

PIUS XII ADDRESSES WORKERS

Section V: 1957

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PLANNING FOR TRANSITION TO AUTOMATION

Ed.: This address to the national convention of the Christian Union of Executives and Businessmen, March 7, 1957, was originally given in Italian and reported in the Osservatore Romano, March 8, 1957; cf. Social Action Notes for Priests, April, 1957, pp. 12-13; The Pope Speaks, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 85-89. The first words of the original text are “Con vivo compiacimenta.”

Taken from **PIUS XII AND TECHNOLOGY** - Compiled by the Rev. Leo J. Haigerty
No. 6 - pp. 23-28

WITH DEEP SATISFACTION WE RECEIVE the renewed expression of devotion which you, dear sons of the Christian Union of Managers and Directors, offer Us on the occasion of the National Congress—one might almost say “jubilee”—called by you ten years after the foundation of your society.

On such occasions, the need to cast a glance at the past spontaneously arises, not only to rejoice in the progress made, and, as it were, to find refreshment in it, but also to draw from a comprehensive view new incentives to action and to the perfection of the objectives and plans that were generously undertaken when the Union was born.

Thus in a renewed study of the fundamentals, many questions present themselves to the mind, as, for example, whether the basic reason for your Union’s existence is still necessity; whether the passage of time, revealing perhaps some defects, counsels new directives and other similar fundamental problems require consideration to assure the vigor and efficiency of your work.

Need for prevision in technical change

We wish, then, to spend a little time on the first of these questions: is your Union still indispensable? We answer that the necessity, far from diminishing, seems to Us to have increased.

The future, indeed, gives good promise of excellent developments, but it is also beset with difficulties, among which the difficulty of foreseeing clearly the possible reactions of the economic world of the future stands out. The study of the literature which you kindly sent to Us, particularly on automation and farm management, confirms this.

The first question you have to face squarely in your role as Italian directors and managers is difficult, not only from the nature of the thing itself, but also because it touches the future capacity of the industrial competition of Italy with other countries.

Difficult, too, is the second question which concerns the internal, not exclusively economic, strengthening of the whole population. Both questions involve other far-reaching problems, for example, the amassing of the necessary capital, the formation and the moral, intellectual and professional instruction, especially of youth; the balance between goods and prices; problems concerning supply and demand working hours, political and trade union activities and the new conditions which the technical changes will create.

It is not Our intention to discuss here such topics which, in any case, are well known to you; all the more so because the accumulation of other business does not now permit Us to propose to you more than some brief remarks on two aspects of a complex problem.

Automation and the worker's worth

1. All of you know that today, wherever an effort is being made to increase production, which is the primary aim of automation, the question of the worker as a person, be he manager or craftsman, of higher or middle rank, though clearly of the first importance, is yet the object of a regrettable neglect.

Such neglect, where no remedy appears, would not only delay the natural development of automation, but could be responsible for sudden crises of unemployment among the working classes, and ultimately, serious harm to the economy of the entire nation. To avoid this three-fold disadvantage, managers and directors must henceforth, and more energetically than in the past, interest themselves in the technical formation of the workers engaged in production. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the transformation of the system of artisan production to that of the mechanical-industrial type, though at first it seemed forced to set the personal worth of the laborer on a par with that of a mere viewer of machinery, later manifested an increasing need for precise skill in its technicians and groups of workers.

Such need will be greater in the process involving automation not only during the period of transition, but afterward as well, for the maintenance and operation of the new machinery. It can be foreseen, too, that the era of automation will constantly increase the emphasis on intellectual qualities in those engaged in production, knowledge, inventiveness, organization and foresight.

Planning for the transition period

Undoubtedly the time of transition might cause increased unemployment among older workers, less adaptable to the mastering of new skills; but there is danger also for younger workers whenever the nation is forced by the competition of other countries to speed up the stages toward automation. Therefore it becomes necessary to think out suitable plans even now so that technical

change will not result in public disaster. In any case, managers must accept the principle that technology is a servant of economics and not vice versa.

This principle is upheld only if the concrete conditions of each individual country, especially those of its workers, who form the bulk of the consumers, are taken into consideration.

Individual differences among nations

In truth, in a period of rapid technical development such as the present one, the question of the future presents itself in different ways for each country. It is undoubtedly different for Italy, with its relatively scarce capital, limited resources of raw materials and large population, when she is compared to countries having abundant capital and raw materials, that are thus equipped with the natural requirements for the modern technical development of production.

Even now, after more than a century, the crisis of the salaried worker, caused by the industrial transformation, has not been completely solved in Italy. That change sacrificed the primacy of economics to technical forces, and especially sacrificed the primacy of the objective purpose of the national economy, which is the good of the people.

The error consisted precisely in surrendering everything to the machine, the only regulator of trade (as was then believed), to the neglect of the other even long-term measures that would put orderly control on the forces of production, to the profit of the whole social body.

The necessity of such measures as would fit the special conditions of your country remains, even in the wished-for carrying out of the scheme which grants it its own place in a United Europe. For in the beginning, at least, unification would be unable to make up at once that relative lack of capital and of raw materials which impose on your country a position below that enjoyed by better supplied nations, which are consequently more ready to embark on the new technology.

In this case, and until among the members of United Europe compensatory provisions are brought into play—such as the interchange of skilled workers, loans or privileged markets—an ever increasing disproportion in productivity will be inevitable among countries or groups of countries, and in consequence there will be a threat to the whole economy of your country.

Cooperation of all

Hence it is necessary that all individuals and organizations study the matter, and apply wisdom and foresight to the advantage of the common economy. Care for superior quality in the goods produced, supplying of real and not artificial needs of the people, must, it seems, for the present and near future, be the marks of the Italian economy. To this goal must be directed the forces of the entire nation, producer, consumer and, above all, investor.

The state and individual's responsibility

2. While attributing to the whole people, as their proper though partial function, the planning of the future economy, we are very far from agreeing that such a function has been committed to the state as such. Indeed, while studying the development of some Congresses, even of Catholics, dealing with economic and social matters, one can note an ever increasing tendency to invoke the intervention of the state; so much so that one sometimes seems to receive the impression that this is the only conceivable solution available.

Certainly, according to the social teaching of the Church, the state has its special function in the shaping of human society. In order to fulfill that function, it must also be strong and have authority. But those who continually invoke the state, and place all responsibility upon it, only bring it to ruin, and also make it the plaything of powerful interested groups. The result is that any kind of responsibility whatever for public business thus comes to an end, and that when anyone speaks of the state's duties or failings, he means the duties or defects of anonymous groups, and naturally he does not think of himself as involved in them.

State dependent on persons composing it

On the contrary, every citizen ought to be aware that the state, for whose intervention he is asking, in the concrete and in the last analysis is always the sum total of the citizens themselves, and that, consequently, no one can claim that the state has obligations and burdens to the fulfillment of which he is not himself determined to contribute, to the extent of his knowledge of his responsibility when using the rights accorded to him by law.

In reality the questions of economy and social reform depend only very extrinsically on the sound development of these or those laws—supposing that they are not contrary to the Natural Law; but they necessarily and intimately depend on man considered as a person, on his moral strength and good will to bear responsibility, and to understand and treat with sufficient knowledge and skill the things which he undertakes and to which he is bound.

No recourse to the state can create men like this. They have to rise up in the midst of the people in such a way as to prevent the election ballot—in which irresponsibility, ignorance and passions also come together—from producing a decision ruinous for the true and genuine State.

Make this truth known

But, dear Managers and Directors, why do We say all this to you? Because We are convinced that precisely your position in life puts clearly before your eyes daily that the all important consideration is man as a person.

No planning of management, no professional or legislative institution, no extensive organization with officials and meetings, can create or take the place of. the personal (value of man.

Make this truth known and effective, since the false judgment about a state which must do everything or an institution which provides everything, is very widespread. Make this truth known and effective. That will really constitute a sane plan of action for managers and directors. The restoring to health of the family, the soundness of school instruction and education, the raising of the standard of living of the people, are linked with this plan of action. But it also extends to other questions as is clear, for example, to anyone who—in order to gauge, perhaps, the extent of the people's sense of individual and personal responsibility—makes an accurate study of the statistics of those who have a double salary, or again, (of the statistics) of the increase in consumption in more numerous sections of the population in this certainly not rich country.

Bring it about, then, that the informed man, the man of education and skill, may always find a place in society and in economy, and be able to raise himself to a higher level by his work. Then conscience, God's interpreter, will praise you in your work, for you will carry to the people the best of your Christian ideals. Italy also will find, under Providence, in modern economy the path toward her destiny.

NUCLEAR ENERGY AND ITS USE

Ed.: A note to Masatoshi Matsushita, special envoy of Japanese Premier, Nobosuke Kishi, after an audience of April 14, 1957, in which the Japanese envoy sought the Holy Father's support for a movement seeking the abolition of nuclear and atomic weapons. Appended to the note were resumes of nine of the addresses made by the Holy Father since 1941 dealing with atomic energy. The note and resume were printed in French in the Osservatore Romano, April 25, 1957, under the title "La Maitrise Croissante." The more significant addresses on atomic energy referred to in the resume may be found in this book: the Easter address of April 10, 1955 (p. 222); the address to the Pontifical Academy of Science of April 24, 1955 (p. 117); the Christmas address of December 24, 1955 (p. 219); and the Easter address of April 1, 1956 (p. 167). Further discussion of armament control to prevent atomic warfare may be found in the Easter address of April 18, 1954 (p. 163); and the Christmas address of December 23, 1956 (p. 221). The moral issues in placing one's science at service of atomic warfare are indicated in the address to Military Doctors, October 19, 1953 (p. 218). English translations by N.C.W.C.; cf. The Pope Speaks, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 157-159.

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No. 9 - pp. 44-46

MAN'S INCREASING MASTERY OVER THE TERRIFYING FORCES of nature has given rise to new and urgent grounds for anxiety. For the destructive power of nuclear weapons has become unlimited, being no longer checked by the critical mass which once set a natural limit to the already terrible power of the first atomic weapons.

This unlimited power is now used as a challenge which is tossed from one camp to the other and becomes more and more catastrophic, as each side tries to outdo the other in the increasing and unfortunately real terrors which the power inspires.

Where natural catastrophes are concerned one can only bow before events that happen through the Almighty's will. But should a catastrophe occur through man's perverse wish to dominate—with all the retaliations that would follow—how could such an act not be reprobated and condemned by every upright soul?

Therefore, instead of the useless waste of scientific activity, of labor, and of material means which the preparation of this catastrophe represents—and, apart from the enormous immediate damage, no one can foretell with certainty what the ultimate biological effects, especially the hereditary ones, could be on living beings instead of this exhausting and costly race to death, scientists of all nations and all beliefs must feel a grave obligation to pursue the noble end of mastering these energies for the service of man. Scientific, economic, industrial, and even political

organizations should support with all their power efforts aiming at the use of these energies on a scale adaptable to human needs.

