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ON THE PROBLEMS AND DANGERS OF OUR DAY

An address to the College of Cardinals on the Feast of St. Eugene, June 2, 1947

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ONCE AGAIN THE RECURRENCE of the feast of Our holy predecessor and heavenly patron provides Us with the occasion, Venerable Brethren, of dwelling for a while with you on the great questions and the tremendous happenings of the day, and on the dangers that threaten the whole world.

May the outpouring of Our mind and heart, which finds an echo in the thoughts and sentiments so happily expressed to Us by your venerable Dean, be for each of you, Our intimate counselors and faithful helpers, and for Ourselves, a stimulus to continue with renewed confidence, greater energy and calm dedication that apostolic work which today more than ever weighs on all the toilers in the Lord's Vineyard, all the ministers of the sanctuary.

The year 1947—what judgment shall the future ages pass on it? It has almost reached half of its course, and up to now, to the time of speaking, has it brought anything else to the world except the apparently irreconcilable opposition between the mighty onrush of problems in which it is sinking and entangled, and the humiliating lack of solution for them?

The verdict of history will be in accordance with the results coming from the events and discussions of the months which still remain.

Future generations will either bless or curse it; they will bless it if it means for the great human family a starting point toward the reawakening of the sentiment of brotherhood establishing an order of law and peace worthy of men, useful and beneficial for all; they will curse it, on the other hand, if it means a gradual decline into those stagnant marshes of discord and violence from whose murky depths there can only arise sinister and harmful forebodings of new and incalculable calamities.

Security

The wounds caused by the war have not yet been healed: indeed, some of them have rather been deepened and inflamed.

Was there ever before so much talk of universal security which should have been the fruit of victory? But where is it to be found? Have feelings of uncertainty and the fear of war vanished or, at any rate, have they diminished? If things are considered as they really are, it must be admitted

that it is not possible, even with the best of good will, to establish immediately that security for which the human race so ardently longs.

Then, in that case, let not those postwar and peace methods be employed which have nothing to do with punishing the criminals of the war but which create bitter, disillusionment, especially among those who had no responsibility for the past regimes under which they themselves were persecuted and oppressed.

How, indeed, does one help in establishing universal security by heaping up on its very foundations mighty ruins—not only material ones but the ruins of living human beings? How can a Europe feel safe whose members are a prey to despair and to discouragement, the dark and dismal forces of disintegration which the revolutionaries of tomorrow will easily exploit, just as those of yesterday did?

We well know, indeed, the extent and gravity of the unspeakable horrors with which the defeated system covered the face of Europe; nor do we wish to lessen the enormity of its guilt. But how is it possible for the victorious nations, in their turn, to adopt or tolerate the methods of hate and violence on which that system lived and thrived, or how can they use the weapons which aroused their righteous indignation when employed in the hands of others? What sensible man would ever seek a guarantee for his own safety and security in the ruin and misery of his neighbor?

Therefore, once again, We desire to exhort and to warn the nations: security, as far as it may be realized here below, cannot have any other solid foundation than the physical and moral well-being of a nation, based internally on right public order and externally on normal relations with neighboring states. At present, it is still possible to renew such normal relations, even after the second world war. May the rulers of the states not let slip this opportunity; it may be—God forbid—the last opportunity.

Prosperity

Much has been said also about a universal prosperity which should likewise have resulted from the victory. But where is it? There are, indeed, countries where the wheels of industry turn rapidly and work without interruption and at a maximum capacity. Production, overproductions, that is the golden key, the sesame, the secret formula that would wipe out the last traces of the evils of the war and fill up the craters it made.

But the prosperity of nations cannot be safe and secure if all do not share in it. Hence it is not unlikely that idleness and the impossibility of commerce in which some nations find themselves placed will automatically cause in the near future economic crises and unemployment even in other nations as well.

Liberty

Likewise, much was said of the state of liberty which was to have been another perfect fruit of victory: liberty triumphing over despotism and over violence. But this cannot flourish except where justice and law command and efficaciously secure the respect for individual and collective dignity.

Meanwhile, the world is still waiting and pleading that justice and law create stable conditions for man and society. In the meantime, millions of human beings continue to live under oppression and despotic rule. For them nothing is safe, neither home, nor goods, nor liberty, nor honor: thus the last ray of happiness, the last spark of courage, dies in their hearts.

In Our Christmas Message of 1944, addressing a world full of enthusiasm for democracy and eager to be its champion and proponent, We expounded the main moral requirements for a right and healthy democracy. Today, not a few fear that the hope placed in that order has diminished, owing to the striking contrast between democracy in words and the concrete reality.

If at this moment We raise Our voice, it is not to discourage the many men of good will who have already set to work, nor to belittle what has already been attained, but it is only through a desire to contribute, as far as in Us lies, to an improvement of present conditions.

It is not yet too late for the peoples of the earth to bring about, in a united and loyal effort, these conditions so indispensable for security, for universal prosperity or at least for a tolerable *modus vivendi*, and for a helpful organization of liberty.

Youth

A consideration of the first importance renders necessary this common effort—the good of youth and of the family.

The Church, a tender mother, is not alone in fearing for the welfare of youths. In some countries the new generations from their adolescence and even from infancy suffer from weakness; physical and spiritual anemia caused by material poverty with all its attendant miseries, from an insufficient family life or even from its complete absence, from lack of education and instruction or finally, perhaps, from long years of imprisonment or exile.

Among peoples living under better conditions, dangers of another kind—often arising from an excess of wealth and pleasure—menace the physical and moral health of youth. This state is still sadder. But there is something even more serious and it makes the cure of the evil still more difficult—the widespread crisis, indefinitely prolonged, with the disorders it provokes and the uncertainty for the future which it necessarily brings, sows in the hearts of coming generations seeds of distrust in their elders, whom they hold responsible for all the evils they suffer, and makes them skeptical of all the principles and values that their elders held in high esteem and passed down to them.

There is a serious danger that very many youths poisoned by these corrupting principles will end by falling into pure nihilism. Woe to the nations the day when there is extinguished in the heart of youth the sacred flame of faith, of ideals, of readiness for sacrifice, of the spirit of dedication. Even though such a state of things were to last but for a short while, who can foresee the consequences?

The Family

In a similar precarious state of incertitude which tends to continue; what can the future hold in store for the family—that natural nursery and school where the man of tomorrow grows up and is formed?

From districts that suffered most comes distressing news of the miserable condition of family, youth, woman. Above all, tragic is the state of the families—if those wandering groups may still be called such—whose fidelity to God's law brought the blessing of a rich crown of children. Very often, after paying more than others their tribute of blood during the war, today they are obliged to suffer more acutely the consequences of the general lack of dwelling and provisions.

It is not God, certainly, who is failing to keep His promise, as the sneers of egoists and the pleasure-loving seem to insinuate; but the incomprehension, the harshness and ill will of others make the burden of life well-nigh insupportable for the heroes of conjugal duty.

It is only true heroism, sustained by the grace of God, that is capable of keeping in the hearts of young married people the desire and joy of having a large family, What a humiliation for the world to have fallen so low—into a social condition so opposed to nature.

Before God, and faced with this sad truth, We call with all Our strength for a speedy remedy and trust that Our cry of anguish may resound to the ends of the earth and find an echo in the minds of those who are in charge of public affairs and who cannot ignore that, without a healthy and vigorous family life, a people and a nation is lost. Nothing calls more urgently for the peace of the world than the unspeakably wretched state of the family and of woman.

What is the true state of affairs? Who would dare affirm that the two years since the cessation of hostilities have marked notable advances in the path of restoration and social progress?

In seeing fruitless conferences succeeding one another and the series of interrupted or postponed discussions being prolonged, the peoples, bitterly deluded in their desire for order, peace and reconstruction, are coming to lose hope and patience.

It is not our intention to make accusations. We have before Our eyes a higher purpose than to pass judgment on what has been done. We wish to forestall new and greater evils in the near and distant future.

During periods of deep agitation of minds and of disordered events We place all Our trust in God, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ and Lord of Lords (2 Cor. 1:3; 1 Tim. 6:15) and after God We place Our trust in the faithful of the whole world. To them, then, We address the words that the Divine Master repeated to His Disciples: "Fear not."

If there is something today that gives cause for fear, it is fear itself. There is no worse counselor, especially in the present conditions. It only brings dizziness and blindness and leads away from the right and secure path of trust and justice.

False prophets unscrupulously propagate with cunning and violence anti-Christian and atheistic concepts of the world and of the state which are contrary to the natural law, and as such they have been condemned by the Church, particularly in the Encyclical QUADRAGESIMO ANNO of Our great predecessor, Pius XI. Neither the difficulties of the present nor the crossfire of propaganda should frighten or mislead you.

Fear, which is a shameful thing in itself, excels in its many disguises. At times it puts on the misleading garb of a declared Christian love for the oppressed; as if suffering people could derive advantage from falsehood and injustice, from mob-tactics and from promises that can never be fulfilled.

At other times it hides under the appearance of Christian prudence and under this pretext remains silent when duty should require it to utter a fearless “non licet” to the rich and powerful, and to caution them thus: it is not lawful for you, in following a greed for gain and dominion, to stray from the inflexible lines of Christian principles, which are the bases of political and social life and which the Church has repeatedly and with great clarity expounded to the men of our times. To you especially the invitation is addressed to collaborate without reserve in forming a public order which will realize, in the highest possible degree, a healthy economic life and social justice.

Thus the exploiters of class warfare will be deprived of the possibility of ensnaring the disappointed and the despoiled people of the world, by telling them that the Christian Faith and the Catholic Church are not their ally, but their enemy.

By disposition of Divine Providence the Catholic Church has formulated and promulgated its social doctrine. She points the path to be followed, and no fear of losing possessions or of temporal gains, of appearing less in harmony with modern civilization or less national or social could authorize true Christians to deviate even a hair’s breadth from this path.

Peace

Considering the sad reality of the numerous and disastrous conflicts which so painfully afflict the world of today and bar the path of peace, it would be equally wrong to shut one’s eyes so as not to see, or to hold one’s arms so as not to act, alleging as an excuse that nothing more can be done.

Nothing more can be done? At the very moment when Christians can oppose to vacillating and uncertain principles that fearless courage which is not the mere joyous exuberance of a sanguine nature, but a manifest proof of a supernatural force nourished by the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity?

By means of this force a mighty breath of pure air will sweep over the world, dissipating the atmosphere of panic and pessimism which threatens to poison it; eyes, sealed till then, will open to the clear vision of truth and justice. Those in good faith and of good will, who had gone astray, will discover a way out of a situation that has become almost intolerable and advance toward a solution of apparently insurmountable problems.

