*Mater et Magistra* is an obvious and badly needed response to the cataclysmic changes that have rocked the world since the publication of *Quadragesimo Anno* in 1931. These transformations, the Pope notes, affect both the internal structure of states and their relations with one another.

They touch the field of science, technology and economics: the discovery and application of nuclear

energy; the application of chemistry to industry, with the rise of many synthetic products; the growth of automation; the annihilation of distance through the increased speed of communications and transport and the first conquests of space.

They touch the social field: the development of systems of social insurance; improvement of basic education; increased social mobility and the blurring of class divisions; the growth of a more responsible attitude toward socio-economic problems and a spreading popular interest in world affairs; the increasing imbalance between agricultural and industrial sectors within nations and between developed and underdeveloped countries on a world scale.

They touch the political field: the increasing participation of all groups

of citizens in public life; the wider activity of government in economic and social affairs; the decline of colonialism in Asia and Africa and the spread of political independence; the multiplying relationships between countries and their growing interdependence; the development of a network of supranational organizations devoted to economic, social, cultural and political ends.

To keep alive the torch lighted by Leo XIII, Pius XI and Pius XII, so that from it men may draw inspiration and guidance in coping with contemporary developments, the Pope aims in the new encyclical 1) *to confirm and make more specific points of doctrine already treated by Our predecessors*, (50) and 2) *to make clear the mind of the Church with respect to new and urgent problems of the day*. (50)

The encyclical has four divisions: *

1. The Teaching of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* and Opportune Developments in the Doctrine of Pius XI and Pius XII. (10-50)

2. Explanation and Development of the Teaching in *Rerum Novarum*. (51-121)

3. New Aspects of the Social Question. (122-211)

4. Reconstruction of Social Relationships in Truth, Justice and Love. (212-265)

To save space and come imme-

diately to what is distinctive in the new encyclical, I shall pass over the Pope's résumé of the teaching of his predecessors. This is not an easy decision to make, since the summaries of *Rerum Novarum*, *Quadragesimo Anno* and Pius XII's "Radio Message of Pentecost, 1941" are carefully done and offer an authoritative review of the Church's social doctrine.

I

Since the publication of *Quadragesimo Anno*, society has become increasingly organized, or socialized, and a continuing controversy has raged over the role of the state, private groups and individual enterprise in the economy. There has been persistent conflict, also, over wage policy, distribution of income and the status of workers within the business enterprise. Questions have likewise been raised about private property and the importance assigned to it in the Church's traditional social teaching. To all these topics the Pope addresses himself in the second part of the encyclical. (51-121)

■ PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND THE STATE. The Pope begins by restating three fundamental principles: a) the economy is primarily the creation of the personal initiative of private citizens; b) the state must act positively to promote a productive economy for the benefit of all citizens;

* The numbers in parentheses refer to paragraphs in the encyclical.

c) its action should be governed by the principle of subsidiarity, i.e., restricted to those undertakings which private groups and individuals cannot accomplish themselves.

In the light of these principles, what is to be said about the expansion of government intervention in the economic sphere?

In the first place, says the Pope, it cannot be denied that technological development and the growth of scientific knowledge have given public authorities new possibilities of controlling economic fluctuations and reducing inequalities within and between countries. Under these circumstances governments feel the need of developing techniques and structures that will enable them to intervene in the economy on a wider scale than in the past.

On the other hand, no matter how widespread and penetrating government intervention may be, it should not destroy the rights of the individual, including his right to *provide under normal circumstances for the support of himself and his family.* (55) Rather government intervention should be such as to guarantee those rights.

The ideal balance between state intervention and private enterprise is indicated by history and experience. Experience teaches us that where individual initiative is lacking, production stagnates, especially production of *goods and services of a*

kind designed not only to meet material wants, but more particularly to satisfy needs of the spirit. (57) Experience also shows that *where the state fails to act in economic affairs when it should, or acts defectively, incurable civil disorders tend to follow. Likewise, unscrupulous men . . . take advantage of the weak for their own wicked gain.* (58)

The lesson of history then is clear. It shows that *there can be no well-ordered and prosperous society unless both private citizens and public authorities unite in contributing to the economy. And each, insofar as is possible under changing circumstances and the vicissitudes of human existence, must participate in this harmonious effort to the degree demanded by the common good.* (56)