Resume of Previous Addresses on Atomic Energy

1941. As early as this year, on November 30, 1941, while inaugurating the sixth year of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, His Holiness Pope Pius XII alluded to studies on the atom, showing the interest of the Church in the results which could derive from these studies, in the physical as well as in the moral order (*Discorsi, e Radiomessaggi*, Vol. III, p. 276).

1943. Once again before the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, His Holiness explained, on February 21, 1943, the astonishing progress achieved in the nuclear field and immediately drew as a conclusion an exhortation to place these new results at the service of peace (*ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 388ff.).

1948. Inaugurating the new year of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, February 8, 1948, the Holy Father devoted an important part of his speech to the Atomic Age, and he warned the world of the terrible calamities which could be brought about by the use of nuclear energy for nonpeaceful ends (*ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 439ff.).

The same year, September 12, speaking to the Italian Youth of Catholic Action, the Holy Father explained, through the example of the great non-Catholic scientist Max Planck, how the study of the atom leads one to recognize the existence of a personal God (*ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 208).

1951. In his Christmas Message the Holy Father spoke again of the microcosm and considered the changes which take place in the electronic sphere and the nucleus, proposing considerations pertaining to the existence, providence and presence of God (*ibid.*, Vol. XIII, p. 396 ff.).

1955. In an address given on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1955, to the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square, the Holy Father warned the world of the tragic consequences which could derive from progress achieved in the nuclear field, denouncing not only their destructive application in warfare, but also the no less damaging effects which could result from them in the realm of genetics (*ibid.*, Vol. XVII, p. 35 f.).

Speaking on the same subject to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, April 24, His Holiness exhorted atomic scientists never to avoid in their research the requirements of traditional philosophy and morals.

In his Christmas Message of the same year, His Holiness, speaking on peace, set forth the progress achieved in nuclear weapons and emphasized the necessity for an international agreement to put an end simultaneously to atomic experiments, to renounce atomic weapons, and to institute effective control of nuclear arms. In this message, full of far-reaching exhortations and warnings,

the Holy Father openly declared that he is in favor of a cessation of nuclear experiments (ibid., Vol. XVII, p. 445 ff).

1956. In his Easter Message, April 1, 1956, His Holiness mentioned once again the peaceful use of the tremendous nuclear energy and exhorted all peoples to put a stop to this terrible race toward the abyss (*Osservatore Romano*, April 2 and 3, 1956).

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD COMMUNITY

April 25, 1957

*An Address of Pope Pius XII to the Eleventh Plenary Assembly of the
International Movement of Catholic Intellectuals*

Taken from **THE POPE SPEAKS** - Vol. IV, No. 2, Autumn 1957
pp. 195-199

YOU HAVE COME TO THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY from all parts of the world, beloved children, for the Eleventh Plenary Assembly of the International Movement of Catholic Intellectuals, and your first thought was to greet the common Father and ask his blessing and encouragement for your work.

We are very pleased to grant this request and are happy to receive you during the season of the radiant joy of Easter.

Your many delegations, which represent the sixty-four organizations affiliated to Pax Romana in its oldest branch, a magnificent international elite of all professions, are accompanied by the executive committee of the students' division. This group is both youngest and oldest, because it gave birth in 1947 to this international movement which today celebrates its tenth anniversary. We welcome you all most cordially.

The intellectual in the international community

To sum up and complete the many topics touched upon in your previous meetings you have chosen for your theme this year a timely and important subject: the place and role of Catholic intellectuals in the international community as it is now evolving.

Eminent speakers will undertake to highlight the principal aspects of this subject during your meetings; meanwhile, you have asked that We say a few words on the subject by way of introduction.

In response to your filial request, therefore, We intend to take a look, along with you, at the world community as it is now evolving, in order to recall what it should be, in light of reason and faith, and to clarify for you the attitude which you should have toward it.

International organization

For the past few years, men and nations have watched with astonishment and anxiety the swift development of international organization. Even though they may take some consolation from the wonderful material, intellectual and social progress being made in some areas of human relations, they cannot help but be apprehensive lest the unity toward which the world is moving so quickly be accomplished by violence, and lest the most powerful groups attempt to impose their sovereignty and world outlook upon all the human race.

This uneasiness has been increased by the knowledge that, in the event of a world conflict, modern weapons are capable of producing overwhelming disaster. For this reason some have asked whether the world's rapid progress is not hastening the human family toward catastrophe or tyranny. And there are also people, like yourselves, who are aware through faith of that great and eternal drama of the salvation of souls, and feel a deeper need for light and certainty.

How could Christ's Vicar not hear this appeal, then, and bring to the anxious world once again the strength of Catholic truth?

Union of hearts and minds

Delineating the role which certain persons are expected to play in the world community as it is developing. We must first of all recall the highest end, the one to which all others are subordinated. The final court of appeal for the choices and decision of a Christian must always be the will of Christ.

The Savior became man and gave his life "to gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad" (John 11, 52). He wished "to be lifted up from the earth" (John 12:32) on the cross, that He might "draw all men to him," and to unite them under his leadership in "one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16; I Cor. 15:28).

A Christian, consequently, cannot remain unmoved by international developments. As he sees the pressure of events giving rise to a more and more strictly defined world-community, he knows that this divinely willed unification should result in a union of hearts and minds in a single faith and love.

Brotherhood of man

He not only may, but must work for the accomplishment of this growing community, because he has at hand an incomparable light and strength, the example and command of the Divine Master. All men are his brothers, not merely because of their common origin and participation in the same nature, but in a way which is yet more striking—in their common vocation to the supernatural life.

Relying on certitude such as this, the Christian reflects on how earnestly God “wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:4-6). The revealed truth with which this text deals has been entrusted to the infallible magisterium of the Church, but it is also the heritage of the Catholic community which takes nourishment and life from it.

The Church gives to the faithful a frame of reference, a norm whereby to judge men and interpret events. It is your duty, dear children, to make this frame of reference your own and to investigate its strength and beauty ever more profoundly, weighing and evaluating its cohesion and depth. Let it be, in a real way, the light of your minds, the source of your activity, the refreshment of your souls.

The sphere of action

On the other hand, you are not isolated research workers or autonomous speculative thinkers; you are Catholic intellectuals. To say this is to say that you have a universal social responsibility for all that concerns the spread of Christian truth and its concrete application in all areas of activity.

By the authority which your learning and professional competence confer upon you, you constitute both a challenge and a response to those around you. By virtue of your Christian vocation you are a light which attracts—which no one can reject without implicitly condemning himself, if what he rejects is the true light of Christ. This reservation which human imperfection always justifies to some degree, nonetheless mitigates the total responsibility of Catholic intellectuals in the confusion of a society which too frequently puts aside essential questions, whether these be of current affairs or of more universal application to the political, social, or cultural orientation of a country or a continent.

Levels of cooperation

Does this forbid cooperation for the good of the community, in institutions where God is not recognized expressly as the author and lawgiver of the universe? On this point, we must distinguish between various levels of cooperation.

Without by any means forgetting that his goal is to contribute to his neighbor’s salvation, the Christian must be ever mindful that the establishment of God’s Kingdom in men’s hearts and in social institutions very often requires a minimum of human development, a simple demand of reason to which a man normally assents even if he does not have the grace of faith.

For this reason, the Christian will always be ready to work for the relief of every material distress and for the development of some common basis of knowledge. In a word, he will be diligent to achieve the betterment of the poor and the disinherited. And in this way he will be certain of fulfilling a great obligation placed on him by collective charity, that of clearing the way to a worthy life for many men and of thereby making their cooperation in common effort easier. All

this will lead men to a better state of life, enabling them to look higher, to welcome the Light and embrace the only Truth which can make them free (John 8, 32).

On the other hand, there are some people who already enjoy a certain degree of fame, and can use it to influence public opinion. These people will be aware of a greater responsibility, because truth is impatient of any admixture or impurity, and their cooperation in unstable undertakings might well be taken for endorsement of an unacceptable political or social system. But even in this area there is a vast field in which minds free of prejudice and emotionalism can create an atmosphere of agreement and can cooperate for the attainment of a genuine and worthy commonweal. All this is true because right reason is sufficient to establish the rights of man, to realize the inviolable character of the human person and to appreciate the prerogatives and limits of public authority.

The natural law

It is desirable, therefore, that Catholics cooperate in any undertaking which bases its activity on a theoretical and practical respect for the data of the Natural Law.

They will, in brief, look for some means of following these provisions unswervingly, and they will attempt to make their presence in any activity like the salt and leaven of which the Divine Master spoke.

In any group which aspires to a humanitarian goal, they will find men of generosity and superior character, who can rise above material considerations and understand that any truly collective destiny for mankind presupposes the absolute value of the persons who compose it and the existence, outside of time, of that true society of which a world community can only be a reflection and resemblance.

Self-sacrifice

But We must stress one factor which is required in all spiritual formation: a very great self-sacrifice.

Surely, Christians are not surprised at this statement. Furthermore, it is a fact of experience and a logical necessity that genuine community demands community of sacrifice.

You will recall that the incarnate Son of God taught men the conditions of unity—He “who has not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20, 28). This was His way of showing by His own example the necessity and efficacy of sacrifices in attaining that level of the spiritual life to which men are called by their supernatural vocation: the formation of the unity of the sons of God.

Salt and leaven

Is it necessary, finally, to recall to you the victory and joy of Easter? You have, beloved children, a glorious mission to fulfill. Carry into a restless world the hope and peace which come from universal fraternal devotion.

Be the salt, without which there is a risk that everything will be spoiled and corrupted. Be the leaven, so that the whole mass may rise and the bread of human solidarity may come from a shapeless mixture of ingredients.

It is Our wish that through you everyone will come to understand that “it is better to give than to receive,” more noble to serve than to be served, and that there is more joy in giving one’s life for one’s brothers than in clinging to it selfishly.

This is Our wish for you, and the grace which We beg from the risen Savior for each of your associations and for your entire movement.

As a pledge of this wish, We grant you, in the fullness of Our Fatherly affection, the most ample and affectionate Apostolic Benediction.

POVERTY, THE STATE, AND PRIVATE INITIATIVE

May 3, 1957

An Address of Pope Pius XII to the “Stations de Plein Air” Movement

Taken from **THE POPE SPEAKS** - Autumn 1957
pp.205-209

THE DAY OF YOUR ARRIVAL IN ROME, beloved sons, will leave you with indelible memories, and We too shall keep at heart, for just as long a time, the joy that We now feel in welcoming you, and in receiving with you in thought all those who could not come with you, but who have charged you with their wishes and their gifts.