For those who see things in the light of the supernatural, there is no doubt that even in the most serious conflicts of human and national interest there is always room for a peaceful settlement.

Is this not, perhaps, the mission of the Christian, of the Catholic, in the whirlpool of social and political agitation of today? This is precisely the explanation of the hatred toward the Church that all those cherish whose life depends on dissensions and conflicts and whose interest it is to fan them continuously into flame.

They feel almost instinctively that the Church, established by God as a rock of brotherhood and of peace, cannot come to terms with the idolatrous worshipers of brute force and of the struggles, inside and outside their frontiers, for world domination.

This consideration should be enough to fill you, Catholics, with noble pride because the hatred launched against the Church heightens in the eyes of men her spiritual and moral grandeur and her work done for the good of mankind.

Be alive to such greatness. It means a task, a duty, responsibility. It is not without a purpose that Divine Providence has disposed that never more deeply, perhaps, than at present, have all the Faithful of the Church on earth felt conscious of sharing intimate membership in the Mystical Body of Christ. Even if the powers of darkness, of disunity, discord and destruction are spreading today over the whole world, so much more effective must be the superior activity of Christians and their force, derived from union, order and peace.

What true Catholic could think of shirking such a pressing duty? Apply yourselves, all of you, with earnestness to those tasks: among the timorous be fearless, among the doubters be firm in Faith, among the discouraged be strong in Hope and be full of Love among the skeptics who are devoid of love.

Your love is ardent and is as vast as the world. We know it from experience and can in some measure gauge it from the admirable generosity by which the Catholics in countries still prosperous helped to relieve the needs of people in greater want. They gave incomparably more than figures published in certain quarters would lead one to believe. To a renewed expression of Our gratitude toward all the benefactors, We join once again our earnest exhortation: let not your love grow cold, but let it spread more widely. There are still so many districts from which rise to heaven a cry of distress and a plea of help.

Heaven hears this cry of anguish but wishes to heed it through means of your charity. The words of Christ, “as long as you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me,” (Matt. 25:40) may also be changed by saying: the good that each of you has done to relieve your neighbor in need, has been done by Christ, Christ Himself, in you and through you, in helping the poor and the derelict.

Therefore, in the happy certitude that Christ lives and works in each of us, We say to all Our sons and daughters throughout the universe

Strong in Faith, put up a good fight: the future belongs to believers and not to the skeptics and doubters.

The future belongs to those who love, not to those who hate.

The Church's mission in the world, far from being ended or outmoded, goes out to meet new trial and fresh enterprises.

The task confided to you by Providence in this crucial hour is not to conclude a weak and timid peace with the world, but to establish for the world a peace really worthy in the sight of God and man.

Humanity, by its own unaided efforts; cannot win this peace. To implore it from the Divine Mercy for the poor, torn and tortured world, is a duty that all, pastors and flocks, should undertake with fervent zeal, especially during this month consecrated to the Heart of the Divine Redeemer.

Animated by an unshakable faith in the power of this suppliant prayer, and as a presage of its being heard, We impart with an overflowing heart on you, Venerable Brethren, and on all Our beloved sons and daughters scattered over the face of the earth, Our Apostolic Benediction.

DISCOURSE TO THE PERSONNEL OF ROME'S TRAMWAYS

February 22, 1948*

The Pope received in audience 1,600 members of the personnel of Rome's tramways, members of the Apostolate of Prayer, and addressed to them the following discourse:

GREETINGS, DEAR SONS, who have earnestly desired to express to Us your feeling of filial devotion and to receive from Our lips the encouragement and consolation drawn from Our Heart. You need this to accomplish with dignity and courage your difficult and often painful service; so much the more painful as precious few fully appreciate the energy you must show, either to raise your Christian life to the height of your aspirations, or to face up to the responsibilities and fatigues inherent in your work.

Here is how the Holy Father details the difficulties of the occupation

Worried, busy, eager to find themselves a place in the midst of the crowd and to get on and off in threading their way in front of others; passengers who have not had the opportunity to know you in the intimacy of your private life, do not even suspect the troubles and anguish which you endure. That, basically, is the common lot of all involved in public services, yours in particular.

The Collector

We are well aware that the civil customs and the sane traditions of the Roman people render tolerable, at least ordinarily; the fact of being in the tramways even during the busiest hours. But admitting the good will of most of the public, what responsibilities weigh on the collector, what attention and what vigilance is required of him. Without speaking of the addition of weariness which causes him separation from his dwelling, from place of work, the employee jammed in for long hours by his habitual task, assailed by the crowd which is pushed and which pushes him, must hear, understand, distinguish everyone all at once, they who require, one to move forward, another to have information and attention, still another to have often complicated change made immediately. He must be most attentive at counting each one right away, at not accepting false tickets, at not letting pass unperceived in the incessant flow of new arrivals the dishonest people who do not scruple to pay nothing. He knows he must answer for it to the management, and that

* OSSERVATORE ROMANO, February 23-24, 1948; translated from the French translation as it appeared in DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX, 1948, pp. 82-85.

NOTE: No effort has been made at this point to secure official approbation for the above translation. As such, it is intended only for private use and circulation at the present time. Translator – Reverend Francis J. Ostrowski.

error and fraud are chargeable to him. In case of difficulties in service, or in moments of danger, the employee must preserve all his calm and all his self-composure; he must also prevent youngsters left to themselves from imprudently hooking on the vehicle in behind or on the sides. He must politely serve notice on those-who are not careful of observing the regulations: one wants to get one at the front platform,, another wants to get off by the rear one, a third would like to smoke where it is forbidden, a fourth assumes an unbecoming posture and offends; especially those people in the midst of the crowd who are well-reared and polished. And, as if this were not sufficient, it is incumbent on him to have to support, with an inalterable calm, the impatience of irritable or undisciplined travelers, and perhaps their unjustified reproaches.

The Conductor

As for the conductor, the difficulty he has is different, but not less serious, Always watchful, eye and spirit fixed on the road to follow, constantly alert to see spring out unforeseen, in front of the vehicle at full speed, some scatter-brain, or someone foolhardy, or a puzzled person, he must be, at every moment, ready to put into motion, in the most unexpected way, the cranks and pedals of his machine so as to insure the security both of the pedestrians who circulate around it and in front of it, and the travelers confided to the ability and the good sense of his driving. And in this continual tension of his nerves, his senses and his faculties, he must not lose for a single instant the most rigorous precision, the most perfect calm, an imperturbable presence of mind, while about him curious or impatient people importune him with their questions, their reflections, and their idle criticisms, which make more difficult for him the maintenance of the absolute silence prescribed by regulation in the interest of public safety.

The Inspector

What should be said, next, of the inspectors, who, in virtue of the very repressive character of their office, are often forced to engage in disagreeable discussions?

The Workers

And how could we forget the workers who labor with such vigor, and especially the “break-down mechanics,” who, in case of unexpected damage to the vehicles, hasten up, being exposed, if necessary, to inclement weather, in order to make repairs in emergency; finally the “tire-pumpers,” who must often stretch out in the mud to wheels and adjust tires?

Beyond and Within the Professional Life, There is the Spiritual Life Which Poses New Demands

Is that all, dear sons? If you have at heart the elevating of yourselves thus above your life of work, you must the more perfect your spiritual life, which makes you faithful to God, more particular in the observance of your duties as sons, husbands, fathers, more exact and more conscientious in the accomplishment of your service. But this spiritual life, this public manifestation of your character as Christians, demands of you a solid faith and the frank courage of your convictions in the face of so many others, who, far from professing your faith, show themselves indifferent or uncomprehending in regard to your religious principles, even to sarcasm, or even to

open hostility. As for your not content with holding firm in the face of them you have the desire of leading them to truth and goodness. Holy desire, which gladdens God's heart, but whose realization requires, necessarily, humble and persevering prayer, which obtains for yourselves the indispensable intrepidity, and for those whom you wish to convert, light and correspondence with divine grace.

Before the Adverse Propaganda, Notably that of Communism, There is a Varying Attitude to be Taken

- intransigence in matters of principle.
- charity toward people.

In this work of zeal, it is yours to unite two qualities most difficult to reconcile practically between themselves with simple natural forces, firmness and kindness.

Firmness in principles, in the integrity of doctrine, in the inviolability of moral obligations; as a matter of fact, despite affirmations to the contrary, spread perhaps even among yourselves, the doctrine of Christ, that doctrine of truth and faith, are irreconcilable with materialist maxims, and adhering to these maxims— whether one likes it or not, whether one is conscious of it or not— means deserting the Church, ceasing to be Catholic.

Kindness toward people—which means (outside of Christian charity, a rigorous duty for all) special eagerness to do them service, cordiality, amiability, in personal relationships which win for you the esteem, affection, confidence of all those who surround you, and, in particular, of your comrades; confers on you a moral prestige and a willingly accepted moral influence.

The Sovereign Pontiff, Finally, Invites the Tramwaymen to Devotion

Invoke, then, the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, way, truth, and life, to whom you have consecrated yourselves, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, patroness of the “way;” they will protect you in the dangers which assail you, will assist you in the exercise of your zeal. We beg them to pour over you and your families the most precious and abundant heavenly favors in pledge of which We give you with all the outpouring of Our heart. Our paternal Apostolic Blessing.

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

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NONE IS IN A BETTER POSITION THAN YOU to appreciate the contrast between the disorder in the field of economic relations—which has reigned in many countries for some time past—and the law, order and harmony that God has imprinted on all creation. The goods of the earth, whose exchange ought to stabilize and maintain economic equilibrium among nations, have become the object of political speculation. This applies not only to material goods, but alas! to man also. He has, in many instances, been reduced to the level of a commodity to be exploited.

Unfortunately, we are often witnesses to the interplay of policy which is nothing more than a race for power and supremacy. Moreover, what remains of economic relations between nations is, strictly speaking, no longer an exchange, the mutual action and reaction of which could do good everywhere. Rather these relations are now limited to a unilateral flow of goods under the impulse of Christian charity, or a more or less disinterested benevolence towards nations in need. Despite noble efforts, we are still far from a normal state of things wherein exchanges of goods between nations is at one and the same time the necessary complement to the respective national economies and a tangible sign of their flourishing condition

Italy is in no better condition than the other countries. Yet it must be admitted that in a short space of time much has been done in industry, agriculture, commerce and on the railroads to heal a state of things that at first sight appeared disastrous. Hence We want to tell you how much We appreciate the difficulties and the importance of your work.