■ **SOCIALIZATION.** Since this is a new word in encyclical literature, the Pope defines it, in mouth-filling polysyllabics, as *the growing interdependence of men in society giving rise to various patterns of group life and activity and in many instances to social institutions established on a juridical basis.* (59) So understood, socialization covers movements and organizations in both the private and public sphere of the economy. It is, he explains, both the cause and the effect of growing state intervention. It results from the active concern of governments with such matters as

health, education, care and rehabilitation of the handicapped; but it is also the fruit of a natural tendency in human beings to band together to attain objectives that are beyond their individual reach.

The Pope draws up a kind of balance sheet on socialization.

On the credit side, socialization makes possible the satisfaction of many personal rights, *especially those of a socio-economic nature.*

(61) He mentions the guarantee of minimum subsistence levels, health services, opportunities for higher education, gainful employment, housing, suitable leisure and recreation—in a word, the rights guaranteed by what is loosely called the “welfare state.”

On the debit side, socialization, by multiplying organizations and juridical controls, restricts individual freedom. It creates an atmosphere which makes it hard for the individual to think for himself, to work on his own initiative, to exercise responsibility and enrich his personality.

Weighing the pros and cons, must we conclude, the Pope asks, that socialization *necessarily reduces men to automatons?* (62)

This is a question, he replies, in a statement that rated headlines, *which must be answered in the negative.* (62)

In order that the advantages of socialization may be realized and

the dangers averted, the Pope makes three stipulations: 1) that government officials have a sane view of the common good, one which includes the development of the human personality; 2) that private groups remain independent of the state, subject, of course, to the demands of the common good; and 3) that the members of private groups be treated as persons and encouraged to take an active part in the life of their organizations.

If these safeguards are observed, the Pope concludes, socialization poses no serious threat to the freedom of the individual. Rather it helps to foster in individuals *the expression and development of their personal characteristics.* (67) It also contributes to that organic reconstruction of society which Pius XI considered essential if the demands of social justice were to be satisfied.

■ REMUNERATION OF WORK. To a considerable extent, this section is a restatement of the detailed treatment of wage justice in *Quadragesimo Anno*. A just wage is one which responds not merely to the family needs of the worker, but also to his output, to the condition of the business and to the requirements of the common good. The Pope makes only one change in this formula. Well aware of the part wage costs play in unfair competition between countries as well as within countries, he

expands the concept of the common good beyond national borders to embrace the international community.

The reader should not run over this part of the encyclical too rapidly. It contains 1) a strong reaffirmation of Pius XI's plea that workers be permitted to share in the ownership of the firms which employ them; 2) a warning that today more than ever *a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy*; (77) 3) a denunciation of the unjust treatment of workers in some of the underdeveloped countries. To wealthy minorities in certain countries in Latin America, in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, the Pope's words will not make pleasant or popular reading.

■ **JUSTICE AND PRODUCTIVE STRUCTURE.** Possibly more sparks will fly over this part of the encyclical than over any other. The Pope insists here that the demands of justice go beyond an equitable distribution of income and extend to the process of production itself. An economic system may produce an abundance of goods and distribute them fairly, he remarks, but if in the process the sense of responsibility of the producers is blunted or their personal initiative impeded, the system is unjust. Although it is not possible to describe in detail the requirements of an economic structure that conforms

with human dignity, some directives can be offered. The Pope offers several.

He insists, first of all, on the preservation of the small business enterprise. Small businessmen should themselves strive to adapt to technological change and shifting consumer preference, either alone or through co-operatives. But they will need help—in the matter of credit, for instance, or taxes—and this help the government should offer.

In the second place, in medium-size and large businesses, the workers should be enabled to participate in the activity of the enterprise. Among other things, this means that *the workers should have a timely say in, and be able to make a welcome contribution to the efficient development of the enterprise.* (92) How this is to be accomplished in practice cannot be settled a priori but must be left to experience. The goal, however, is clear:

A humane view of the enterprise ought undoubtedly to safeguard the authority and necessary efficiency associated with unity of direction. It does not follow that those who are daily involved in an enterprise must be reduced to the level of mere silent performers who have no chance to bring their experience into play. They must not be kept entirely passive with regard to the making of decisions that regulate their activity. (92)

In the third place, the Pope recommends that trade unions go beyond collective bargaining to achieve their objectives. Frequently today, he says, it is not the decisions of the individual enterprise that have most effect on workers, but *those made by public authorities, or by institutions that function on a world-wide or national scale.* (99) It is appropriate, and even imperative, that the interests of workers be represented on those levels.