We have now been given the chance to meet Our children, those most destitute of the goods of this world, to whom Our solicitude is directed all the more because they await it with more fervor and find in it a powerful source of consolation and an alleviation of their sufferings.

A wonderful dream

So then a wonderful dream is come true—a dream which many a time must have seemed illusory and in which you refused perhaps to believe! And nevertheless Divine Providence is now allowing you to live it!

Providence has created so much devotion, cooperation and sympathy, that you also can share in the privilege that many other Christians envy: that of coming to pray in places hallowed by the deaths of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul and of numerous martyrs, that also of declaring your devotion to the common Father and of receiving his benediction and his encouragement.

Be welcome then among Us, and thank the Lord who has led you here in order to allow Us to show you what place you hold in Our interests.

In spite of your modest resources, you have not wanted to present yourselves before Us with empty hands, and you have desired to offer Us several gifts in testimony of your affection. These presents seem to Us all the more precious because each one represents a share of your work, privations and sacrifices, and conveys powerfully the warmth of your feelings. We sincerely thank you for them.

A paradox in our age

Your presence here, dear children, evidences a paradox within the modern age. Whoever is interested in social questions, even from afar, cannot but marvel at the progress made in recent times in family allotments, pensions, social security, housing policies.

This progress has remarkably improved the condition of thousands of workers and humble people. Looking superficially at the condition of the most fortunate countries of Europe, one might have the illusion that the network of welfare laws and organizations among them constitutes an effective apparatus for combating misery or, at least, the involuntary causes that provoke it.

Alas! You know by personal experience that it is not so. In spite of so many praiseworthy efforts and good intentions, it must be admitted that, among the people of the most developed countries of this continent, the income of a sizeable part of the population remains below the living minimum.

There are some hundreds of thousands of people who live constantly a prey to the direst shelter, tortured by hunger, struggling desperately to keep a little dignity and not to fall ultimately into black misery and despair. On numerous occasions the public has been shaken by some unusually tragic case which sharply revealed unsuspected distresses. But soon afterward indifference and forgetfulness fell again like a thick veil to hide these painful sights and to silence these lacerating voices which shout their appeal.

The poor and destitute

How is the great number of the abandoned to be explained if not by the fact that the laws and organizations for social assistance are addressed to those who are already capable of helping themselves, capable of making a fixed contribution which will permit them to enjoy anticipated security?

By reason of unfortunate circumstances, of forgetfulness or negligence, the person involved loses his right to assistance or finds that nothing is provided for in his case, which has become suddenly tragic. And so a man and a family are reduced to destitution, forced to accept housing conditions and a kind of life unworthy of human beings, which it will be extremely hard for them to escape.

In these and others who have not the means to organize themselves, and from whom no one can count on for any political or economic advantage, society is not interested. Then do they suffer cruelly and their weakness exposes them to the tactics of unscrupulous exploiters who will try to wrest from them the little that they still have and to keep them in this state of lowliness.

Slum areas

Is it necessary to bring up the sad example of the exploitation of slum areas? Dilapidated, ramshackle houses without the most necessary hygienic installations sometimes yield a sizeable income to their owners without costing them a penny. Inevitably, they neglect to make necessary repairs in them for years on end.

Enough can never be said about the harm that these dwellings do to the families condemned to live in them. Deprived of air and of light, living in filth and in unspeakable commingling, adults and above all children, quickly become the prey of contagious diseases which find a favorable soil in their weakened bodies. But the moral injuries are still more serious; immorality, juvenile delinquency, the loss of the taste for living and for working, interior rebellion against a society that tolerates such abuses, ignores human beings, and allows them to stagnate in this way, transformed gradually into wrecks.

Society itself must bear the consequences of this lack of foresight. Because it did not wish to prevent the evil and to provide a remedy in time, it will spend enormous sums to keep up an appearance of curbing delinquency and to pay expenses for prolonged confinement in sanatoriums and clinics. How many millions authorized for the cure of evils that it would be easier and less expensive to prevent!

Children of the slums

One of the most disastrous results of unhealthy and inadequate housing is serious deficiency in the education of children. How many among them are morally abandoned by their parents, deprived of care and affection, forced to live on the street or in an environment stamped with vice! Inevitably, psychological and emotional instability is added to physical damage. Once disorder takes hold, evil tendencies lose no time in stifling the good and in making the person unfit for all normal social life. Thus the evil, perhaps accidental at first, quickly takes root and grossly aggravates the task of re-education.

Welfare organizations

Persons of good faith who have only an inadequate knowledge of the matter readily believe that the majority of those who live in the slums or who must be satisfied with an income below the essential minimum are there through their own fault or negligence, and that welfare organizations are capable of helping anyone in need of it. The fact is, existing institutions which address themselves chiefly, as we have already said to those who can help themselves, ought to be adapted and their activity extended to those who, for any reason whatsoever, are incapable of benefiting by measures already in force.

It is normal for organizations charged with distributing funds allocated for assistance to be interested in good management, but it must be admitted that they lose sight at times of their principal objective and seek their own interests first, to the detriment of the end for which they

were created. That is how it happens that they are closed to the most destitute and those who have the greatest need of their help.

Practical solutions

We should like, then, to draw the attention of public authorities to this persistent wound in modern society: there still remains a whole section of society—reaching from 10 to even 20 percent of the total population of the best provided countries of Europe—who cannot live a decent and really human life, who remain without protection against disease and moral corruption, and often become the victims of the unscrupulous. There follows for the states considerable financial outlay in order to stay the evils caused by the persistence of the slums.

Good will and competence are not lacking, ready to study the problem seriously and to suggest remedies. It might be necessary to adapt the laws regarding this subject, to complete them, to cure functional disorders in relief organizations, to curb vigorously all forms of exploitation. Practical solutions ought to take account of the circumstances proper to each country, to each area, to each case. They ought above all to consider wretchedness under its principal aspect, the human aspect.

Let them picture the personal difficulties of the party involved and his family, the possibilities of his recovery. Let them follow him with attention and affection, delegating experienced assistants for this work. Often, indeed, the prescriptions of laws and rules appear incapable of covering all the complications of real life, and even reinforce the difficulties that prevent genuinely effective relief, it is important therefore, to entrust the work of succor to persons who are active, serious and entirely devoted to their task, in order that they may be furnished with the powers necessary for the performance of their mission.

Private Initiative

Private initiative will evidently have its important role in the struggle against destitution. The work of the fresh-air camps, thanks to which you have been able to undertake your trip to Rome, gives a remarkable proof of that. Founded more than twenty-five years ago in order to send the children of poor districts into the open air, it has developed prosperously and having the advantage of devoted cooperation, it successfully conducts numerous activities for assisting the neediest. It finds housing accommodations, clothing, household furniture for them. It attends to children who are morally abandoned, puts adolescents to work, and manifests many other resourceful forms of charity.

The Lord's love and protection

Dear children, whatever may be men's attitude toward you, their indifference or their injustice, you may be sure that the Lord does not forget you, for He has said: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's leave. But as for you, the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matt. 10:29-30)

The Lord looks upon you as his children, loves you and protects you all the more because He sees you deprived of the goods of this world and exposed, as He was Himself, to the misunderstanding of the multitude. Do not fear that He will abandon you.

If sufferings and privations weigh upon you, bear in mind that in the midst of want there remains the essential possession: the presence of a generous Father who will reward your faithfulness. No doubt He is asking you to pray fervently, to remain upright, honest, and brave, even when the temptation comes to yield, as so many others have done, to the attraction of evil.

Help one another

From day to day Providence multiplies the number of those who know your needs, wish to relieve them and work for them with all their hearts. Give them your cooperation, with a will to help one another, as much as possible, and to support those who are poorer than you. Once back in your own country, you will show your gratitude to the Lord by setting to work with more joy and zeal, and you will raise up a renewal of confidence around you, the first requisite for bettering your condition and that of all your companions.

We invoke upon you all, upon your families, upon your benefactors, and upon all those who exert themselves to help the destitute, the most abundant divine favors, in pledge of which We grant you heartily Our Apostolic Benediction.

AUTOMATION: ITS PROBLEMS AND ITS PROSPECTS

Ed.: This address to the delegates to the National Convention of the Catholic Association of Italian Workers (ACLI) meeting in Rome, June 7, 1957, was originally given in Italian and may be found in the Osservatore Roma no, June 8, 1957. N.C.W.C, translation; cf. The Pope Speaks, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp.147-155. Section headings appearing in this address are from the Holy Father's own text. The address appears in the Discorsi e Radiomessagi, Vol. XIX, pp. 251-260, under the title "Il gradimento."

Taken from **PIUS XII AND TECHNOLOGY** - Compiled by the Rev. Leo J. Haigerty
No. 7 - pp. 29-39

THE PLEASURE WHICH YOUR PRESENCE HERE GIVES US, beloved sons, is increased this time by the great importance and interest of the topic chosen by the Catholic Association of Italian Workers (ACLI) as the theme of your national study meeting, namely, "Automation and the Working World."

In congratulating ACLI for its timely and constant solicitude for labor, We want to express to you, as distinguished men of learning, Our pleasure in the skill and ardor with which you meet and probe so vast and delicate a problem. You are acting as a kind of bridge between pure science and the practical activities of economics, technology and management.

Approach also as sociologists and Christians

We are aware of the difficulty and complexity of the problem which, in its different aspects, today appears as both a promise and a threat. It is proper to approach this difficult field not only as scientists and technicians, but also as sociologists and Christians. For an error in evaluating the problem would have grave and damaging effects on the material values as well as on the moral and spiritual ones which are inseparable in every man.

Your excellent preparation for the subject permits Us to limit Our talk to certain essential points which We have singled out from the material you courteously sent Us.

I. IS AUTOMATION A PICTURE OF MANKIND'S FUTURE?

Books and articles treating this subject often give the impression that automation will open an entirely new era in history. Up to the present "mechanization," "rationalization," and

“automatization” have been considered the modern methods for increasing the production and distribution of goods, and for allowing a better organized use of manpower in factories and offices. Therefore, if so much emphasis is placed today on automation, people are evidently thinking of something even newer, of something capable of radically changing not only the economy, but also the very life of man and society.

Some hopes based on false notions

In our times—already agitated by fears and hopes for the future—the very word automation divides men into optimists and pessimists regarding humanity and the world of tomorrow. It gives rise to the feeling that science intends to create something that will essentially go beyond “mechanization,” “rationalization,” and “automatization.”

The very fact that these three are not derived from practical experience, but are based on the theoretical conclusions of modern natural sciences, does not in itself give a basically new character to present efforts to develop automation, but only indicates the more extensive influence of mathematical methods recently worked out in research on genuinely quantitative relations.