These difficulties would not be so great, nor would their solution be so difficult, were it not that there has been added uncertainty and disagreement as to objectives. While some propose a return to a world economy such as was practiced during the last century, others support regional or inter-state unions for individual economics. Some expect that the prosperity of all nations will follow upon reestablishment of a free-trade pattern throughout the world. Others no longer place their trust in such a system but rather seek the centralization of all economic life—including even the activity of human labor.

It is not our intention to examine the practical side of these problems or of their solution. We merely wish to draw your attention to the fact that this sharp division of opinion has deeper roots and causes than are detected by simply considering the contemporary scene. Among these causes are, on the one hand, a deplorable want of reflection, that seems satisfied with an easy and superficial empiricism, and on the other, a really fundamental difference of views as to what social economy is or should be, and how man should approach and treat it. It is precisely at this point that

Christian principles of social life must be given a hearing—and a decisive one at that—if men wish to be truly Christian and show themselves such in all their activities.

Fundamental Concepts

We limit ourselves to stressing certain fundamental concepts:

1. *Economic life means social life.* The essential scope of the former—to which individuals are equally bound to help in the different spheres of their activity—is to assure in a stable manner for all members of society the material conditions required for the development of cultural and spiritual life. But satisfactory results are not possible apart from an external order and social norms which aim at lasting achievement of this objective. An appeal to an automatic and magic law is a mirage, no less vain in the economic order than in any other sphere of human activity.

2. *Economic life means social life—the life of human beings.* Hence it cannot be conceived without liberty. This liberty can never be the seductive but deceptive formula of 100 years ago—the purely negative liberty derived from the regulating will of the State. Nor is it the pseudo-liberty of our day—the submission of oneself to the dictate of mighty organizations. Genuine and true liberty can only be that of men who feel themselves bound to the objective goal of social economy and enjoy the right to demand that economies be ordered socially so as to guarantee and protect liberty, rather than restrict even in least degree the choice of means to that end. This is true, and for the same reason both for independent workers and for wage earners. As regards the end of the social economy, every productive member is the subject and not the object of economic life.

3. *National economy, being the economy of a people within the unity of the State, is itself a natural unity.* It requires the most harmonious development possible of all means of production within the territory covered by the nation. Accordingly, international economic relations have a function which, although positive and necessary, is only subsidiary. The upsetting of this relationship between national and international economy was one of the great errors of the past. Today the circumstances under which a large number of people are forced to live could easily favor the return of unsettled conditions. At this juncture, it would perhaps be opportune to examine whether or not a regional union of different national economies would render possible a more efficacious development of the forces of production.

4. *Above all, there must be victory over the evil principle of utility as the basis and rule of what is right in economic life.* This means victory over these occasions of conflict which arise from glaring disparities, maintained at times by compulsion, in the world economy. It means victory over the spirit of cold egoism, so as to bring about that sincere solidarity, both juridic and economic, which implies fraternal collaboration, according to the precepts of the divine law, among nations assured of their autonomy and freedom. Faith in Christ and observance of His commandments of love alone can bring about such a salutary victory.

Such are the fundamental principles that We thought it opportune to dwell upon. We preferred not to speak of the fatal inconsistency of those who, in proposing free world traffic for their own goods, deny to others this natural liberty.

Similarly, We preferred to refrain from characterizing the conduct in practice of certain champions of the rights of private property, These persons so interpret the use and relationships of private property that they succeed—even better than their adversaries—in overturning this very institution, so natural and indispensable to human life, and especially to the family.

It remains but to conclude Our address with the wish that in professional schools and universities these principles of economic life be properly taught. The urgent need of overcoming the materialistic spirit of our day, which also affects the field of economics, make this imperative. In the measure in which you help sow and bring to maturity in the minds of youth—and hence in the new generation—this spiritual and social sentiment, you will cooperate effectively in developing your dear Fatherland. And thus it will go forward in respect and love for work, in the trustful collaboration of all its sons and in the incorporation of its economy with the economic life of the world.

ADDRESS TO THE EMPLOYEES OF THE BANK OF NAPLES

June 20, 1948*

The Holy Father received in audience an important pilgrimage composed of officials and employees of the central office of the Bank of Naples and of its branches. He addressed them in these terms:

WITH PLEASURE WE SEE BEFORE US the banking world brilliantly represented in number and quality. And it is that of beautiful and dear Naples, the city where, if business life pushes and presses intensely as in all large centers, there is still never seen to be dominated and suffocated by the turmoil of exterior things this religious feeling which is its greatest glory and which it delights in having manifested in every way in broad daylight.

Pope Pius XII expounds the traditional doctrine of the Church concerning the use of wealth

Banking world and Christian idea; money and Gospel: terms in themselves antithetic to one who has before his eyes the preaching of Jesus Christ, His exaltation of Poverty, the contrast, solemnly affirmed by Him between God and Mammon.

He says moreover: “Where your treasure is, there also is your heart” (Matt. 6:21); so that if man puts his heart in his money, his heart is there, and there is no more room in the heart for true goods: God and his justice, goods which admit of no domination by another passion and are, in reality, refused to whoever would not wish to give them too much, save for the best of himself, which is precisely the heart with its affections and preferences.

We all know what confirmation the great warning of St. Paul has received at all times and still receives: “Those who wish to become rich fall into temptation and into many useless desires which plunge men into ruin” (cf. Tim, 6:9).

* **OSSERVATORE ROMANO**, June 23, 1948; delivered in Italian; translated from the French translation as it appeared in **DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX**, 1948, pp. 232-234.

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The role of the banker is to esteem money at its real worth

But if, of this sad aspect of money's influence, you are by the duty of your office, the born witnesses, and if you are obliged by it, moreover, to follow closely its variations, and can thereby measure, as from the best possible observatory, the negative value for human happiness; to you on the other hand, is given as to few others the possibility of making an exact estimate of well-used wealth, which, though changing and passing, as the beauty of here below, has received from God in human society the obligation of obeying so many, and such grave, religious and social duties

Each day you observe how, when money possessed in abundance is not an idol to which all is sacrificed, nor a vulgar instrument of base selfishness, but comes into the power of souls unencumbered by avarice, free with that freedom from contingent things which Jesus Christ has procured for us, there is no good work that it cannot rouse and sustain for the good of men and the glory of God, becoming thus, by a miracle of grace, a ladder itself toward Christian justice and sanctity.

It is to this end that your Christian spirit sees that money must be dedicated. And to promote it in all ways, to affirm it and to make of it your ideal in the delicate profession assigned you by divine Providence, you have consecrated with a deep Christian conscience the energies of spirit and, what is still more effective, of heart.

He who possesses wealth is held to exercise

Among the upright and noble goals and duties that concern your professional life, it is hardly necessary to recall to you one, one especially, which the present circumstances have rendered more urgent than ever: charity.

Much has been asked in this area from the banking world in the course of the war and post-war years, and much surely has been done by your bank to lighten ills and soften sorrows for the material and moral reconstruction of the common country which has been wounded in all its members and stands in need of everything.

But new as it was for you, such an office of mercy, where you contributed your assistance to healing public and private misfortunes, this glory of holding open the sources of charity will always be for your bank a particularly dear, and intelligently maintained, title.

Patriotism and Christian spirit will continue to sustain in your deserving institution such a precious activity. This can only attract the blessing of God on the whole of your affairs and your multiple enterprises. And you personally, yourselves, each following the part he shall have taken in this work of fraternal help, will participate with abundant spiritual profit in that divine mercy solemnly promised in the Gospel to those who shall have shown mercy.

The Holy Father defines as following the mission of banks

The influence and the responsibility of banks is enormous.. They are the intermediaries of credit suppliers for the foundations of commerce, agriculture and industry; they draw from this a great social importance. The economic order presently in existence is inconceivable without the

money-factor. The banks direct its course: it is important, then, that this course be not directed toward economically unhealthy enterprises, violating justice, deadly to the good of the people, injurious to civil life, but that it be in harmony with healthy public economy and with true culture.

All this demands in directors of banks and in their employees experience in economic questions, social sense, an absolute conscience and loyalty.

In these feelings and with these wishes, We thank you for the filial homage that you have come to render Us with such affectionate eagerness. And in calling down on you and your daily work the abundance of light and divine power, We accord you from the bottom of our heart, you, your families and all those dear to you in Jesus Christ, the Apostolic Benediction.

ON PUBLIC FINANCE

An English translation from the original French text of an address given on October 2, 1948, to 100 delegates attending the Congress of the International Institute of Public Finance held in Rome.

Taken from **THE CATHOLIC MIND**, March 1949, pp.189-190

IN GIVING US THE PLEASURE OF RECEIVING the delicate offering of your respect, you give Us the opportunity to express to you the great interest that We take in the work of your Institute, a work which assuredly is arduous and whose importance and difficulties few persons understand.

The questions of public finance always have been the object of special attention on the part of not only intellectuals and technicians but, so to speak, of everyone. The reason is that each Judges his state of prosperity or crisis above all from the point of view of his personal interest. Recent events and conditions have given to all these questions a sharpness which in many countries makes them the center of political battles and often the starting point of the most impassioned controversies, not without danger for the internal well-being of the State.

Through self-interest, partisan spirit, or considerations more of sentiment than of reason, many people, in fact too many people—makeshift economists and politicians—approach and treat financial and taxation questions with the more ardor and earnestness, assuredness and airy manner the greater is their incompetence. Sometimes they do not seem even to suspect the necessity, in order to solve these problems, of deep studies, investigations and numerous observations of comparable experiences.

The financial needs of each of the nations, large or small, have tremendously increased. The fault is due not only to international complications or tensions, it is due also, and perhaps much more, to the huge increase in the State's activity. This activity, dictated too often by false or unhealthy ideologies, makes of financial policy and particularly of taxation policy an instrument serving preoccupations of a quite different order. Who will be astonished, after that, at the danger that the science and art of public finance will descend to the role of a technical and purely formal manipulation for lack of clear, simple, solid fundamentals. Unhappily, that is what one sees today in several fields of public life—a clever and bold framework of systems and procedures, but without elasticity, life or soul.

Such a state of affairs influences the mentality of individuals more regrettably yet. The individual is coming to have less and less understanding of the financial affairs of the State. Even as regards the wisest policy, he always suspects a mysterious maneuver, a malicious ulterior motive which he should distrust and protect himself against. It is there. In short, that one must seek the

real reason for the decay of the moral conscience of the people—people of all classes—in matters of the public good and in taxation matters principally.