The Pope concludes this section with a word of heartfelt appreciation to the International Labor Organization, which, he says, has made an *effective and precious contribution to the establishment in the world of a socio-economic order marked by justice and humanity.* (103)

■ PRIVATE PROPERTY. Over the past few decades, the spread of social security, the growth of "fringe benefits" and seniority systems in connection with jobs, and the separation of management and ownership have raised questions about the traditional emphasis on private property in the Church's social teaching. The Pope settles this doubt by reaffirming—with an obvious reference to communism—the importance of private property as a *guarantee of the essential freedom of the individual and . . . an indispensable element in the structuring of a sound social order.* (111) For the rest, the Holy Father

repeats the traditional teaching on the social character of private property and the place rightfully reserved for public ownership.

II

Rerum Novarum dealt with the great changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution; *Quadragesimo Anno*, with the breakdown of *laissez-faire* capitalism after World War I. Both encyclicals concentrated on the nation-state as an economic unit, treating international issues only peripherally. Furthermore, they were mainly directed at industrial problems.

Today the world has suddenly become one in a way it never was before. Everywhere men are talking about the underdeveloped countries, many of which have become independent only within the past fifteen years. Industry continues to present challenges, but meantime agriculture is more and more demanding the attention of sociologists and economists, of private organizations and governments. Where men once worried about the industrial worker, they now worry about the agricultural proletariat. The times clearly demanded some authoritative word from Rome on farm problems and on a seething world divided between rich and poor nations in which the rich are growing richer and the poor, poorer. *Mater et Magistra* responds

to this demand, as *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* answered the demands of other times. Pope John's treatment of agriculture and the underdeveloped nations opens new vistas to the Catholic social apostolate. (122-211)

■ AGRICULTURE: DEPRESSED SECTOR.

An exodus from rural regions to urban centers, the Pope notes, is occurring on such a large scale that it is creating problems difficult to solve. As industry develops and farm technology advances, some shift of this kind is to be expected. What is taking place today, however, is mainly due to other factors, including the key one that almost everywhere agriculture is a depressed sector of the economy. As a result, nations are concerned with narrowing the imbalance in productive efficiency between agriculture and industry, with reducing the disparity between rural and urban living standards, and with countering the inferiority complex which farmers have come to feel about their work. The Pope offers several directives.

1. Let governments see that essential public services are suitably developed: roads, means of communication, health services, schools, etc.

2. Let an effort be made to see that industry and agriculture develop harmoniously, both as regards technological progress and a mutually profitable interchange of goods.

3. Let the state adapt its tax system to the peculiar nature of farming, provide credit at moderate interest rates, protect farm prices and offer to farmers the same social-security benefits available to the rest of the population.

4. Let farmers unite in co-operatives and other types of organizations to promote their welfare, remembering always the nobility of their work.

As the Pope praised the ILO, so too he here expresses his *warm approval of the work which the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been doing.* (156)

■ PROSPEROUS AND POOR NATIONS.

This is the long section of the encyclical which, very properly, attracted most attention in the press. The Pope himself emphasizes the significance of the topic:

One of the most difficult problems facing the modern world concerns relations between nations that are economically advanced and those in the earlier stages of development. (157)

But if the problem is difficult, the obligation which the disparity between rich and poor nations imposes on the rich is clear:

The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members, in a sense, of the same family requires that nations enjoying an abundance

of material goods should not remain indifferent to those nations whose citizens suffer from internal problems that result in poverty, hunger and an inability to enjoy even the more elementary human rights. (157)

This truth is all the more valid since, given the growing interdependence among nations, it is impossible to preserve a lasting and beneficial peace while glaring socio-economic inequalities persist among them. (157)

This entire section should be read and reread, especially by citizens of the richest country in the world, but the following points are worth special mention:

1. Aid to developing countries must not be a one-shot affair. Emergency assistance is needed, but it cannot of itself remove the causes which create a permanent state of misery and want. For this a long-range program of technical and financial aid is required. Although the Pope is grateful for what has already been done, he expresses his hope that in the years ahead the wealthier nations will redouble their efforts to promote the scientific, technical and economic progress of the underdeveloped nations. (165)

2. In extending their assistance, he warns the prosperous nations to be disinterested and respectful of the spiritual values of the recipient countries.