If, however, some men believe that automation will open an entirely new period in the history of mankind, they obviously want to give the natural sciences a completely new place in contributing to the shaping of human life. They want to give a central place to these sciences, a place which, at least up to now, they have had to share with other sciences, including theology and philosophy.

Therefore they go so far as to say that automation will bring about a completely “man-made” world. They say that today for the first time man, enlightened by the exact sciences, is assuming the role of the “demiurge,” the autonomous lord of the world.

We certainly do not want to lessen your intensity in studying the urgent problems of automation by saying that you must consider them with greater objectivity and, above all, discard every false idea of man and the world.

What is automation?

Publications which have appeared to date on this subject are said to number more than 30,000. Nevertheless We continue to read that scholars have not yet found a satisfactory definition of automation. Only some of its elements can be described: certain operations in the manufacturing of an object, or even the entire process of production with its many different steps, are carried out in the manner of an automation. Furthermore, to assure this automatic production, devices are used that are interconnected and operate automatically: hydraulic and electrical “control” devices; optical and acoustical signal systems; mechanisms to control the quality and quantity of production and to transmit order; and electronic regulators used to control a pre-determined series of operations.

Thus not only men's muscles, but also their nerves and brains are made unnecessary in the process of production. Some go so far as to imagine or dream of a factory without workers.

If We believe that the discovery of atomic power is a great and important achievement. We must also realize that it is unusable without automation. In fact, only automation can give to industry the safety and precision which direct human labor cannot provide but which is absolutely indispensable in the use of atomic energy.

The limits of automation

All this is true and inspires in Christians grateful admiration for the greatness of God the Creator and for His works. But there are some who will claim that automation as such, as a new way of organizing the material powers of production, will in itself be sufficient to change radically the life of man and society. These persons are particularly they who, like Marxists, falsely attribute a basically decisive importance to the technical side of human life, to actual methods of production.

The present era, usually called the age of technology, tends to accept such concepts of the future. However, man's development is always determined by the totality of his nature in the midst of society and consequently by the manifold factors embraced in man's unity. Only within this framework is the technical factor efficacious.

In the long run, the technical factor cannot prevail either against the general direction of the economy or against that of social life in general. If it were otherwise, your convention would have no meaning whatsoever, and the working world would have to accept automation blindly as its fatal destiny. However great the influence of automation may become, it will by nature remain limited. It is one of the factors of the future, but it is not in itself either a decisive or compelling factor.

Automation and the life of society

Nevertheless automation does endow man with the power to become the demiurge of a "man-made world." Thanks to the methods of production which automation introduces, man is, without a doubt, able to create a reality corresponding more and more exactly to the design he has worked out in advance, and in this respect it is a "man-made world."

The technical triumph of automation consists precisely in its success in making a preconceived plan the guiding "spirit" which informs and directs the entire process of material production. For this reason we see controls, warnings, and adjustments in production as if it were a living body. We find disturbances just as in a living organism. We even find a flexibility and adaptability proper to the process of production itself.

It is not at all surprising, therefore, if on the basis of the principle of automation some see in the development of the natural sciences the possibility of organizing the very life of human society according to the preconceived plan, in such a manner as to cause it to be a "man-made world."

Plans based on statistics and mathematics, however, are insufficient to deal with the realities of society and its stable organization, even though today social sciences lean toward this one-sided concept of their object. Social life requires further and principally other forms of knowledge—theology, philosophy, and the sciences of man’s spiritual life and of his history.

II. AUTOMATION AND NATIONAL ECONOMY

Thus we cannot state unconditionally that automation is the entire picture of the future for human society. Man, moving toward domination of the world, always remains, to his own advantage, bound by limits imposed by nature, or, in other words, by the same divine wisdom that set “a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits” (Prov. 8:29). These limits may be pushed further and further. Nevertheless they remain unsurpassable.

Technical and economic productivity

But even if considered as a new method of production, automation is still a delicate problem requiring consideration and prudence,

First of all, the danger arises that in automation we might confuse technical productivity with economic productivity. The fascinating novelty that automation offers lies in the possibility of keeping under control a continuous and uninterrupted process of production. It obviously increased productive capacity fantastically. Does it also, however, increase the true productivity of the national economy?

By this We mean the lasting and true attainment of conditions which make possible the material and human well-being of all members of the population, so that all who contribute directly to the national economy through their labor, their property, or their capital will earn an income comparable to their contribution. Furthermore, such national economic productivity should make it possible to overcome social tensions more easily.

Capital, specialists, markets needed

Will the introduction of automation lead to these conditions? If we study the requirements of technical production, We readily see that a great deal of capital is required, chiefly from funds available for long-term investment. Nor must anyone forget that an ever-increasing number of specialists capable of planning and directing large-scale production is needed. Finally, it is more necessary than ever to have a wide consumer’s market assured.

Cautious application of automation

In view of this we can easily understand why even those European countries best equipped in these respects face the problem of automation with caution and are temporarily content with partial automation.

We also note that, up to now, the effects of automation on the actual national economy have nowhere been tested. The fact that automation was devised for the production of armaments, and even today is most successfully applied in that field, only proves automation's undeniable technical productivity.

It might be added that, in most countries, it will be possible to consider the use of automation economically only when disarmament frees the necessary capital and when the development of technology—which has been accelerated mainly by the arms race—will no longer make obsolete tomorrow many things which were thought of yesterday as advances.

In any event, a nation which is not rich and which is pressed by immediate and urgent needs in many fields, such as education, communications, agrarian reform and housing construction, must get along with its limited capital. Nor should it live beyond its means. This can easily happen when expenditures and investments are dominated by fascination with technical progress.

Danger of technological unemployment

Another important aspect of social life which must be carefully considered is the danger of technological unemployment, which is likely to arise with the introduction of automation.

Some predict that this danger will have to be faced for only a brief period since in the long run other job opportunities for the unemployed will develop through the founding of new industries, the reallocation of labor to other places of employment, and the shortening of working hours at the same rate of pay together with an increase in contract labor. All of these things will be done in order to earn maximum profits by keeping costly plants running day and night.

It seems that in the long run these means might overcome technological unemployment. But they would also increasingly limit a workers freedom, and in certain instances increase the differences between the various classifications of workers. Furthermore, they would make impossible the common sanctification of Sunday within the family, something which is already seriously threatened. We might also ask ourselves whether these aspects of automation would become a burden on national economic productivity.

But even though all of these problems could be settled satisfactorily in the long run, the fact remains that an increase in technological unemployment, even for a short period, would be a hardship which some countries could not lightly face. In this matter we cannot adopt the false maxim which in the past led some politicians to sacrifice an entire generation for the benefits expected to accrue to succeeding ones.

Harmonize interests of management and labor

The challenge of the problems posed by automation to the national economy—which We have merely touched upon—always reaches its peak when it comes to maintaining productivity. This is particularly true because a national economy entirely equipped according to the new technique would seem to be much more vulnerable generally and much less flexible in case of crisis or other disturbances.

The central problem, then, is to harmonize to a greater degree the interests of management and labor, and to make them aware of their common destiny in a social economy which develops productive powers more and more harmoniously throughout the nation, a social economy which is gradually spreading throughout Europe, and which is open to the rest of the world.

Only one word of advice can be given under such circumstances to the parties whose relationships are determined by a work agreement; it is better to bargain than to fight. It is the only word which both labor and management can make their own in the light of their conscience and before the world.

New wage patterns for new types of workers

Once working conditions have undergone a considerable change as a result of automation, the whole question of wages will have to be considered in a new light. This is so because up to now labor was at the center of the process of production. It was the contribution—measurable according to output—of the muscle power and manual skill of the hired hand. Now, on the contrary, the individual is at the head of the process of production, and he must constantly cooperate with it with care and technical “know-how” so that production is continuous and, in case of trouble, can be again resumed as quickly as possible.

New criteria therefore must be adopted for estimating the value of paid labor. The question of new types of workers will have to be taken into consideration. Internal trade union problems and perhaps even modifications of their present forms will have to be considered, particularly if it is borne in mind that, in various sectors of the national economy, automation will not greatly affect labor even in the future.

The socialist formula not the solution

The multiplicity of problems on the one hand and on the other the amazing technique of automation—namely, production taking place uninterruptedly according to an organized plan—make many people think that social problems in the era of automation can and must be solved only according to the program of socialism. They think, in other words, that social problems can be solved only by doing away with the institution of private property, at least in so far as it has been the basic norm for the well-ordered use of material goods.

We alluded earlier to Marxist influence. Undoubtedly in the national and European economy, more planning will be necessary. But this need not and cannot be identical with more or less absolute state control.

It cannot be because the independence of families and the freedom of citizens are by nature linked with the sound functioning of private property as a stabilizing social institution.

It need not be, if the adherence of our aims and institutions to the common welfare makes itself felt ever more strongly and is legally effective in business, in the various sectors of production, in government, and in parliament, that is to say, wherever decisions are made that affect man and the economy.

III. AUTOMATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Because Our interest in this problem turns primarily to the human person, as both the subject and object of every social transformation, We wish to add some observations as to the future of the workingman in an economy controlled by automation.

Freedom from the monotony of labor

It is said that automatic machinery will definitely free men from the monotony of labor, from repeating the same movement over and over again; and that the operation of machinery will no longer force him and his group to work at a relentless rhythm. Man will feel himself master of what is going on, of what he is supervising and checking with responsibility and competence and master of things he repairs.

However, he will undoubtedly feel the burden of labor in other forms. There will be places where, alone and under nervous tension, he will have to watch for hours on end the astonishing process of automatic production. The words of the Bible—"In the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread. . ." (Gen. 3:19)—will not be nullified even by the new era of automation. It will remain true in new ways.

More skilled workers required

Workers will no longer be able to specialize in a single field. They will have to be intellectually and vocationally skilled to undertake the operation and coordination of the most varied kinds of apparatus. Thus, judging from experiments made up to now, the number of unskilled workers will become smaller, while that of skilled and fully trained workers will increase proportionately.

Already the constant shortage of fully qualified workers shows that the greater burden of work rests upon them. This means that intellectual versatility, vocational training, self-assurance and readiness to assume responsibility will be more and more necessary.

Need for comprehensive vocational education

Such men cannot be trained rapidly by some kind of automatic education. They must be allowed to grow in their vocational education, as in any other. We cannot, therefore, forego the long apprenticeship followed by work in the shops themselves as well as in specialized schools.

This education must surely be adapted to the needs of technical progress and provide sound knowledge and vocational skill. To be a true education, however, it must involve the whole man because in the advance of modern economy the qualities of a worker's character are of decisive importance.