How can the Church contemplate with indifference this crisis, which in reality is a crisis of conscience? That is why, addressing herself to those who have some share of responsibility in the treatment of public finance questions, she beseeches them: In the name of human conscience, do not destroy morals from the top. Forego those measures which, despite their technical virtuosity, shock and wound the people's sense of the just and unjust or which relegate to the background their vital urge, their legitimate ambition to harvest the fruits of their own labor, and their anxiety over family security, all considerations which merit first place in the mind of the legislator and not the last.

The financial system of the State should aim at reorganizing the economic situation in a manner that would assure the people the material conditions of life indispensable for following the supreme end assigned by the Creator: the development of intellectual, spiritual and religious life.

As for you, your high ability calls you to defend financial policy against the maneuvers of the ambitious and the demagogues. Devoted to the greatest impartiality, ardent to find not popular favor but the true good of the people, you would receive at least the approbation of a select few who understand you; for yourselves you have the testimony of your conscience and God. Don't doubt that God, Who knows all, will not leave you without reward for what you have done for the service of your fellowman and for the world's restoration. With Our whole heart We beg Him to give you the light and strength you need to bring fruitfulness to your work for the well-being and the peace of human society.

ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF WORK

March 25, 1949*

SEE, GENTLEMEN, IN OUR WELCOME at this busy period of the year, a mark of interest which we bear for your works. Your desire, insistently expressed, to come to Us, proves that you realize it and appreciate it, and that you envisage conscientiously the moral aspect of your task.

On the one hand, indeed, We have often manifested Our anxiety touching the urgent, agonizing need, for procuring for the thousands, for the millions of individuals and families, housing which assures them a minimum of hygiene and well-being, of dignity and of morality. This is to say that, in our eyes, the work of construction is of the very first importance.

On the other hand, We need not detail here the difficulties which are at present rising up in opposition to your task; they are only too well known to you, and form the object of your deliberations; but, in the last analysis, they come down to the fact of the disequilibrium between the “have” peoples and the “have-not” peoples.

The vicissitudes of the war and of the post-war period have carried it to such a degree of seriousness that in the near future, most nations will see themselves reduced to orienting according to a direction more or less exclusive, their production, and in consequence, their work, exploitation of the soil, the investment of capital.

Who will suffer the direct consequences of this constraint if not the great mass of the population? It needs to be housed, just as it needs to be clothed and fed. That is a common need of all men, without distinction of income or station. It should, on this basis, receive from normal economy, and tending toward its proper end, especially with the help of private initiative, its legitimate satisfaction.[†]

Modern economics, so boasted, so proud of producing ever more, ever better and cheaper, has not precisely, nonetheless, succeeded in satisfying this real need of man, above all of the family. Real need, and not artificial, as it has sometimes been insinuated to be, as if one could be content

* **OSSERVATORE ROMANO**, March 27, 1949; delivered in French; translated from the French translation as it appeared in **DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX**, 1949, p. 106

NOTE: No effort has been made at this point to secure official approbation for the above translation. As such, it is intended only for private use and circulation at the present time. Translator – Reverend Francis J. Ostrowski.

[†] Translator’s note – there is just a possibility that between the last two sentences something has been omitted—the *Documents Pontificaux* text becomes rather confusing here.

either with the hovels of savages or nomads, or with a small elegant retreat, provided with every modern comfort, but where there is no place for the child.

If therefore the construction industry continues to shunt the modern economy toward a production destined to satisfy the primordial needs of man, in place of letting itself be determined by the accidental movement of prices, it will have well merited its title of social worth, for it will have led back the economy itself from the mistaken ideas of a disoriented competition to the level way of collaboration in a truly social order.

Assuredly, in the present state of discomfort, everything is by no means realizable in the desired direction; yet something of it is already, and in any case, nothing is permitted which hides from sight the path toward the goal pursued.

The Church, whose social doctrine takes into account ((prend fait et cause)) the interests of the family, should, by the fact itself, envisage also the question of fitting habitation.

What a stimulus truly is this need of housing for the progress of the economy and technology!

An economy, a technology which is ruled by the primordial needs of man has no place for being preoccupied with too great or too small a number of inhabitants.

Certainly the question of housing is not the only object, of your competence, but it is that which most pushes toward actions, linked as it is with one of the elementary needs of man. The other objects of your activity, perhaps more striking at first glance, draw their principal value from the fact that they are the means of production destined precisely to satisfy these needs of the economy. That is what especially interested Us in reading the publications of your Commission.

We are particularly happy to find there the trace of your assiduous efforts with a view toward the consolidation of your institution.

The perfecting of the technology and of the organization of work, the personal relations between the different, collaborators in the profession, the awakening of the sense of responsibility of each in the execution of the common work, the sufficient income from work assured to all, the professional formation, the stability of employment, the recruiting of apprentices—these are questions which, insofar as they touch on Christian social doctrine, merited Our most kindly attention. We can only congratulate you on having studied them with diligence. Also, We thank you warmly for your visit, and, convinced of the breadth and the importance of the task to which you are applying the most serious care, and of your high consciousness of acquitting yourselves of it, We intend to draw down on you, by Our prayers, the light and help of the Divine Protection.

ADDRESS TO CATHOLIC EMPLOYERS

Address to 400 delegates to the Ninth International Congress of the International Union of Catholic Employers, assembled at the Vatican, May 7, 1949

Taken from **THE CATHOLIC MIND**, July 1949, pp. 445-448

WITH EQUAL SOLICITUDE AND EQUAL INTEREST We receive the visits, in turn, of workmen and of the representatives of industry. Both of these groups lay their respective problems before Us, with a confidence that moves Us deeply. So in bidding you a very hearty welcome, dearly beloved sons, We gladly seize the opportunity you offer Us to assure you of Our paternal regard, and to commend the zeal with which you are laboring to permeate the economic world with Christian social doctrine.

Cooperators in Common Task

We have just made reference to the preoccupations of those who are engaged in industrial production. Mistaken and disastrous in its consequences is the prejudice, alas! too widely held, which sees in these problems an irreducible clash of rival interests. The opposition is only apparent. In the economic domain management and labor are linked in a community of action and interest. To disregard this mutual bond, to strive to break it, can only betray a pretension to blind and preposterous despotism, Employers and workers are not implacable adversaries. They are cooperators in a common task. They eat, so to speak, at the same table, seeing that they must live, in the last analysis, from the gross or net profits of the national economy. Each receives his income, and in this regard their mutual relations do not in any way imply that one is at the service of the other.

To receive one's wage is a prerogative of the personal dignity of anyone who makes his productive contribution in one form or another, as employer or laborer, towards the output of the nation's economy. In the accounting of private industry salary-totals may be listed under costs to the employer. But in the national economy there is only one type of costs, which consists in the national resources utilized with a view to national production, and which must, in consequence, be constantly replenished.

From this it follows that both parties are interested in seeing to it that the costs of national production are in proportion to its output. But since the interest is common, why should it not manifest itself in a common outward expression? Why should it not be allowable to assign to the workers a just share of responsibility in the establishment and development of the national economy? Especially today when the scarcity of capital and the difficulty of international exchange are paralyzing the free flow of expenditure on national production? The recent attempts at

socialization have only served to make this painful reality more clearly evident. It is a fact. Neither has it been created by the bad will of some, nor can the good will of others succeed in eliminating it. This being true, why not come to a decision now, while there is yet time, in full awareness of the common responsibility, so as to insure on group against unjust suspicions and other against illusions which would become before long a social peril?

“Occupational Organization”

Our Predecessor of imperishable memory, Pius XI, had suggested the practical and timely prescription for this community of interest in the nation’s economic enterprise when he recommended in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* “occupational organization” for the various branches of production. Nothing, indeed, appeared to him more suited to bring economic liberalism under control than the enactment, for the social economy, of a public-law statute based precisely on the common responsibility which is shared by all those who take part in production. This feature of the Encyclical stirred up a host of objections. Some saw in it a concession to modern political trends, while for others it meant a return to the Middle Ages. It would have been incomparably more sensible to lay aside the flimsy prejudices of the past and to get down to work sincerely and courageously to make the proposal, with its many practical applications, a living reality.

But at present that part of the Encyclical would seem, unhappily, to provide us with an example of those favorable opportunities which are allowed to escape for want of being seized in time. Meanwhile feverish attempts are under way to work out other juridical types of organization for the social economy, and at the moment preference favors state enterprise and the nationalization of industry. There can be no question that the Church also admits—within certain just limits—state ownership and management, judging that “certain forms of property may legitimately be reserved to the public authority: those which represent a dominating power so great that it cannot without danger to the general welfare be entrusted to private individuals” (*Quadragesimo anno*). But to make of this state enterprise the normal rule for public economic organization would mean reversing the order of things. Actually it is the mission of public law to serve private rights, not to absorb them. The economy is not of its nature—not more, for that matter, than any other human activity—a state institution. It is, on the contrary, the living product of the free initiative of individuals and of their freely established associations.

It would be just as untrue to assert that every particular business is of its nature a society, with its personnel relationship determined by the norms of distributive justice to the point where all without distinction—owners or not of the means of production—would be entitled to their share in the property, or at the very least in the profits of the enterprise. Such a conception stems from the assumption that every business belongs naturally within the sphere of public law. The assumption is inexact. Whether the business is organized in the form of a corporation or an association of all the workmen as part-owners, or whether it is the private property of an individual who signs a wage-contract with all his employees, in the one case as in the other it falls within the competence of the private-law discipline of economic life.

Objective of Social Economy

All that We have just said applies to the juridical nature of the enterprise as such. But the business may involve a whole category of other personnel relationships which must be taken into account—even those of shared responsibility. The owner of the means of production, whoever he be—individual owner, workers' association or corporation—must always—within the limits of public economic law—retain control of his economic decisions. It goes without saying that his income is higher than that of his collaborators. But it follows that the material prosperity of the entire population, which is the objective of social economy, lays upon him, more than upon the others, the obligation of contributing by savings to the increase of the nation's fund of capital. As we must not forget, on the other hand, that it is supremely advantageous to a healthy social economy when this accumulation of capital derives from the greatest possible number of sources, it is very desirable, in consequence, that the workmen also should be enabled, by the fruit of their savings, to share in the creation of the capital resources of their country.

A great many businessmen like yourselves, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, have on repeated occasions expressly declared that the social doctrine of the Church—and that doctrine alone—is equipped to provide the essential elements for the solution of the social problem. Assuredly the reduction to practice and application of this doctrine cannot be the work of a day. Its realization requires of all participants in the process a discretion born of insight and foresight, a strong dose of good sense and good will. It demands of them especially a radical reaction against the temptation to seek one's own advantage at the expense of the other partners—whatever be the nature and form of their participation—and to the detriment of the common welfare. It calls finally for unselfishness of a sort which can only be instilled by an authentic Christian virtue, sustained and aided by the grace of God.