3. He exhorts the less-developed countries to learn from the experience of developed nations. It is necessary that they emphasize an increase in production, but it is no less necessary that the increased production be equitably distributed among all their citizens. Social progress must go hand in hand with economic development.

4. The Pope identifies the Church with "the revolution of rising expectations" and with the efforts of the developing nations to preserve their distinctive cultures.

5. In a detailed and sympathetic discussion of the population problem, he rejects artificial contraception as a solution and expresses his confidence in the ingenuity of man to increase the food supply, and in his intelligence and good will in bringing about a better balance between population and available resources and in distributing more equitably the abundance now being produced.

6. The Pope stresses again and again the growing interdependence of peoples and the need for co-operation on a world scale, since *individual nations can no longer adequately solve their major problems in their own environment and with their own resources.* (202) As a consequence, he deplors the mistrust in the world today and attributes it to the denial of God and the moral order that proceeds from Him. He finds reason for hope, however,

in the spreading skepticism about building a paradise on earth and in the growing consciousness of inviolable human rights, combined with an aspiration for more just and more human relations.

III

The reference to the spiritual aspect of today's crisis provides a natural transition to the pastoral exhortation—so much in character—with which Pope John brings the encyclical to a close. (212-265) This is a moving plea to Catholics to keep spiritual values uppermost in their lives (without, however, questioning the goodness of scientific-technical progress and the material well-being it produces), to realize the implications of their membership in the Mystical Body of Christ, to know the social teachings of the Church and to practice them.

Especially notable in this section is the vigor of the Pope's assertion (*We reaffirm strongly*) that *Christian social doctrine is an integral part of the Christian conception of life*. Instruction in this doctrine is not to be confined to special institutes but *must be included as an item in the required curriculum in Catholic schools of every kind, particularly in seminaries*. (223) It is to be injected *into the religious instruction programs of parishes and of associations of the lay apostolate*. And it should

be spread by every means of modern communication, by television, press and radio.

The Pope does not minimize the difficulty either of the social apostolate or of the times in which we live. Especially with regard to the Church's social teaching is the transition from theory to practice difficult, because *of the deep-rooted selfishness of human beings, the materialism that pervades so much of modern society and the difficulty of determining the demands of justice in particular cases*. (229) And as for the times: *Our era, it must be admitted, is penetrated and shot through by radical errors; it is torn and convulsed by deep disorders*.

Nevertheless, the Pope is confident that with God's help order can be restored to human society, so that all nations may enjoy peace and prosperity. If the age is difficult, *it is also an era which opens up immensely hopeful apostolic possibilities to those who toil in the Church*. (260)

The writer cannot bring this summary to a close without adding another voice to the chorus of gratitude for this providential encyclical. *Mater et Magistra* will hearten all those engaged in the social apostolate. It will attract new recruits. It will clarify doubts and dissipate confusion. Attuned to the times, it is an answer to prayer in a revolutionary age.

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REVIEW QUESTIONS

Part I: Background to the Encyclical

The Church and the Social Order

1. Why are human prosperity and culture a legitimate concern of the Church? (3)*
2. How does Pope John summarize the social teaching and action of the Church? (6)

The Period of "Rerum Novarum"

3. What was the social, economic and political climate prevailing when *Rerum Novarum* was written? (11)
4. Who were the opponents of that encyclical, and what were their objections? (16)
5. On what grounds did Leo declare that religion and the Church were indispensable for the solution of the social problem? (16)
6. What did *Rerum Novarum* say about the nature of work? (18)
7. What twofold function is property meant to serve? (19)
8. How did *Rerum Novarum* describe the purpose of the state? (20)
9. What obligations were placed upon the state with respect to labor? (21)
10. What rights of the worker were defended by Pope Leo? (22-23)

The Encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno"

11. When was *Quadragesimo Anno* written, and what specific problems did it confront? (27-29)
12. What definition of a just wage is given in the encyclical? (32-33)
13. What is Pius XI's objection to complete, or even moderate socialism? (34)
14. What specific remedies did he propose for the economic problems of the time? (37)

* The numbers in parentheses refer to the paragraph in the encyclical which treats of the matter in question.