Furthermore, since particular aptitudes are required and modern workers must, at least within certain limits, be familiar with the whole process of production, with the branches of production and with the national economy, in keeping with the various institutions which the modern law of labor has created, it is necessary that professional training and, before that, the school give to them a sufficiently broad cultural background.

A true concept of leisure and sound popular culture

We think that the worker thus educated can also solve the problem of leisure time which automation will give him. He who has properly understood the religious, moral and vocational meaning of labor will likewise understand the meaning of leisure, and will also know how to employ it usefully.

He will be free from the false notion that man works simply in order to enjoy his free time. For in reality man has leisure not only as a natural and proper relief, but to improve his faculties, to better fulfill his religious, family, and social duties, and to make himself physically and spiritually better fit for work. At this point, an imprudent use of automation could seriously endanger, not only people's morals but also the sound structure of production and consumption in the national economy. Vocational training therefore holds an important part in the education of the people and in the development of a sound popular culture.

If the urgent problems of automation particularly in Italy impel us to ponder and take action toward this end, a great step forward shall have been made. Not only is a high degree of income of relevant importance, but even more so is its rational use. Equally important is the proper use of increasingly extensive rights, rather than their possession. All of this naturally depends on the internal stability of men

May Our words bear witness to Our interest

We wished to express the ideas that came to Our mind while becoming acquainted with your material of study. At your sessions you will undertake to examine more widely and deeply such a vast subject. May Our words bear witness to the interest with which We shall follow your

discussions, and may this participation on Our part be to you a source of encouragement and comfort.

May God grant to you abundant graces, as a pledge of which We impart to you from Our Heart Our paternal Apostolic Blessing.

EUROPEAN UNION

June 14, 1957

An Address of Pope Pius XII to the “Congress of Europe”

Taken from **THE POPE SPEAKS**
VOL. IV, No 2, - pp. 201-204

IT GIVES US GREAT PLEASURE TO WELCOME YOU, gentlemen, on the occasion of the Congress of Europe, which was called by the Italian Council for the European movement.

It has been your wish that your work help strengthen the spirit of cooperation between organizations and political forces in order that European unity might be established more quickly.

The European idea

You have some idea how closely We have followed the progress of the European idea and how We have watched the concrete efforts being put forth to make the idea penetrate more deeply into men’s minds and, under the proper circumstances, to bring about its realization. Despite some wavering between success and regression, this plan has made some headway during the past few years. Not long ago, when this plan first took shape for application to autonomous and independent governmental institutions, people thought that it was an ideal which, albeit desirable, was nonetheless unattainable.

European union today

But in 1952 the legislative bodies of six western European nations approved the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community, and the social and economic advantages of the move have been encouraging. On the other hand, the European Defense Community, which was supposed to unify efforts toward defense on a military and political basis, met with such strong resistance that it failed. At the present time, many people are of the opinion that it will be a long while before the initial enthusiasm for unification is revived.

In any case, it is not yet time to consider unity on a supra-national basis and we should fall back upon the formula of the Union of Western Europe which, aside from military aid, is intended to stimulate social, cultural, and economic cooperation. But We still cannot consider this a sufficiently strong basis for a European community, since the majority decisions of the Council of

Ministers are under strong limitations and the Assembly is unable to impose its will or use parliamentary control.

From the spring of 1955, when it was touched off, the so-called European revival grew until, on March 25, 1957, it climaxed in the signing of treaties for Euratom and the Common Market. Granted that this community is under some restrictions in the economic area, it is nevertheless able, by extending its field of activity, to make the member-states aware of their mutual interests. This awareness, naturally, will exist at first only in the material order, but, if the attempt is successful, it will extend itself to those areas where moral and spiritual values are concerned.

Responsible authority

Your congress has kept a sharp eye on the future, and you have, before anything else, examined the decisive point upon which depends the formation of any community worthy of the name: the formation of a European political authority which will have sufficient responsibility to be felt. From this point of view, the European Economic Community is less successful than the Coal and Steel Community, whose High Authority has powers which are relatively broad and which, except in certain determined cases, do not depend upon any Council of Ministers.

Among the tasks facing you now, the first one is the ratification by the interested parliaments, of the treaties We mentioned above, which were signed at Rome on March 25. As a second step, you will have to examine means of reinforcing the powers of the executive branches of the already existing communities, in order to come, finally, to some idea of the constitution demanded by this political unity.

Political union

You have already looked into the question of an external political community and you have learned that, for such a situation to be successful and produce results, it does not necessarily presuppose an already existing economic integration. A single external political community in Europe, though it will allow for the differences arising from varying interests, will also base itself on the common economic, spiritual, and cultural interests of its members. Such a community is becoming more and more indispensable in a world which, more and more, is splitting up into small groups.

Fortunately, interests overlap on enough points to permit such a plan for unity to be put into action among the already existing European institutions, but an instrumentality is needed which will effectively refine and apply such a plan.

Europe and Africa

Finally, you have considered the problems connected with an association between Europe and Africa, which was given special mention in the March agreements. It seems to Us that Europe must

keep her influence in Africa so far as education and formation are concerned and wherever, more basically, she gives a great deal of material aid which helps to raise the standard of living of the people of Africa and enhances the value of the continents natural resources.

In this way Europe will prove that her desire to form a community of States does not spring from selfish motivation. She will show that she is not, after all, interested simply in a defensive arrangement which will protect her from external threats to her interests. She will prove that, more than anything else, she is working from constructive and disinterested motives.

The need for union

Right now, it is abundantly clear that there is real need for union and that such a union must be built upon foundations strong enough to support it. Whether it be a painful process or a happy one, the construction of the union is going forward and, despite some unsuccessful tries, it is going forward with courage.

You have already ventured to pass beyond the realities of the present, and are beginning to select the stones necessary for tomorrow's building. We are happy to see such a spirit, persuaded that it comes from generous and upright motives. Your aim is to secure for Europe, which has so often been torn asunder and bloodstained, a lasting unity which will enable her to continue her mission in history.

The Christian message

If it is true that for Europe the message of Christianity was like the leaven in dough, always working, and causing the whole mass to rise, it is no less true that this same message remains, today as yesterday, the most valuable of the treasures with which she has been charged. With the concept and exercise of the fundamental liberties of the human person, this message can maintain the vigor and integrity of the operations of family and national society and, in a supra-national community, can guarantee respect for cultural differences and a spirit of conciliation and cooperation, along with an acceptance of the sacrifices which it will entail and the dedication which it will demand.

No undertaking in the temporal order comes to a conclusion without giving rise to another, without generating, in its accomplishment, a whole series of other obligations, needs and objectives. Human society always depends on the future; it is always in search of a better organization, and cultures often survive only by dying and giving birth to richer and more brilliant cultures which in their turn yield to others.

Christianity brings an element of growth and stability to each of these cultures. Above all, it directs their forward march toward a clearly defined goal, and gives them an unchanging assurance of a homeland which is not of this world and which only knows perfect union, because it originates in the strength and light of God Himself.

It is Our most earnest wish that this ideal will always guide your work and give you strength to bear without discouragement the fatigue, bitterness, and disillusionment inherent in all such undertakings. May you be able to construct for the men of our age an earthly home which bears some resemblance to the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of truth, love and peace, to which they aspire from the depths of their beings.

As a token of the divine favors which We ask for your work, We give to you, to your families, and to all your dear ones, Our Apostolic Benediction.

PROBLEMS OF TRANSPORTATION

October 24, 1957

An Address of Pope Pius XII to the European Council of the Ministers of Transportation

Taken from **THE POPE SPEAKS** - Spring 1958
pp. 441-442

The seventh meeting, gentlemen, of the members of the Council of the European Conference of the Ministers of Transportation brings you to Rome and occasions your wish for an audience. In acceding to your wish We are happy to greet you as the representatives of the seventeen nations which are taking part in your Conference.

The question of transportation, so closely linked with that of commerce and with all the problems of a European federation, is assuredly one that demands constant reconsideration. It is clear that the effectiveness of recent economic treaties depends in no negligible way on the facility, the rapidity, and the security of trade agreements which are being established among your countries. The coordination of highway, railway, and air systems will be improved, and so likewise will the commercial and human relations between the different regions of Europe.

Although the technical aspects of your problem exceed Our competence, We readily appreciate your difficulty in taking into account so many different factors of the problem. And yet the consequences of a more perfect harmonization of European transportation so vitally affect the cause of peaceful union so dear to Us that We cannot remain indifferent to the great strides that will result—which is Indeed Our keenest wish—from the discussions and studies which you pursue in common in the city of Rome.

It so happens that on this October 24 the Roman liturgy celebrates the feast of the Archangel Raphael whom the Church invokes in behalf of travelers. The source of this devotion is obviously the book of Tobias with its account of the safe guidance of his protege by the messenger of God. We cannot draw attention to this happy coincidence without rejoicing over the fact that it assures you of a share in the prayer of the Church. In expressing best wishes for the outcome of your meetings. We ask God to bless your efforts with success, and as a pledge of Our good wishes, We give Our Paternal Apostolic Benediction to you, to your families, and to those dear to you.

TOWARD A EUROPEAN FEDERATION

November 4, 1957

An Address of Pope Pius XII to the Assembly of the European Coal and Steel

Taken from **THE POPE SPEAKS**
VOL. IV, No. 4 — pp. 443-446

IT IS A PLEASURE TO RECEIVE YOU, gentlemen, and to greet you as the first and, at present, the only duly constituted European parliamentary institution representing different States.

Everyone knows with what interest We have followed the attempts at federation which have been going on since the end of World War II, and particularly the project which was to end in the setting up of this European Coal and Steel Community, armed with true legislative powers in its own domain. The movement was launched in the month of May, 1950, in a spirit that was both daring and realistic, and in 1951 a treaty signed by the six countries you represent gave it expression, this treaty became effective on July 25, 1952, and its first economic results were soon felt in a favorable way.

An event such as the meeting of your legislative assembly in Rome will, We feel sure, create greater public interest in the benefits to be derived from a unity that is broader than that of a nation as understood in the traditional sense. Men will not fail to be struck by the increased production of coal and steel; by the lower prices resulting from the elimination of customs barriers and restrictive measures; and by the professional readaptation of workers and the free circulation of manpower which, very fortunately, have recently been put into effect.

Futility of narrow nationalistic politics

A vital economic necessity obliges modern states of lesser power to form a close alliance if they wish to pursue the scientific, industrial and commercial activities which condition their prosperity, their true liberty, and their cultural growth. A whole set of reasons urges the nations of Europe today to federate in an effective way.