It is to draw upon this aid and this grace on your Union, on its development from within and its influence on the world without, particularly in those countries which, for all their Catholicity, need nonetheless to give deeper consideration to the social thinking of the Church, that We impart to you from the depths of Our heart, for yourselves and for your Association, under the powerful patronage of the Mother of Divine love, Our Apostolic Blessing.

DISCOURSE TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

*June 27, 1949**

IF IT IS PAINFUL, LONG AFTER THE CESSATION of hostilities, to see yet from the fact of misunderstandings, prejudices, conflicts of interests or ideologies, remaining in suspense the solution of serious problems and the liquidation of annoying consequences of war, still it is a motive of joy and of confidence that to observe at least on one point—a point of major importance—the majority of the nations despite the persistent tension of relations on economic, social, political and moral ground being nonetheless united in working together toward progress in universal health, driven not just by a very justified preoccupation with reciprocal defense, but in a praise-worthy spirit of mutual and solidarity. To greet you on the occasion of this work in common is for Us a profound satisfaction, and We thank you for having wanted to obtain it for Us.

Often, too often, alas, fear is the origin of many of the measures of wisdom, and on account of this origin, they exceed the limits traced by wisdom itself. In the present case, the defense, in itself legitimate, against an imminent danger of contagion, leads, in the course of history, to the adoption of rigorous laws, whose execution, still more rigorous, even to cruelty, can be explained only by the panic of populations. There is no need to go back to the too famous plague of Milan in 1630. The memory—among many others—is not so far from that lamentable Odysee, in the autumn of 1884, of the passengers on the *Matteo Bruzzo*, wandering the open ocean, repelled everywhere, and even by cannon-fire, because the cases of cholera reported aboard it had sown panic on the entire Atlantic shore.

Without going that far, did not the measures of quarantines, once terrible by their length as well as by their severity, subject the poor passengers to a deplorable physical and moral situation, without speaking of the damage incurred by the public economy? Thank God, who, in creating man in his image, has put in his heart the natural instinct, of kindness. Once the first movement of unreasoned terror has passed, once composure has been recovered, effort is made to reconcile as best man can, the duties of humanity with those of the common security. Little by little the progress of science, of hygiene, of prophylaxis and therapeutics, have permitted, without prejudice to this security, to diminish and soften the treatments inflicted on travelers suspected of the least possibility of contamination. It was thought with good reason that it would not do to save up for the innocent, for brothers, already sufficiently tried by ill-health or the passing crisis of health in their country, punishments with which one punished the guilty. And there was grasped the duty of bringing them, on the contrary, them first of all, the aid which would put them under protection from evil, and would render them by the same token inoffensive to the rest of the world.

* *OSSERVATORE ROMANO*, June 29, 1949; delivered in French; translated from the French translation as it appeared in *DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX*, 1949, p. 237-241.

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This just feeling of humanity has dictated the initiative which, gradually, has taken on such vast proportions, that today one can see almost all the Nations taking part in your Assembly by the sending of their delegates or their observers, not counting the representatives of intergovernmental organizations joined to the World Health Organization. Among how many peoples, either by reason of their poverty, or helplessness, or by the still retarded degree of their civilization, their science, or their technology, is not the level of hygiene and health much inferior that of other countries? Periodically recurring epidemics and permanent endemic diseases lead them little by little toward ruin; and statistics, so recent and imperfect though they might be, attest to the ravages which threaten the disappearance of entire tribes and peoples. Could it be tolerated to see our brothers suffer from illnesses and physical defects are sometimes bringing them to extinction while in the world so many other societies have arrived at such a degree of health-protection that early death is there diminishing progressively, and the plagues, up till now most unyielding, are step by step giving ground?

One could not praise too much the private or individual initiatives which have dispensed financial resources and indefatigable devotion to the health-betterment of the less favored countries, above all thanks to missionary endeavors; but they could not be enough by themselves, and the World Health Organization brings to this eminently humanitarian and social enterprise a more universal, more concerted assistance, and in consequence, assistance of a more certain and rapid effectiveness.

In obeying this noble impulse, you are also serving the interests of each of your own nations, of those even whose health services are the best supplied and equipped, where hygienic and physical education of the population is the most diligently pushed, where legislation provides most wisely for the safeguarding, maintenance, and progress of public health.

But neither vigilance, care, institutions, so perfect as they are thought in each country, suppress, if not provided for, by a general and combined action, the ever increasing risks occasioned by the frequency of international relations, movements of populations, forced or voluntary displacements and immigrations.

Is there a more apt means to obviate this than to work relentlessly and simultaneously at the raising of health in all regions, as in all classes of humanity? That is what you are doing, gentlemen, and it is to what you have most especially applied yourselves during the days of the convention which you have just held.

One point most especially held Our attention in reading your programs and works: the meaning at once more extensive and more profound which you give to the expression, "Health." It is not in your eyes purely negative, as if health, in general, consisted in the simple exclusion of corporal illness and physical defects, as if mental health, in particular, meant nothing more than the absence of all insanity or anomaly. It carries with it positively the idea of the spiritual and social well-being of humanity and on this account, it is one of the conditions of universal peace and common security.

It follows that the question of health surpasses, the framework of biology and medicine; it necessarily has its place in the sphere of morality and religion.

The Church, far from considering health as an object of an exclusively biological order, has always underscored the importance, in order to maintain it, of religious and moral forces, and it has always counted it among the conditions for the dignity and local good of humanity, for its bodily and spiritual, temporal and eternal good.

The social doctrine of the Catholic Church allows no doubt to creep in regarding the fact that the health of body and spirit, where reigns also health in social relations, can effectively contribute to the establishing of an atmosphere of the sort most favorable to the interior and mutual peace of peoples. Now, everything which can usefully serve the cause of true peace is assured of finding the encouragement and support of the Church.

It is in these sentiments and with all Our heart that We express to you Our congratulations and Our hopes for ever more satisfying results, calling down on you and on your work the choicest divine blessings.

THE SOCIAL PROBLEM

Radio address to the German Catholic Congress, Bochum, September 4, 1949

Taken from **THE CATHOLIC MIND**- Vol. XLVII - November 1949
No. 1043 - pp. 701-704

WITH SENTIMENTS OF PATERNAL AFFECTION and conscious of a sacred duty to you, beloved sons and daughters of Catholic Germany, We have accepted the request of Our Venerable Brother, the Archbishop of Paderborn, that We address, for the closing of the 73rd General Congress of German Catholics, a short word of encouragement and advice to you who are now gathered in great numbers in a grandiose setting of industrial activity, but above all under the sign of the sublime Cross in a great, solemn demonstration of faith.

As Our greetings reach your ears and your hearts over the waves of the ether, there rises before Our mind's eye "the land of the red earth" as We saw it in 1927 on the occasion of that unforgettable Catholic Congress at Dortmund. Flying over the Rhineland, then so flourishing as it unfolded beneath Us like unto God's garden, the airplane brought us from the ancient and venerable city of Treves right into the heart of one of the principal economic centers of Germany.

During the Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated in the open air in the gigantic stadium of the "Westfalenhalle," We saw in the majestic display of your organizations a Catholic Germany whose fervent faith gave reason for great hopes.

Today after little more than two decades, which have witnessed more trials and sufferings than in centuries of other times, We see Catholic Germany meeting again on the soil of Westphalia to find the way required by the new events and, through the principles of their Holy Faith, to achieve restoration, reconstruction and peace. If there is one thing that consoles and comforts Us somewhat, it is the confident hope that the spirit of faith which vibrated then all around Us will arouse also in your Congress of Bochum a new Christian life, increased and purified, to enable you to use the unified efforts of the millions of your Catholic men, inspired by a Catholic conscience, wherever there is work to be done for the creation of peace, and wherever are being considered decisions which can tip the scales of the destiny of Germany and of Europe—which is wavering anxiously today—to the side of good and to the benefit of all peoples.

Five Points

The concrete discussions of these days at your working committee meetings have dealt with social reorganization. Thus, since you so desire it; it is for Us to indicate in conclusion some directives, and these can be summed up under five points.

1. In the country of Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler no right-thinking man will dare to accuse the Church of not having in mind and at heart the problem of the workers and also, in general, the whole of the social question. Since Our predecessor, Pope Leo XIII, almost sixty years ago issued the encyclical, *Rerum novarum*, few problems have engaged the interest and solicitude of the Supreme Pastors of the Church more than the social question. All that they could do to collaborate, with doctrine and counsel, for a solution or at least a mitigation of social inequalities, has been done. What is necessary is that the social doctrine of the Church should become the patrimony of all Christian consciences and that this doctrine be put into practice. Social activity, however, requires sacrifice on the part of all concerned. These sacrifices must be made, and today, more than at any other time, do not admit of any further delay.

2. The social program of the Catholic Church is based on three powerful moral pillars: truth, justice and Christian charity. To deviate even slightly from the dictates of these principles would be impossible for the Church, even though she may be forced as a result to renounce temporary success in the sphere of propaganda and disappoint the fervor of those participating in the struggle, on one side or the other. The Church has always been on the side of those who seek justice and who are in need of help, but, on principle, she has never been opposed to any social group or class and always aims at serving the common good of all the members of the people or the state.

3. The Church never ceases to labor so that the apparent conflict between capital and labor, between the employer and the worker, be transformed into a higher unity, which means to say, into that organic cooperation of both parties which is indicated by their very nature and which consists in the collaboration of both according to their activity in the economic sector and the professions. May it please God that the day be not far off when those organizations of self-defense which the defects of the economic system, and especially the lack of Christian outlook, have made necessary may cease to function. It is for you to prepare for the coming of that day in your country. The conditions are not unfavorable. The tremendous catastrophe which fell upon you has brought with it the advantage that in important groups, freed from the prejudices and egoism of class, the class contrasts have been in great part leveled out and men have come closer one to the other. The common misfortune and misery was and is a severe but salutary teacher of discipline. It forced all to learn the art of mutual support, comprehension and assistance, one to the other to bear the years of misfortune. The precious fruit of those years must not be lost to you. It must never happen again that the contrast between the rich and the poor, which incidentally has been greatly reduced, the contrast between the owner and the man who lives from the work of his hands, be allowed to widen or deepen. Who, dear sons and daughters, who more than you are called to smooth the way for this decisive step in social reconstruction, in order to effect the law and the spirit of Christ?