Pius XII's Pentecost Message, 1941

15. Which, according to Pius XII, is the prior right: the right of private property or the right to subsistence? (43)
16. Who has the primary right and duty to regulate labor relations? (44)
17. When and how should the state intervene in labor disputes? (44)

The Last Twenty Years

18. Does Pope John approve of the growth of welfare programs, labor unionization and internationalism? (46-49)
19. Does he approve of the growing activity of the state in economic and social affairs? (49)
20. In what sense does the passing of colonialism create new social problems for nations and states? (49)

Part II: On Private Initiative and State Intervention

State and Private Initiative

21. In principle, who creates the economy and for what immediate purpose? (51)
22. What is the function of the state in economic affairs? (52-55)
23. What is "subsidiarity"? (53-54)
24. What norm should be used in judging the appropriateness of state intervention? (54)

Socialization

25. What is "socialization" and what does the Pope think of it? (59-62)
26. Does the growth of socialization bring about an inevitable loss of freedom? (62-63)
27. What characteristics should be built into programs of socialization? (65-66)
28. How does socialization implement the organic structure of society advocated by *Quadragesimo Anno*? (67)

Wages and Profits

29. What principles should determine wages? (69-70)
30. What is a minimum just wage, and what is a wage that is perfectly just? (71-72)

31. What is the test that Pius XII offers for measuring the economic progress of a nation? (74)
32. By what principle is labor entitled to a share in the growth and expansion of a corporation? (75-77)
33. What other factor must be considered in determining both profits and wages? (78)
34. What are the demands of the common good on the national and on the international level? (79-80)

Co-operatives and Unions

35. How are economic systems as such to be judged? (82-83)
36. What type of economic society did Pius XII encourage? (84-85)
37. Why is flexibility stressed for artisan associations and co-operatives? (87-88)
38. Why is public authority justified in its assistance to craft organizations and co-operatives? (89)
39. On what grounds does the encyclical justify an active voice for labor in management? (92)
40. Why does modern life require more leisure, education and culture of workers? (94)
41. Should organized labor have a say in national and international affairs? (99)
42. What principles are expected to motivate the world-wide activities of organized labor? (101-103)

Private Property

43. What task falls to public authority by reason of the separation of ownership from management? (104)
44. Why do some people question the necessity of private ownership in modern society? (105)
45. Has there been any change in the popular esteem for capital? Is this an improvement? (106-107)
46. What inevitably happens in a nation that fails to recognize the right of private ownership? (109)
47. What advantages may be expected to follow from a healthy condition of private ownership? (112)
48. How important is it that ownership be widely experienced? (115)

Social Aspects of Ownership

49. When is public ownership justifiable? (116)
50. What sort of officials should be chosen to administer public property? (118)
51. What is meant by the social function of property? Does private property have a social aspect? (119)
52. Does the social function of property impose any obligations? (120)
53. Which does the New Testament stress: the right of private property or the social function of property? (121)

Part III: New Social Questions

Conditions in Farm Areas

54. Why is the farm sector of the economy depressed? (124)
55. What is the nature of the challenge which the flight from depressed farm areas poses for almost all countries? (125)
56. What is the first measure that should be adopted to correct the imbalance between rural and urban areas? (127)
57. What results can be expected from co-ordinating the development of agriculture with the manufacturing and service industries? (129-130)
58. What specific public policies with respect to agriculture are required to insure harmonious development of the national economy? (131-141)

Public Policy and Agriculture

59. What is the fundamental principle of taxation? (132)
60. Why should the state adopt special tax and credit policies for agriculture? (133)
61. What two types of social insurance are necessary for farmers? (135)
62. Are social insurance systems legitimate means of redistributing income? (136)
63. How should farm prices be regulated? (137-140)
64. How can farm income be opportunely supplemented? (141)
65. What is the ideal type of farm enterprise? (142)
66. What considerations should lead farmers to have a high regard for their vocation? (144-145)