The material and moral ruins caused by the last World War have given a better insight into the futility of narrow nationalistic politics. Europe, battered and humbled, feels the need of uniting and of putting an end to worldly rivalries; she sees territories that were formerly protectorates reach the age of autonomy quickly; she notes that the market of basic goods has passed from a national to an international plane; finally, she senses, and so does the entire world with her, that all men are brothers and are called to work together in assuming responsibility for all the miseries of mankind and in putting an end to the scandal of famine and ignorance. How can the nations of Europe dare again to confine themselves to a shortsighted protectionism when experience has

proven that such measures ultimately stifle economic expansion and diminish the resources that are available for the improvement of the lot of humanity?

Law and authority

It would be erroneous to believe that the new order will rise from the sheer pressure of economic factors. Human nature, weighed down by sin, breeds only disorder if left to its own desires. What is needed is a recognized law, and an authority able to enforce it.

One of the advantages of the European Coal and Steel Community is that it has proven its usefulness by tangible results. A greater stability of prices has made buyers and sellers acquire the habit of trading within the entire market, and the climate of confidence thus created gives hope that the treaty will soon be extended to include wider areas. At present, however, it can only guarantee a partial equilibrium, for a too-important part of economic trade still escapes it.

Social progress

Another benefit of the ECSC which We would like to insist on is the social progress it stimulates in the interested states. It has done this by improving the living conditions of the workers, by assuring employment to workmen who as a result of more advanced technology had been discharged; by maintaining the level of salaries; by procuring for those concerned unemployment compensation, travel compensation, and compensation for technological training; by supplying investments destined to create additional employment, or by constructing homes for the families of workingmen.

We would like to mention in particular the recent creation by the European Coal and Steel Community of the work-card which allows a first-class worker to circulate freely from one country to another. This result, although it may seem insignificant to the man in the street is in reality the fruit of laborious negotiations necessitated by the diversity of the labor laws of the countries included in the Community; its symbolic value and practical importance, therefore, escapes no one. The equality of social conditions which it must progressively create across the new Europe among workers of the same category will certainly have profound human repercussions, and We express the hope that it will tend to bring minds and hearts closer in a real brotherhood.

Social information

Besides this benefit, which is primarily material, the work of the Community in the domain of social information also deserves attention. Indeed, the regular publication of firsthand reports on the condition of the market and production, the possibility given to labor unions to participate in inquiries on wages within the areas included by the Community, the financing of studies on the security of work or on specific sicknesses such as silicosis among miners, constitutes very notable services rendered to the workingman and an additional reason for Our good will.

Naturally, there is much work left to be done, and all the progress recently accomplished cannot be attributed to the ECSC, but the initial steps taken in the spirit of the treaty by the organizations which the Community has inspired have led to valuable experiences and have occasioned changes which otherwise would have come more slowly. Even certain failures, for example in the transfer of manpower from less economically favored to more favored regions, have made unbiased appraisers aware of the necessity for a more daring economic policy, one more comprehensive and far-reaching in behalf of underdeveloped regions of Europe.

A moral lesson

A moral lesson in energy and patience emerges from the present situation of the ECSC, for it could achieve the substantial results thus far attained only through a long juridical and technical preparation, without which it would never have overcome difficulties of all kinds which confronted it during the first months. Today many misgivings have been allayed which might have seemed insuperable, and one can begin to see, albeit imperfectly, that the movement under way can pause no longer, but must be wholeheartedly embraced and those temporary sacrifices accepted without which it cannot succeed.

It is, therefore, a joy for Us to think of the benefits, both spiritual and material, which can result from the pooling of the rich patrimony of Europe. In speaking of patrimony We deliberately use the word in a broad sense to include especially intellectual and moral values. It is surely necessary to base the attempt at political union on sure economic factors; but we must count even more on the enrichment and stimulation which will result from fusion of old and deep-rooted cultures on the meeting of complementary temperaments and traditions, on the common development of the store of personal and social forces that has accumulated over long centuries of peaceful conquests—those conquests over the forces of nature which have improved, enriched, and embellished the land, and those victories over ignorance and error which have given birth to the culture, knowledge, and spiritual life of the Western world.

Love of the fatherland

There is no thought of abolishing allegiance to one's fatherland or of fusing races arbitrarily. Love of the fatherland flows directly from the laws of nature, as summed up in the traditional text of the Commandments of God: "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee" (Ex. 20:12), Nevertheless, gratitude for the labors and accomplishments of our ancestors ordinarily begets an instinctive preference for certain ways of thinking and living and an attachment to privileges, which do not always have, or no longer have, any justification for existing in view of the new obligations created by the swift and profound evolution of the modern world. To enter into a larger community always entails sacrifices, but it is urgently necessary to understand their inescapable and ultimately beneficial character.

We note, incidentally, a happy change in public opinion in this regard, an opinion now better informed, thanks to the facility of travel and the abundance of written and audio-visual documentation from which everyone can profit at little expense. This is a beginning, and to speed

it on its way the contribution will secure for you, with God's help, that degree of unselfishness without which there cannot be profound and durable union.

A salutary way

Just as the agreements now in force were the fruit of long efforts and of a supple and tenacious perseverance, so new hurdles cannot be cleared without expending great effort. The results thus far obtained augur well for the future, and "We express the most sincere wishes for the work of your assembly.

The countries of Europe which have agreed to the principle of delegating a part of their sovereignty to a supranational organism have embarked. We believe, on a salutary way which can produce, for them and for Europe, a new life in all domains, an enrichment not only economic and cultural but also spiritual and religious.

And so We call down on your assembly light and strength from on high, and as a pledge of these We grant with all Our heart Our Apostolic Blessing to you, to all who are dear to you and whom you desire to recommend to Our prayers.

MORAL PROBLEMS IN FASHION DESIGN

November 8, 1957

An Address of Pope Pius XII to a Congress of the “Latin Union of High Fashion”

Taken from **THE POPE SPEAKS**
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BELOVED SONS AND DAUGHTERS, promoters and associates of the “Latin Union of High Fashion,” We heartily extend to you Our paternal welcome.

You have seen fit to come here to give Us testimony of your filial devotion and, at the same time, to seek heaven’s favor on your Union. From its very inception you placed it under the auspices of Him Whose glory must be the end of every human activity, even of those that are apparently profane, according to the precept of the Apostle of the Gentiles: “Whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

A delicate and complex problem

You propose to examine from the Christian point of view and with Christian intent a problem which is as delicate as it is complex. Its moral aspects cannot be ignored. It is a constant object of attention and anxiety for those whose task it is, by reason of their duties in the family, in society, and in the Church, to preserve souls from the snares of corruption and to protect the whole community from moral decadence: the problem of fashions, especially women’s fashions.

It is right and proper that your generous intentions should receive Our gratitude and that of the Church, and that your Union, born of and inspired by a sound religious and civic sense, should receive Our fervent wishes for the achievement, through the enlightened self-discipline of fashion designers, of the twofold aim expressed in your statutes: to improve the moral condition of this important sector of public life, and to help raise fashions to the level of an instrument and expression of well-intentioned civility.

Since We wish to encourage such a praiseworthy enterprise. We have willingly consented to your request that We set out Our thoughts to you, particularly on the proper formulation of the problem and, most important of all, its moral aspects. We shall also make some practical suggestions which may guarantee to the Union a well-accepted authority in this highly controversial field.

I. GENERAL ASPECTS OF FASHIONS

Following that counsel of ancient wisdom which finds in the purposes of things both the ultimate criterion for every theoretical evaluation and the certainty of moral principles, it will be useful to recall those aims which man has always established for himself where his clothing is concerned.

Three reasons for clothing

Without doubt he obeys the familiar requirements of hygiene, decency, and adornment. These are three necessities so deeply rooted in nature that they cannot be disregarded or contradicted without provoking hostility and prejudice. They are as necessary today as they were yesterday; they are found among almost every people; they can be seen at every stage of the wide scale in which the natural necessity of clothing is historically and ethnologically manifested.

It is important to note the strict and close interdependence that binds these three necessities, despite the fact that they derive from three different sources. The first is derived from man's physical nature; the second from his spiritual nature; the third from his psychological and artistic nature.

...Hygiene

The hygienic requirements of clothing concern mostly the climate, its variations and other external factors as possible causes of discomfort or illness. It follows from the above-mentioned interdependence that hygienic reasons—or, rather, pretexts—cannot serve to justify a deplorable license, especially in public, aside from exceptional cases of proven necessity. But even in these cases, every well-bred soul would be unable to avoid the distress of an involuntary feeling of confusion, outwardly expressed by natural blushing.

In the same way, a manner of dressing which is harmful to health—and there are no few examples of this in the history of style—cannot be considered legitimate on the pretext of beauty. On the other hand, the common rules of decency must give way to the needs of a medical cure which, although it may seem to violate them actually respects them when all due moral precautions are employed.

...Decency

Equally obvious as the origin and purpose of clothing is the natural requirement of decency, understood either in the wider sense, which includes proper consideration for the sensitivity of others to objects that are unsightly, or, above all, as a defense of moral honesty and a shield against disordered sensuality.

The strange opinion which attributes the sense of a modesty to one type of education or another, and even considers modesty a conceptual deformation of innocent reality, a false product of civilization, a stimulus to dishonesty, and source of hypocrisy, is not supported by any valid reason. On the contrary, it finds explicit condemnation in the resulting repugnance with which they are viewed who dare to adopt this point of view. Thus the soundness of common sense, manifest in universal usage, is confirmed.

Natural decency in its strictly moral sense, whatever its origin may be, is founded on the innate and more or less conscious tendency of every person to defend his personal physical good from the indiscriminate desires of others so that he may reserve it, with prudent choice of circumstances, to those wise purposes of the Creator which He Himself has placed under the protective cover of chastity and modesty.

This second virtue, modesty—the very word “modesty” comes from *modus*, a measure or limit—probably better expresses the function of governing and dominating the passions, especially sensual passions. It is the natural bulwark of chastity. It is its effective rampart, because it moderates acts closely connected with the very object of chastity.

Modesty makes man hear its warning, like a forward sentinel, from the moment he acquires the use of reason, even before he learns the full meaning and purpose of chastity. It accompanies him throughout his entire life and demands that certain acts, which are good in themselves because they are divinely established, should be protected by a discreet veil of shadow and the reserve of silence, in order to confer on them the respect owed the dignity of their great purpose. It is therefore just that modesty, as the depository of such precious possessions, should claim for itself an authority prevailing over every other tendency and every caprice, and should preside over the determination of fashions in clothing.

...And adornment

And here we arrive at the third purpose of clothing, from which fashions draw their origin more directly, and which responds to the innate need, more greatly felt by woman, to enhance the beauty and dignity of the person with the same means that are suitable to satisfy the other two purposes.

In order to avoid restricting the scope of this third requirement to mere physical beauty, and, even more, to avoid associating fashion with lust for seduction as its first and only reason, the term *adornment* is preferable to *beautification*.