4. Christian cultural and social policy cannot be separated because the same Christian man is both the source and the aim of each. Christian social policy pertains to Christian cultural policy, as a particular organ to the complete living organism. If you decide in favor of a Christian cultural policy; if, for example, you defend the Catholic schools—note that this is a question of an irreplaceable benefit—you consolidate the foundation of a Christian social policy.

5. It must not happen that the world of labor fall into atheistic materialism. It is necessary to make a supreme effort to preserve it for God and for Christ. Form in your sphere a spiritual home for working youth. The particular interests of youth or labor organizations which might obstruct the attainment of this goal should be generously sacrificed for such a vital aim.

Dam Against Communism

If, recently, a line of separation has been traced, binding on all Catholics, between the Catholic Faith and atheistic communism, this has been done for that reason, which is, to erect a dam to save not only the workers but all, without exception, from Marxism, which denies God and religion. The decree has nothing to do with the contrast between rich and poor, between capitalists and the proletariat, between owners and those who own nothing. It concerns the preservation and the purity of religion and of the Christian Faith, and, with that, the happiness, and the dignity, the rights and the freedoms of the workers. He would be completely blind who, having lived through these last decades, does not understand this.

Here then is the special advice which We have thought it Our duty to give you on this solemn occasion.

And now, dear sons and daughters of Catholic Germany, guard and cherish with jealous solicitude the two-fold and holy inheritance left to you by your ancestors.

The first is the Christian life of the family. Wherever this still remains, principally in the rural districts, preserve and defend it. Yes, defend it, because even there it is in danger of being lost. Where it has already disappeared, particularly in some urban working-class districts, rebuild it. You cannot give to your children and your young people anything more precious than the Christian life and perfection of the family.

The other inheritance is coordinated activity in public life. Without doubt, the aim of Redemption, is the personal sanctification, if possible, of everyone. However, according to God's plan of salvation, the sanctification of the individual must be rooted, bloom and bear fruit in the community in which he lives, which itself is vivified by faith in God and by the spirit of Christ. Here there begins the mission of the Church in public life. As a vital principle of human society, the Church must extend her influence to all spheres of human activity, drawing on the deep sources of her inner riches. Behold the vast possibility of action for laymen, in the Church and for the Church. It has always consisted in this: to work as your fathers did, in an exemplary manner, enterprising, ingenious, and resolute: "One heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32). "The God of all grace, Who has called us unto his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will Himself, after we have suffered a little while, perfect, strengthen and establish us. To Him is the domination forever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 5:10,11).

As a pledge of this We, placing the efficacy of your Congress under the protection of Mary "Help of Christians," with paternal affection, impart to you all from the fullness of Our heart the Apostolic Blessing.

ADDRESS TO AN AMERICAN CONGRESSIONAL MISSION

October 2, 1949*

A group of members of the American Congress come to Europe to study the problems posed by the existence of several hundred thousand refugees were received by the Pope, who said to them:

YOUR VISIT, GENTLEMEN, members of the House of Representatives, makes Us relive more than one beautiful memory and vivifies a hope that We have long fondled in Our heart.

We have not ceased to express publicly our anguish before the solution of this question that has been called, in too inhuman a way, “The Refugee Problem”; and that is why your very condensed enquiry concerning the facts found Us ready to attach to it all the importance that a professional critical Commission merits, and all the dignity which an urgent work of mercy should have. Neither justice nor mercy will be served if the research of the facts is limited simply to the research of the faults. It is plainly too late and too superficial simply to be moved and to bear witness even to one’s indignation.

The horror of concentration camps in peacetime, which is a striking blot on innocent brothers and sisters, and the condition where live millions of men who today answer to this odious appellation of “outcasts”, are no more simply a subject of humiliation and regret. There is more here than a vigorous appeal to Christian compassion.

You have been capable of seeing and judging for yourselves, with more insistence than ever today, that the agony of the persons called “displaced” is an appeal to a prompt and organized action by all.

An immense lot of intelligent goodwill—granted sometimes defective—and of effort have already been expended to furnish decent homes and work for these legions of homeless and these desperate hostages. The generous works of immigration and aid-organizations with whom you keep most wisely a close and effective contact merits being praised more than one can say, and they

* **OSSERVATORE ROMANO**, October 3-4, 1949; delivered in English; translated from the French translation as it appeared in **DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX**, 1949, pp. 437-439.

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have not missed receiving Our fatherly encouragements and Our material support in the measure in which this was possible for Us.

But the need is not finished; there remain hundreds of thousands of unfortunate victims of blundering, of the inevitable judgments and hesitations when there is put into action legislative and administrative action on so complex and delicate a terrain. And you remain—as We are happy to tell you We remain—confident of final and near victory, and firmly decided to see the gigantic specter of abandoned men definitively driven from humanity's conscience.

You likewise will understand one other elementary observation which is dictated to Us by the sacred mission of which we have charge. Political, economic and even social dangers are implicated in a politics which consists in prolonging the wait and in taking exaggerated precautions. But these dangers, real and serious though they might be, are nonetheless only derivative and secondary. Our principle anxiety—and We are certain that there is the same anguish in the depths of your hearts—concerns the judgment of history and the judgment of Our Lord in regard to the accomplishment of the most important duty of every man toward every other man and of every nation toward every other nation, and which demands the respect for the image of God, such as it is reflected in the weakest and most abandoned of God's children

No reason of State, no pretext of collective advantage—as We had occasion to say only a few days ago ((Discourse to the International Union of Family Organizations, September 20, 1949))—can attempt to justify the scorn for this dignity and the refusal to accord these elementary human rights which the Creator has imprinted in the soul of each of his creatures.

Rest assured, gentlemen, once more, of Our touched sympathy and of Our supplications before the throne of divine justice and mercy on behalf of your greater efforts and of those of your colleagues and co-workers of all countries with a view toward vigorously pulling down the last obstacles which prevent Our dearly-beloved refugees from enjoying full human liberty; their hope can neither flag nor die in their hearts.

ADDRESS TO THE PERSONNEL OF THE BANK OF ITALY

*April 25, 1950**

*At the end of a retreat preached to a part of the personnel of the Bank of Italy,
Pope Pius XII addressed to this audience the allocution in this wise:*

IT IS PARTICULARLY PLEASANT TODAY to see gathered here the directors, employees and workers of the Bank of Italy. Your presence, dear sons and daughters, is clothed with a special character by the fact that it is situated in the light of the Holy Year. This thought should give more force and effectiveness to the resolutions which the Lord has inspired in your souls during the spiritual exercises which you have finished in preparation for the feast of Easter. It will induce you evermore to consider your work, not in the materialist sense, but according to its real dignity and profound value.

The Pope underlines the meaning of professional life according to the Christian ideal

Professional labor is for Christians a way of serving God. For others, it can only be a weight which one tries to avoid as much as possible, or else an end in itself, an idol, of which man becomes the slave. But not for us.

Even if, with the years, professional labor should become monotonous, or if, by obedience to the law of God, it should weigh as a constraint, or as a too heavy burden, it should nonetheless always remain for you, Christians, one of the most important means of sanctification, one of the most effective ways of being conformed to the divine will and meriting heaven.

No Christian can consider work in a different way. If there is, today, so much discontent, so much frivolity, so much indifference, it is because the clear and true conception of work's Christian value no longer exists, or, if it exists, is no longer alive in souls.

* **OSSERVATORE ROMANO**, April 27, 1950; delivered in Italian; translated from the French translation as it appeared in **DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX**, 1950, pp. 125-128.

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Work has many functions

1. *It should permit the worker to live.* Work should give sufficient daily bread to man and to his family. We are not dealing here with something which is added in an intrinsic way, but which is intrinsically proper to professional work, according to the designs of God. Is it possible to imagine a more powerful stimulant for a just organization of daily life than this Christian concept of work?

2. *It should contribute its part toward the building of the common good.* Work should, besides, serve the general good: it should attest to the sense of responsibility of each for the good of all.

Pius XII defines the role of the personnel of the Bank

Who could neglect this aspect of work in an Institute like the Bank of Italy? Conscience, uprightness, exactitude, these qualities of all good work are so much the more inseparable from work understood as service of God, and become, thus, profitable to the well-being of the community.

How could an administration such as yours be a real community, and not a simple existence in common, if not because all of you, from first to last, are conscious of working with Christian loyalty for the good of all?

Do not be astonished, dear sons, if We insist on the social aspect of your profession; this should lead you to esteem, love, and exercise it with sedulousness and conscience.

Money, wealth, should serve the good of men, according to the dictates of divine law

In the Holy Gospels the Divine Master does not condemn wealth justly acquired; he praises or reproves the correct or evil conduct of man in its regard: “Woe to him who makes himself its slave, because it is not possible to serve two masters.” (Luke 7:20). Woe to the evil rich person who lives but to enjoy, without turning a glance of pity on poor Lazarus who, covered with sores, lies by his door. (Luke 16:19). Yes, woe to all of them, but praise and recompense to the good and faithful servant who makes the money he has received bear fruit; quite the contrary, blame and punishment to the lazy servant who has hidden the money of his master in the ground instead of confiding it to bankers and obtaining from it proper interest. (Matthew 25:20-30).

The Bank should help man utilize his wealth well

Does not the social function of the Bank consist in putting the individual in a position to make capital bear fruit, even slight, instead of dissipating it or letting it lie dormant without any profit either for himself or for others?

That is why the services which the Bank can render are multiple: facilitating and encouraging saving; reserving savings for the future by making them fruitful already in the present; permitting it to take part in useful enterprises which could not be engaged in without its help; making easy and

sometimes, very simply, possible, the regulation of accounts, exchanges, the commerce between the State and private organizations, and, in a word, all the economic life of a people; establishing, in some way, a regulator which helps to surmount the difficult periods without running into catastrophe.

These are only some examples among so many others. But are they not already charged with a powerful impetus, whether for the directors on whose shoulders weighs— especially in periods of crisis—the weighty responsibility for decisions to be made, or for the employees whose work demands a rigorous attention from which nothing should distract?

**Human would should, for the Christian,
already take on a supernatural value**

The work of a man who lives in sanctifying grace should display his quality of child of God, as a supernatural source of daily energy and daily merit for heaven and the great designs of the Kingdom of God.

In this way the working-day of a true Christian—apparently no different than that of other men and dedicated as it to the things here below—is, henceforth plunged into eternity.

The Christian worker remains and works in this world with all his power and with all his will, but he lives from the hereafter and for the hereafter; till the hour when it shall please the Lord to call his faithful servant to eternal peace. With this wish and calling down on your work the most abundant aids of heaven, We give all of you, with all Our hear, our Apostolic Benediction.