67. Why should farmers organize economically and politically? (146)
68. In pursuing their goals, what caution must farmers observe? (147)

Aid to Underdeveloped Areas

69. What should be done about imbalances which exist between regions of the same country? (150-152)
70. In aiding depressed regions, what does the common good demand of government, of private enterprise? (151-152)
71. What forms does the imbalance between land and population take? (153-154)
72. Does morality require international co-operation to correct this imbalance? (155)
73. What two international organizations are singled out for praise by Pope John? (156, 103)
74. Why must rich nations help developing nations? (157-159)
75. What should be said of nations burdened with farm surpluses? (161-162)
76. Is emergency aid to developing nations a sufficient response to their needs? (163-168)
77. In expanding their production, what policies should developing nations follow? (167-168)
78. In granting aid, what cautions should rich nations bear in mind? (169-173)
79. What attitude does the Church take toward national differences and aspirations? (181)

Population Increase and Economic Growth

80. On a world-wide scale, how is the problem of imbalance between population increase and the means of subsistence described? (185-186)
81. What is the nature and extent of this problem and how should it be solved? (188-192)
82. Why does the population problem demand a moral approach? (193-194)
83. What does the Church teach about the transmission of life? (195)
84. What does Scripture say about population and natural resources? (196-197)

International Co-operation

85. Why are understanding and co-operation among nations a prime necessity today? (200-202)
86. What is impeding international collaboration? (203-204)
87. How alone can the spirit of distrust among world leaders be banished? (207-208)
88. Why cannot a civilization be built without recognition of God's authority? (209-210)

Part IV: Reconstruction in Truth, Justice and Love

Learning Catholic Social Doctrine

89. Why are the ideologies designed to solve modern social problems so often ineffectual? (213)
90. What is the fundamental principle of the Church's social doctrine? (215-219)
91. Can one hold a Christian conception of life while rejecting or ignoring the social teaching of the Church? (222)
92. What is the Pope's wish in regard to the teaching of the Church's social doctrine in Catholic schools and seminaries? (223)
93. How will Catholics most easily demonstrate the truth and efficacy of the Church's social teaching? (225)
94. What must be the aim of Christian education in the economic and social fields? (228)
95. How does one learn Christian behavior in social and economic matters? (230-232)
96. What role in Christian social education must be accorded to associations of the lay apostolate? (233)
97. What element of the Christian conception of life is needed to check the hedonism prevalent today? (234-235)

Implementing Catholic Social Doctrine

98. How should Catholics behave when there are differences of opinion among them about the application of Catholic social doctrine? (238)
99. How should Catholics behave when co-operating with non-Catholics in socio-economic activities? (239)
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- 2) Some directives for coping with the problem. (127-156)
 - a) Essential public services should be provided in farm areas. (127)
 - b) All sectors of the economy should be developed harmoniously. (128-131)
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 - d) Farmers should unite to protect their interests, confident of the value of their contribution to society. (146-149)
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B. Problem of imbalance between countries differing in economic development. (157-184)

- 1) Human solidarity, as well as world peace, demands that rich nations help the developing countries. (157-166)
- 2) Their aid should benefit all sectors of the economy, be disinterested, respect the character and spiritual values of the recipient countries. (167-177)
- 3) Contribution of the Church. (178-184)

C. Problem of imbalance between population and resources. (185-211)

- 1) Pressure of population on resources is a problem, but not one to be solved by violating the moral order. (185-191)
- 2) Solution lies in social and economic progress and in respect for the laws of life. (192-199)
- 3) It requires co-operation on a world level, which is lacking today because of distrust arising from failure to acknowledge moral order founded on God. (200-211)

Part IV. Reconstruction of Social Relations on Truth, Justice and Love. (212-265)

- A. Man must return to God, the only foundation of a solid and fruitful temporal order. (212-221)
- B. Knowledge of the Church's social teaching, which is an integral part of the Christian conception of life, must be spread by every available means. (222-230)
- C. The task of applying Catholic social principles, of reducing them to action, belongs particularly to the laity. (231-241)
- D. All should remember the primacy of the spiritual in human life; and in the performance of their work they should be conscious both of their dignity as members of Christ's Mystical Body and of the bonds of charity which bind them to one another. (242-265)

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