This penchant for the adornment of one’s own person clearly derives from nature, and is therefore legitimate.

Over and above the function of clothing which hides physical imperfections, youth asks for clothing which has an attractiveness and splendor that sing the happy themes of the spring of life, and which facilitates, in harmony with the rules of modesty, the psychological prerequisites

necessary for the formation of new families. At the same time, those of mature age seek to obtain from appropriate clothing an aura of dignity, seriousness, and serene happiness.

In those cases in which the aim is to enhance the moral beauty of the person, the style of the clothes will be such as almost to eclipse physical beauty in the austere shadow of concealment, to distract the attention of the senses, and concentrate reflection on the spirit.

The language of clothing

Considered under this wider aspect, clothing has its own multiform and efficacious language. At times it is a spontaneous and faithful interpretation of sentiments and habits; at other times it is conventional, affected, and therefore hardly sincere.

Clothing expresses joy and sorrow, authority and power, pride and simplicity, wealth and poverty, the sacred and the profane. The specific form of this expression depends on the traditions and the culture of a particular people; it changes all the more slowly as the institutions, characters, and sentiments that the styles interpret are the more stable.

The nature of “fashion”

Fashion—an ancient art of uncertain origins, which is made complex by the psychological and social factors it involves—applies itself expressly to the enhancement of physical beauty. At present, fashion has achieved an indisputable importance in public life, whether as an aesthetic expression of customs, or as an interpretation of public demand and a focal point of substantial economic interests.

A profound observation of the phenomena of fashions will reveal that they are not only extravagant in their form, but are also the meeting point of such different psychological and moral factors as taste for beauty, thirst for novelty, affirmation of the personality, intolerance of monotony, no less than luxury, ambition and vanity.

Fashion is actually elegance, conditioned, however, by constant change in such a way that its own instability confers a distinctive constant change of fashions, which has now become seasonal—changes which are slower in basic lines, but extremely rapid in secondary variations—seems to be a desire to surpass the past. It is facilitated by the frantic character of the present era, which has a tremendous capacity for burning up in a short time all that is meant to satisfy the fantasy and the senses.

It is understandable that new generations intent upon their own future—a different and better dream than that of their fathers—should feel the need to detach themselves from those forms, not only of clothing but also of objects and ornaments, which most obviously recall a way of life that they wish to surpass. But the extreme instability of present-day styles is determined above all by the will of artificers and guides, who have at their disposal such means, unknown in the past, as an

enormous and varied textile production, the inventive fertility of fashion designers, and easy means of “launching” fashions in the press, movies, television, exhibits and fashion shows.

The rapidity of change is further stimulated by a kind of silent competition, not really new, between the “elite” who wish to assert their own personality with original forms of clothing, and the public who immediately convert them to their own use with more or less good imitations. Nor can one overlook another subtle and decadent reason, namely, the effort of those “stylists” who play on the factor of seduction in order to insure the success of their “creations,” being well aware, of the effect that constantly repeated surprise and novelty create.

The economics of fashion

It is another characteristic of today’s fashions that, although they remain principally an aesthetic fact, they have also become an economic element of great proportions. The few established fashion-shops which once dictated undisputed rules of elegance from this or that metropolis to the world of European culture have now been replaced by a number of financially powerful organizations which, while they supply the demand for clothing, also form popular tastes and constantly work to promote increasing demands for their own market.

The reasons for this transformation are to be found, first of all, in the so-called “democratization” of fashion through which an increasing number of individuals fall under the spell of elegance and, secondly, in technical progress which makes it possible to turn out mass-produced styles that would otherwise be expensive but have now become easy to acquire on the so-called “ready-made” market.

Thus was the world of fashion born, a world which includes artists and craftsmen, manufacturers and merchants, publishers and critics, as well as an entire class of humble workers who draw their income from fashions.

The fashion-designer

Although the economic factor is the driving force of this activity, its soul is always the “stylist,” the person who, through a clever choice of materials, colors, cut, line, and accessory ornaments, gives life to a new and expressive style that pleases the public. It is needless to list the difficulties of this art, the fruit of genius and skill and, even more, of a sensitivity to the taste of the moment.

A style destined for certain success acquires the importance of an invention. It is surrounded by secrecy while waiting to be “launched.” Once on the market, it brings in high prices, while the information media give it wide publicity almost as though it were an event of national importance.

The influence of fashion-designers is so strong that the textile industry lets its production be guided by them, both in quantity and in quality. Their social influence is equally great in interpreting public customs, for if fashions have been the external expression of the usages of

people in the past, today they have become ever more so—from the time when this phenomenon, fashions, began to be the result of reflection and study.

“High fashion”

But the formation of the tastes and preferences of the people and the guidance of society toward serious or decadent habits does not depend on the fashion designers alone. It depends also on the whole organized complex of the fashion industry, especially upon production houses and critics in that more refined sector which finds its clients in the upper social classes and takes the name of “high fashion,” as if to designate the source of the currents that people will later follow almost blindly, under what appears to be some magic compulsion.

Now, since so many important values are involved in and sometimes endangered by styles, as we have rapidly outlined, it seems providential that persons should enter upon the scene who have received a technical and Christian preparation and want to help free styles from those tendencies that are not commendable,

These are persons who see in styles the art of knowing how to dress, whose aim is certainly, though only partially, to enhance the beauty of the body, but with such moderation that the body, the masterpiece of divine creation, will not be obscured but, on the contrary, in the words of the Prince of the Apostles, will be exalted “in the imperishableness of a quiet and gentle spirit, which is of great price in the sight of God” (I Peter 3, 4).

II. THE MORAL PROBLEM OF FASHION AND ITS SOLUTIONS

The problem of fashion consists in the harmonious reconciliation of a person’s exterior ornamentation with the interior of a “quiet and modest spirit.”

However, some people ask themselves if there really is a moral problem in such an exterior, contingent, and relative fact as fashion. And, granted that there is, they ask in what terms this problem is to be set forth and according to what principles it must be solved.

This is not the place to protest at length against the insistent attempts of many contemporaries to separate the exterior activities of man from the moral realm as if the two belonged to different universes, as if man himself were not the subject and the object of the moral realm and, therefore, responsible before the Sovereign Regulator of all things.

It is quite true that styles, like art, science, politics, and other so-called profane activities, follow their own rules to attain the immediate ends for which they are intended. However, their subject is invariably man who cannot prescind from directing these activities to his ultimate and supreme end.

There exists, then, the moral problem of styles, not only insofar as they concern a generically human activity, but more specifically insofar as this activity is carried out in a field common to, or at least very close to, evident moral values. The problem is especially great insofar as the aims of styles—aims that are good in themselves—are likely to be twisted by the wicked tendencies of a human nature which is fallen through original sin, and thus fashions can be changed into occasions of sin and scandal.

Ecclesiastical severity

This inclination of a corrupt nature to abuse fashions has frequently led ecclesiastical tradition to treat fashions with suspicion and severe judgment, as expressed with intense firmness by notable sacred speakers and by zealous missionaries, even to the point of “burning vain objects” which, according to the usages and austerity of those times, was esteemed as effective eloquence by the people.

From these manifestations of severity, which basically showed the maternal concern of the Church for the welfare of souls and the moral values of civilization, one cannot argue, however, that Christianity exacts almost a renunciation of respect and care for the physical person and its external decorum. Whoever would draw this conclusion would be forgetting what the Apostle of the Gentiles wrote: “In like manner, I wish women to be decently dressed, adorning themselves with modesty and dignity” (1 Tim. 2:9).

The Church’s positive attitude

The Church, on the contrary, does not censure or condemn styles when they are meant for the proper decorum and ornamentation of the body, but she never fails to warn the faithful against being easily led astray by them.

This positive attitude of the Church derives from reasons far higher than the mere aesthetic or hedonistic considerations which have been assumed by a renewed paganism. The Church knows and teaches that the human body, which is God’s masterpiece in the visible world, and which has been placed at the service of the soul, was elevated by the Divine Redeemer to the rank of a temple and an instrument of the Holy Spirit, and as such must be respected. The body’s beauty must therefore not be exalted as an end in itself, much less in such guise as will defile the dignity it has been endowed with.

Moral evaluation of attire

Speaking in concrete terms, it cannot be denied that along with seemly styles there are also immodest fashions that create confusion in well-ordered minds and can even be an incentive to evil. It is always difficult to indicate with universal norms the borderline between seemliness and shamelessness because the moral evaluation of attire depends on many factors. However, the so-called relativity of fashions with respect to times, places, persons, and education is not a valid

reason to renounce *a priori* a moral judgment on this or that fashion which, for the time being, violates the limits of normal decency.

The sense of decency, almost without being consulted on the matter, gives immediate warning as to where immodesty and seduction, idolatry of matter and luxury, or only frivolity, are concealed, And if the artificers of shameless fashions are skilled in the trafficking of perversion, mixing it into an ensemble of aesthetic elements that are good in themselves, human sensuality is unfortunately even more skillful in discovering it and is ready to fall under its spell.

Here as elsewhere, greater sensitivity to this warning against the snares of evil, far from being grounds for criticizing those who possess it, as though it were a sign of interior depravity, is usually a mark of a upright soul and of watchfulness over the passions.

Yet, no matter how broad and changeable the relative morals of styles may be, there is always an absolute norm to be kept after having heard the admonition of conscience warning against approaching danger: style must never be a proximate occasion of sin.

The element of intent

Among the objective elements that concur to make an immodest style there is, first and foremost, the evil intention of its makers. Where these seek to create unchaste ideas and sensations through their fashions, there is present a technique of disguised malice. They know, among other things, that boldness in such matters cannot be pushed beyond certain limits, but they also know that the desired effect is close to these limits, and that a clever combination of serious and artistic elements with others that are less worthy is highly suited to capturing the fancy and the senses. For they realize that a fashion thus devised will be acceptable to a client who seeks such an effect, but will not compromise, at least in their opinion, the good name of upright clients.

Every restoration of decency to style must, therefore, begin with the intention of those who design and those who wear. In both there must be an awakening of the conscience as to their responsibility for the tragic consequences that could result from clothing which is overly bold, especially if it is worn in public.

Immodesty

More basically, the immorality of some styles depends in great part on excesses either of immodesty or luxury. An excess of immodesty in fashion involves, in practice, the cut of the garment. The garment must not be evaluated according to the estimation of a decadent or already corrupt society, but according to the aspirations of a society which prizes the dignity and seriousness of its public attire.

It is often said almost with passive resignation that fashions reflect the customs of a people. But it would be more exact and much more useful to say that they express the decision and moral

direction that a nation intends to take: either to be shipwrecked in licentiousness or maintain itself at the level to which it has been raised by religion and civilization.