VOCATION OF BUSINESSMEN

Address of His holiness to the delegates of the World Congress of Chambers of Commerce, April 27, 1950

Taken from **THE CATHOLIC MIND**, August, 1950 pp. 510-511

WE HAVE A GREAT JOY IN RECEIVING YOU HERE, representatives of the Chambers of Commerce from all over the world: you who in effect represent the elite of the commercial world. We do not want to miss this occasion to tell you—in haste and in measure permitted by the extraordinary obligations of the Holy Year—a word of the Christian conception of your profession. Its role, its influence, its responsibilities are, in the present hour, of an importance and a gravity greater than ever. We believe it to be opportune that you crown your technical and juridical work by a serious moral consideration of the role and responsibilities of commerce.

It is not without impressive significance that mythology gave wings to Mercury (pagan god of commerce.) Should we not see in that the symbol of the liberty that commerce needs to go and come across the borders of its own country? Certainly there is no question—and none among you dreams that there is—of claiming unlimited liberty. Incompatible with the alms and needs of each national economy, or with the permanent solicitude for material prosperity of all. But on the contrary, it is in view of this (national) prosperity that you aspire to a fuller liberty of commerce. And you have reason.

It is not enough, unfortunately, to have reason on your side in the serene region of principles, so long as the most legitimate desires remain unrealizable in practice because of purely political considerations that continue to restrict the circulation and communication of persons and goods.

There are even countries where a policy has been adopted, more or less absolute, that places all commerce in the hands of public authority. Let us affirm this clearly: this is a tendency in opposition to the Christian conception of social economy. Commerce is fundamentally an activity of the individual and it is this private activity that gives a man his first impulse and lights the flame of his enthusiasm.

Further, you will not obtain the goal you wish, which is the general prosperity, without putting into full effect the individual exercise of commerce for the service of society's material well-being. The merchant, one will say, should be skilled without doubt; he must be a man of affairs, prudent more than sentimental, again, without a doubt. But he must add to these strictly professional qualities a high concept of the ideal of his profession. As a businessman, he must also consider himself a servant of the community.

To have no other ambition except always to make more money and to enrich himself is to betray his vocation, since one can well call by this name (vocation) the mission that God has assigned to him, the particularly difficult calling of a merchant.

He would thus play the game of the evil-minded, who strive to make of commerce a living vampire at the expense of the economic life. If on the contrary, the merchant aims and strives to circulate worldly goods, destined by God for the advantage of all, and takes them where they must serve and in a manner to make them serve well—then, indeed, he is a good and true servant of society, a guarantee against misery, a promoter of general prosperity.

May, among other things, the concentration of commerce in the Chambers of Commerce and, perhaps one day, the constitution of these as representatives of all those linked with this profession, help maintain everywhere in its purity the ideal of the honest and, as is sometimes said, of the royally magnificent merchant.

But it is most important—because it is the solid basis of everything—that this ideal bears the imprint of religion. Did not our Lord himself compare the kingdom of Heaven to the precious gem that the wise merchant buys at the price of all his goods (Matthew 13:45)? May this be the conviction of all of you; transmit it to your children, spread it among the young in your profession. Thus, you will bring upon yourselves, upon the good and healthy progress of your affairs and the whole world the most abundant divine favors, in pledge of which whole-heartedly We give you, your families and those that you represent here our Apostolic Blessing.

PRODUCTION FOR HUMAN NEEDS

Address of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, prepared for the delegates to the Catholic International Congresses for Social Study (Frigourg Union) and Social Action (Saint Gall Union) held at Rome during Whitsuntide, June 3, 1950)

Taken from **THE CATHOLIC MIND**, August 1950, pp. 507-510

WE BID YOU A CORDIAL WELCOME, members of the International Congress of Social Studies and of the International Christian Social Union, and feel particularly pleased to extend this greeting to you here during Holy Year. This meeting is more than a happy coincidence. On your part it is a manifestation of your personal dispositions. For us it offers grounds for a gratifying hope that your deliberations and your resolutions will contribute in large measure to the ripening of the fine fruit We are counting upon from this year of Return and of world-wide Reconciliation; namely, the renewal and expansion, within the great community of mankind, of the spirit of justice, brotherhood and peace.

The lack or decay of this spirit must, indeed, be regarded as one of the chief causes of the distress which afflicts millions of men in modern society—the vast multitude of unfortunates who are starving, or threatened with starvation, from unemployment. It is on their misery and discouragement that the spirit of evil is gambling in his attempt to wean them away from Christ, the real and only Savior, to thrust them into the current of atheism and materialism and to entangle them in the mechanism of social organizations at variance with the order established by God. Dazzled by the blinding light of handsome promises, by the impudent claim to successes which cannot be realized, they are sorely tempted to surrender to easy illusions which can only lead them to new and frightful social upheavals. What an awakening faces them when reality dissipates these beautiful, gilded dreams.

Only the coalition of all honest people in every part of the world, united in loyal understanding and perfect accord, for a far-reaching plan of action can bring about the remedy. Let there be no more of these blinkers that narrow the field of vision and reduce the vast problem of unemployment to a simple attempt at better distribution of the total individual and physical labor forces in the world!

The time has come to face squarely, in its full dimensions, the duty of providing for countless families, in their natural, moral, juridical and economic unity, a just living-space which meets, however modestly but at the very least in sufficient measure, the demands of human dignity.

Away with the selfish preoccupations of nationality and class which may in the least degree hinder an undertaking loyally embraced and vigorously carried out by the joint action of all the forces actually at work or available over the whole face of the earth: an undertaking launched with

the aid of every initiative and effort of private individuals and specialized groups, and with the world-wide collaboration of peoples and States, each contributing its respective share of wealth in raw materials, in capital, in manpower. All the participants in this common project should appreciate, finally, the assistance offered to it by the Church.

There you have the great social problem, with its challenge at the crossroads in this present hour! If that problem is put on the way to a successful solution, even at the expense of material interests, even at the price of sacrifices by every member of the great human family, the international situation will be rid of one of its most troubling factors, the one which more than any other keeps alive today the ruinous “cold war,” and threatens to set ablaze the incomparably more disastrous hot war, the war that burns.

A dweller in the old industrial countries would show himself very much behind the times were he to imagine that there is question today, as was the case a century or even only half a century ago, merely of assuring to the wage-earner, loosed from his feudal or patriarchal bonds, freedom in fact in addition to freedom by law. Such a notion would betray a complete failure to grasp the main issue in the present situation. For several decades now, in the majority of these countries and often under the decisive influence of the Catholic social movement, social policy has been taking the form of a progressive evolution in labor legislation, with a corresponding subjection of the private owner of the means of production to juridical obligations in favor of the workingman. The desire to see social policy further developed along these lines encounters a limit, and that limit is reached where the danger arises that the working-class may follow in its turn the mistaken course of capital. That course involved the withdrawing of personal responsibility, chiefly in big business, from the private owner (individual or partnership) and handing it over to the responsibility of anonymous corporate groups.

Such a development would suit a Socialist mentality to perfection. It could not but prove disturbing to anyone who is aware of the fundamental importance of the right to private property in stimulating initiative and fixing responsibility in economic matters.

A similar danger is likewise present when it is claimed that the wage-earners in a given industry have the right to economic *joint-management*, notably when the exercise of this right rests in reality, directly or indirectly with organizations managed from outside the establishment

Worker and Employer

As a matter of fact, neither the nature of the labor contract nor the nature of the business enterprise in themselves admit necessarily of a right of this sort. It is unquestionable that the wage-earner and the employer are equally the subjects, not the objects, of a nation’s economy. There is no question of denying this parity. It is already an established principle of social policy; it would be asserted still more effectively were that policy to be organized on the occupational level. But there is nothing in the private-law relationship, as governed by the simple wage-contract, to contradict this fundamental parity. The wisdom of Our Predecessor Pius XI has made that quite clear in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*, where he denies, in consequence, that there is any need in the nature of things to pattern the wage-contract on the contract of partnership. That is not to disavow the usefulness of what has thus far been achieved in this direction, “in various ways, to the no small gain

of both wage-earners and employers” (Acta Apostolicae Sedis, Vol. 23. p. 199).^{*} But in the light of principles and facts the right of economic joint-management lies beyond the field of these possible achievements.

The disadvantages of these problems lies in the fact that they make one lose sight of the problem of major importance and major urgency which broods like a nightmare especially over the old industrial countries, that is, the imminent and permanent menace of unemployment, the problem of the reintegration and maintenance of normal productive enterpriser of that productivity which is intimately linked, by its origin as well as in its purpose, to the dignity and well-being of the family viewed as a moral, juridical and economic unit.

With reference to the countries for which industrialization is being contemplated today, We cannot but applaud the efforts of ecclesiastical authorities designed to spare peoples who have been living up to now under a patriarchal or even feudal regime, those above all who dwell in towns made up of dissimilar groups, a repetition of the grievous omissions of economic liberalism during the last century. A social policy in harmony with the teaching of the Church, sustained by organizations which safeguard the material and spiritual interests of the people, and adapted to modern conditions, should be assured of the support of every genuine Catholic without exception.

Even supposing these new industrializations to be a fact, the problem remains in its entirety. In their regard the same question recurs: do they contribute, yes or no, to the reintegration and maintenance of wholesome productive enterprise within the national economy? Or do they merely add further to the number of industries forever at the mercy of new crises? And besides, what care will be taken to develop and consolidate the domestic market—once it is rendered productive by reason of the side of the population and its manifold needs—where capital investment is guided only by the lure of transient advantages, and where empty illusions of national prestige determine economic decisions?

Production and Consumption

There has been too much experimenting with mass production, with the exploitation, to the point of exhaustion, of every resource of the soil and subsoil. Above all, peasant populations and agrarian economics have been only too cruelly sacrificed to these experiments. Equally blind is the well-nigh superstitious reliance on the mechanism of the world market to restore a balanced economy, and the trust in an Omniprovident State to secure, for each of its subjects and in every emergency of their lives, the right to make demands which must eventually prove to be unattainable.

In the domain of social economy the duty pressing for attention is the judicious adjustment of production to consumption on the basis of human needs and human dignity. In view of this urgency, the question which comes to the fore today is that of the organization and equipment of the social economy at its production-stage. The solution of this question must not be sought from the theory of “laws of the market”—a purely positivistic by-product of neo-Kantian criticism—nor in the mere formula, every bit as artificial, of “full employment.” There before you is the problem

^{*} See *Reconstructing the Social Order* (Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*) American Press, 1948, p. 23.

on which We should like to see the theorists and practical men of the Catholic social movement concentrate their attention and bring their studies to bear.