Luxury

No less unfortunate, although in a different area, are excesses of style when it is assigned the task of satisfying a thirst for luxury. The small merit which luxury has as a source of labor is almost always nullified by the grave disorders that derive from it in public and private life. Prescinding from the dissipation of wealth, which excessive luxury demands of its worshippers, who will more often than not end by being devoured by it, it always insults the integrity of those who live by their own toil, and it displays a cynicism toward poverty, either by flaunting too easy gains or by breeding suspicion about the way of life of those who surround themselves with it. Where moral consciousness does not succeed in moderating the use of riches, even if they are honestly acquired, either frightful barriers will be raised between classes, or the entire society will be set adrift, exhausted by the race toward a Utopia of material happiness.

In indicating the harm that a lack of restraint in styles can do to individuals and society. We do not intend to suggest that the expansive force or the creative genius of fashion designers should be repressed, nor that fashion should be reduced to unchanging forms, to monotony or to dismal severity. On the contrary, We mean to indicate the right road that styles should follow, so that they may achieve their end as faithful interpreters of civilized and Christian traditions.

Three basic principles:

To do this a few principles may be set down as a basis for solving the moral problem of styles; from them more concrete norms may be easily drawn.

...the influence of styles

The first is not to minimize the importance of style's influence for good or for evil. The language of clothing, as We have already said, is the more effective when it is more ordinary and is understood by everyone. It might be said that society speaks through the clothing it wears. Through its clothing it reveals its secret aspirations and uses it, at least in part, to build or destroy its future.

But the Christian, whether he be creator or client, should be careful not to underestimate the dangers and spiritual ruin spread by immodest fashions, especially those worn in public, because of that continuity that must exist between what one preaches and what one practices, even in the sense of externals. He will remember the high purity which the Redeemer demands of His disciples even in glances and thoughts. And he will remember the severity which God shows to those who give scandal.

We might call to mind on this subject the strong words of the prophet Isaias, in which was foretold the infamy that was to befall the holy city of Sion because of the immodesty of its daughters (cf. Isaias 3:16-24). And one could recall those other words with which the greatest of all Italian

poets expressed in vehement terms his feeling of indignation for the immodesty creeping into his city (cf. Dante, *Purgatorio*, 23, 94-108).

...control

The second principle is that style should be directed and controlled instead of being abandoned to caprice and reduced to abject service. This applies to the makers of style—designers and critics; conscience demands that they not submit blindly to the depraved taste which is manifested by society, or rather by a part of it, and not always that part most discerning in wisdom. But it also applies to individuals, whose dignity demands of them that they should liberate themselves with free and enlightened conscience from the imposition of predetermined tastes, especially tastes debatable on moral grounds, To direct styles also means to react firmly against currents that are contrary to the best traditions.

Control over fashions does not contradict but, on the contrary, confirms the saying that “fashions are not born outside of and against society,” provided that one ascribes to society, as one should, consciousness and autonomy in directing itself.

...and moderation

The third principle, even more concrete, is the respect of “measure” or rather of moderation in the entire field of styles. Just as excess is the principal cause of their defects, so moderation will preserve their value.

Moderation, above all, must provide a pattern by which to regulate, at all costs, greed for luxury, ambition and capriciousness. Stylists, and especially designers, must let themselves be guided by moderation in designing the cut or line of a garment and in the selection of its ornaments, convinced that sobriety is the finest quality of art.

Far from wanting a return to outdated forms—though these often reappear as fashion novelties—but rather to confirm the perennial value of sobriety, We should like to invite today’s artists to dwell for a moment on certain feminine figures in the masterpieces of classical art which have undisputed esthetical value. Here the clothing, marked by Christian decency, is the worthy ornament of the person with whose beauty it blends as in a single triumph of admirable dignity.

III. SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS TO PROMOTERS AND ASSOCIATES OF THE “UNION”

And now some specific suggestions for you, beloved sons and daughters, promoters and associates of the “Latin Union of High Fashions.”

It seems to Us that the word “Latin” itself, with which you have wished to designate your association, indicates not only a geographical region, but above all the ideal aim of your activity. In

fact this term “Latin,” which is so rich in deep significance, seems to express, among other things, a lively sensibility and respect for the values of civilization.

It seems to express at the same time a sense of moderation, of balance and concreteness, qualities that are all necessary to the components of your Union. It has given Us pleasure to see that these characteristics have inspired the purpose of your statutes, which you courteously submitted to Us. We notice that these statutes derive from a complete view of the complex problem of fashions, but especially from your firm persuasion of fashion’s moral responsibility,.

Your program is, therefore, as wide as the problem itself, since it includes all the determining sectors of fashions: the feminine group directly, with the intention of guiding it in the formation of its tastes and the choice of clothing; the houses which are “creators of fashions”; and the textile industry; that by mutual agreement all might adapt their efforts to the healthy principles of the Union. And since your Union is composed of organizations that are not mere spectators but participators—We might say actors in the theater of fashions—its program also deals with the economic aspect of fashions, rendered more difficult now by forthcoming changes in production and by the unification of the European markets.

The formation of taste

One of the indispensable conditions for achieving the aims of your Union lies in the formation of sound taste in the public. This is indeed a difficult task, opposed at times by premeditated design, and it requires of you much intelligence, great tact, and patience. In spite of everything, face it with a fearless spirit. You are certain of finding strong allies, first of all, among the excellent Christian families which are still to be found in great numbers in your own native land.

It is clear that your action in this direction must be aimed mainly at winning over to your cause those who control public opinion through the press and other information media. People wish to be guided in style more than in any other activity. Not that they lack a critical sense in matters of aesthetics or of propriety, but, at times too docile and at other times too lazy to make use of this faculty, they accept the first thing that is offered to them and only later become aware of how mediocre or unbecoming certain fashions are.

It is necessary therefore that your action should be timely. Among those, furthermore, who at the present time are guiding with great effectiveness the tastes of the public, celebrities, especially in the world of the theater and films, occupy a preeminent position. In the same measure that their responsibility is grave, so will your action be fruitful wherever you can succeed in bringing over at least a few of these to the good cause.

Aesthetic and moral problems

A distinguishing mark of your Union seems to lie in the careful study of the aesthetic and moral problems of fashions, conducted in periodic meetings, such as the present congress, that have an ever more international character, persuaded as you are that the fashions of the future will have a

unified character in the individual continents. Employ yourselves, therefore, to bring into these congresses the Christian contribution of your intelligence and skill, with such persuasive wisdom that no one will be able to suspect you of prejudice in your own personal interest or of the weakness of compromise.

The sound consistency of your principles will be put to the test by the so-called modern spirit, which cannot bear hindrance. And it will be tried by the same indifference of many toward the moral consideration of styles, the most insidious of sophisms are usually repeated to justify immodesty and seem to be the same everywhere. One of these resurrects the ancient saying *ab assuetis non fit passio* (“The passions are not aroused by things we are accustomed to”) in order to brand as old-fashioned the rebellion of honest people against fashions which are too bold. Must it perhaps be shown how out of place the ancient saying is in such questions?

When We spoke of the absolute limits to be defended in the relativism of style. We mentioned the unfounded character of another fallacious opinion according to which modesty is no longer appropriate in the contemporary era which has now become free of all useless and ruinous scruples.

It can certainly be conceded that there are different degrees of public morality according to the times, the nature, and the conditions of the civilization of individual peoples. But this does not invalidate the obligation to strive for the ideal of perfection and is not a sufficient reason to renounce the high degree of morality that has been achieved, and which manifests itself precisely in the great sensitivity with which consciences regard evil and its snares.

A mortal combat

May your Union, therefore, pledge itself to this fight, which aims at insuring an ever higher degree of morality, worthy of its Christian traditions, in the public customs of your nation. It is not by chance that your work, which strives to introduce moral styles, is called a “battle.” Every other enterprise which tries to return to the spirit its domination over matter, meets with battle in the same way.

Considering each battle in particular, one can see that they are individual and significant episodes in the bitter and eternal struggle that everyone who is called to the freedom of the Spirit of God must endure in this life. The Apostle of the Gentiles described with inspired accuracy the front lines and opposing forces of this combat: “For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, so that you do not what you would” (Gal. 5:17). Listing the works of the flesh in a sad inventory of the bequest of original sin, he included among them impurity, to which he opposed modesty as a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Busy yourselves generously and with confidence, without ever allowing yourselves to be ensnared by that timidity which made the numerically small but heroic armies of the great Judas Machabeus say: “How shall we, being few, be able to fight against so great a multitude?” (1 Mac. 3:17). May the same answer given by the great champion of God and of the fatherland encourage

you: “For the success of war is not in the multitude of the army, but strength cometh from heaven” (Ibid., 19).

With this heavenly assurance in mind We take leave of you, beloved sons and daughters. And We raise Our supplications to the Omnipotent that He might deign to bestow His assistance upon your Union, and His graces upon each one of you, your families, and, in particular, upon the humble working men and women of fashions. As a token of these favors which We wish you, We heartily impart to you Our paternal Apostolic Blessing.

THE FARM PROBLEM

November 9, 1957

An Address of Pope Pius XII to the Food and Agriculture Organization

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It is Our pleasure, gentlemen, to grant you an audience on the occasion of the ninth Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization, which is being held in Rome. You intend to consider the present-day difficulties of agriculture and the program by which you propose to remedy them, as well as several questions relative to the functioning of your organization.

Having examined the current situation, you have ascertained a disturbing fact which requires immediate solution: the phenomenon of the impoverishment of agriculture in the world economy. You note that in national as well as international trade the market everywhere shows a trend detrimental to the interests of the farmer. Whereas the price of manufactured goods continues to rise, the price of agricultural products since 1952 has progressively continued to decline. Thus the purchasing power of the farmer shrinks little by little, his condition becomes more precarious with the unfortunate consequence that the depopulation of the rural areas, especially Europe, is on the increase, thus creating a new series of social and religious problems. This state of things vitally interests Us because it deeply affects a large, courageous, and deserving class of people whose qualities of stability and fidelity to the best of traditions are more necessary now than ever before to stabilize a rapidly evolving society.

It is certain that the facts of the question are very complex and the solutions difficult to apply. Yet you will render an outstanding service to farmers if you succeed in halting the progress of this phenomenon of deterioration and in initiating a corrective movement.

It is Our profound wish that your organization will bring the participating nations ever more closely together in a generous effort, one free of prejudices of various kinds which would result in opposing its action and even sometimes in rendering it ineffective. Too many men still suffer from hunger for anyone to retard, from motives of personal interest, the work which aims at helping them.

As a pledge of God's support, which We invoke on your present Conference as well as on your further activities. We are only too happy to grant Our Apostolic Benediction to you and your dear ones.