In token of the paternal interest We take in your research and in your activities, under the patronage of the Holy Ghost, Whom We implore to fill your hearts with His Gifts, We impart to you and to all Catholic sociologists...Our Apostolic Blessing.

ADDRESS TO THE PERSONNEL OF THE BANK OF ROME

June 18, 1950*

The personnel of the Bank of Rome, having finished the exercises of the Jubilee, were received in audience by Pope Pius XII who declared:

YOUR FILIAL PIETY WHICH HAS DECIDED to crown and conclude your Jubilee pilgrimage with a visit to the common Father, and which is so pleasant to Us as it corresponds to your inner desires, invites Us to answer by Our fatherly word to the feelings which have lead you here.

The Pope congratulates the directors of the Bank for having always maintained it on the proper path

These are above all the feelings of a devotion to the Holy See which, born with the Institute itself, have not weakened in the course of its already long life. Feelings of fidelity to just principle which, after having presided at its foundation, have not ceased to maintain its directors on the proper path, through alternating vicissitudes and in the midst of its growing and multiple activity. In short, feelings of vigilant administration, lending entirely toward the common utility In the best use of public savings.

Those must be silenced who proclaim that the Bank is intrinsically evil

So, while addressing to you these merited praises, We thus arrive at defining clearly Our position in regard to an unhealthy conception and one not answering to “That liberty by which Christ has set us free” (Gal. 5:1. That is, as if the banking system was by its very nature soiled with a fault; as if the exercise of your profession and the very object of your work put you inevitably in danger of contaminating your heart. As if it was particularly difficult for you to free your soul from the attachment to ephemeral and fallacious goods to pass through the flame of temporal wealth in a way that you would not lose the eternal treasures. You advance in your career like others in

* **OSSERVATORE ROMANO**, June 19-29, 1950; delivered in Italian; translated from the French translation as it appeared in **DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX**, 1950, pp. 214-216.

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theirs—and perhaps often you traverse it with sorrow—in honorably winning your livelihood and that of those who are dear to you.

There is a way of being at the same time an excellent financier and a good Christian

All this is valid not only for the simple subaltern in his work of simple execution and accounting, but equally for the great employees of finance, for the financier in the true sense of the word. He can himself unite to the application of his competence and the utilization of his professional capacity, the true evangelical spirit, that is, the liberty of a heart profoundly detached from the money which he manages, from the values which he negotiates, from the material goods which he administers, in knowing only one Lord, God, (Matt. 6:24) whom he serves in an obedience of spirit and action to his commandments and in fidelity to Christ.

In every age, moreover, appeal has had to be made to the banking institution

It seems opportune to Us to underline still once more here the high function of the banking system, the great importance which it has always had in the national economy, already in the time of the Ancient Assyrians and Egyptians, and to which the present conditions have only served to give a considerably increased breadth and influence. If money has not been wrongly defined as the blood in the organism of the economic body ((the expression, says the footnote in *Documents Pontificaux*, is that of Pope Pius XI who declared in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (15th of May, 1931): “A small number of stockholders and absolute masters of money govern credit and dispense it according to their good pleasure. By this, they distribute away the blood to the economic organism, whose life they hold in their hands, so well that without their consent no one can any longer breath.”)), it can rightly be concluded from this that Banks are as the hearts which must regulate its circulation for the greater good of families, of individuals, of social groups, whose ensemble forms the national economic body; wherefore, the power, the usefulness, the responsibility of the banking system.

The Bank must be imbued with Christian spirit

Certainly, this power and this responsibility are not without risks of abuses as the facts, alas, sufficiently demonstrate. The duty of the Church and of its faithful is only more imperious for communicating to the banking system the pure Christian spirit. This spirit is broad, and stranger to narrow pettiness. It fixes impassable limits only where moral law and natural honorableness ceases, without restraining liberty this side of these borders, but without permitting venturing beyond. This breadth and this firmness work for the good of the general economy, which is that toward which you yourselves tend.

Thus your “*Banco di Roma*” will be a glowing melting-pot of business in the honorableness of work. Thanks to the Christian spirit, which directs your professional activity, and your personal conduct, each of you will contribute so that it can fulfill better and better its functions the function

of the heart which makes circulation and flow a pure and vigorous blood in the entire social economy.

The Holy Father Blesses the Assembly

With this wish, at the same time as We thank you for your homage and assure you of Our good-will, We pray the Lord to shower on you his lights and his gifts, in pledge of which We give all of you, your families, your daily work, Our fatherly Apostolic Benediction.

ADDRESS TO THE PERSONNEL OF THE ROMAN ELECTRICAL SOCIETY

July 2, 1950*

Three thousand workers, employees and directors of the Roman Electrical Society were received in audience by the Pope in the Hall of Benedictions. Pope Pius XII addressed himself to the crowd in these terms:

IT IS ALWAYS FOR US A MOTIVE of great satisfaction and joy to receive the testimony of filial love from workers and to seize each opportune occasion to express the esteem and affection which their laborious life inspires in Us. The Church has always protected the worker and his work. Take in your hands, dear Sons, the declarations of the Popes on the social question and the condition of workers. These are not empty words nor vain promises which could not subsequently be realized nor maintained. They constitute rather an effective and just defense of the worker, of his work, and of his well-being.

To this sentiment is joined another one, since work is consecrated to procure the common good. Too often work is misunderstood or at least underestimated by the public which, nonetheless, profits from its advantages. Habituated to enjoying services which have become for them indispensable, the users of these things easily forget their value and merit, and seem to remember them only at the times when, by absolute necessity, they find themselves deprived of them.

It is this not doubtless your case as well, co-workers in the Roman Electrical Society? In normal times, the short interruptions of current, independent of the human will, make, or should make, people appreciate that much more the benefit of its constant regularity. If this should happen to fail, what grave consequences can result for domestic life, for industry and the economy, for surgery, by putting sometimes even human lives in danger! On the other hand, what efforts, what incessant vigilance are necessary to avoid these interruptions or for remedying them as soon as possible.

But a horrible cataclysm, the most frightening conflict in history has just recently provoked, principally by the destruction of power-houses, a disastrous general crisis of electrical energy. Before the ruin of magnificent work, before the perspective of terrible and long consequences, all,

* **OSSERVATORE ROMANO**, July 3-4, 1950; delivered in Italian; translated from the French translation as it appeared in **DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX**, 1950, pp. 234-236.

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directors, technicians, workers, cannot repress in their hearts a feeling of deep sorrow, a first impression of discouragement. This was only a rapid impression, firmly and immediately repulsed. Homage must be paid to the force of spirit and will, to the resolute and persevering courage which have allowed you—more rapidly than the most optimistic calculations were able to envision—to unravel the disorder and tangle of bombed-out installations, to rebuild edifices, to reconstruct machines, to put back into working order and re-wire circuits and systems, to give all its activity to the immense organization, from the source of energy on the mountain to the modest lamp where it ends.

You can truly be proud of such a marvelous restoration, each of you in the measure in which you have contributed to it, because it supposes from all, two conditions which constitute the nobility of the working life: interest and love of the worker for his work in cooperation for the common good, interest and love for the enterprise in the service of which so much toil is consecrated.

This toil is not light. We are well aware, and in your personal life, in your family life, hours are not lacking where it does not make itself felt heavily. May the thought of its utility in these hours sustain you and the certitude moreover strengthen you that We, Vicar of Christ, who consider with satisfaction your work for men, his brothers—that We honor you, love you, and that We invoke on you especially in this Holy Year the most precious graces of Heaven, in pledge of which We give you with all Our heart, as well as to your families, to your colleagues and companions, prevented by duty to be present here themselves, Our fatherly Apostolic Benediction.

ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN TOBACCO CENTER

September 14, 1950*

The Fifth International Conference of the European Tobacco Center, taking place in Rome, the members were received in audience by the Pope at Castel-Gandolfo, who declared:

YOU HAVE DESIRED, GENTLEMEN, TO COME; you also—engaged in the study of the problems concerning the growth industry and commerce of tobacco—desired to present your homage on the occasion of your European Convention. Some will be astounded to see Us acceding to your desire; thinking that the Church has no business in this matter,. Let us admit it, not without reserve. Still you represent an activity in the development of which everyone, from the lowliest to the highest, are united mutually by the bond of the profession.

The Sovereign Pontiff praises the professions where the cooperation is established among all the agents

There would be nothing more needed to merit Our interest. How much more easily would social problems be resolved if each of the collaborators in the same industry, in the same profession, would be practicing it with all their heart, fully conscious, in the love of work well done, if there reigned among all of them the warm cordiality of a second family; if the youngest apprentice and the most important head felt in his heart the healthy pride of being more than just a wage-earner, a living cooperator, useful, appreciated by the entire society?

Concerning the particular problem of tobacco, the Church has the right to intervene in two domains

While conceding that the Church does not have direct authority in the question of tobacco, We alluded to some reserves. Did We, then, have in view one particular aspect, where she would have her word to say, an aspect of the moral order, evidently? To be precise, it is two-fold.

1. It is necessary, in conscience, when manipulating tobacco, to eliminate, insofar as possible, the toxic elements.

* *OSSERVATORE ROMANO*, September 15, 1950; delivered in French; translated from the French translation as it appeared in *DOCUMENTS PONTIFICAUX*, 1950, pp. 373-374.

NOTE: No effort has been made at this point to secure official approbation for the above translation. As such, it is intended only for private use and circulation at the present time. Translator – Revered Francis J. Ostrowski.

In the first place it concerns you: the poisonings and other accidents which too often affect the general health or the organs of smokers, should be reduced to the minimum, and it is for all those who take part in its handling a duty of conscience; it is thus necessary that each one in his sphere contribute to his task all the competence and all the care desirable. Are not States seen to be preoccupied with this point, when, in certain countries, they reserve the posts of tobacco engineers to the head prize-winning polytechnical students?

2. Each one should employ tobacco with moderation and in taking into account numerous factors which have to enter in, in order to make of this use a sanely moral act.

We spoke of another moral aspect of the question of tobacco where the solicitude of the Church has a place to be shown. This is of a general nature: We wish to say the duty common to all of watching over the regulation of the use of tobacco in such a way that it is in accord with physical and moral health, with economic possibilities, with the social obligations of individuals and peoples.

The pope, to finish, blesses those present

Your request to be received in this special audience is a proof that such is also your thought, and that is why, most willingly, We give all of you, those who are dear to you, with all the outpouring of Our heart, the Apostolic Benediction.