

Pacem in Terris - Human Rights and Duties in Natural Law

Pope John XXIII

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PACEM IN TERRIS—

Human Rights and Duties in Natural Law

THE encyclical on establishing universal peace in truth, justice, charity, and liberty—to give it its full title—is a lengthy document running to some 20,000 words divided into five parts. We print below the full text of the third, fourth and fifth parts which form half the whole encyclical and contain its most specific judgments, and precede this with the summary of the argument developed in the first and second parts. These are a recapitulation of traditional Catholic teaching in which the late pontiff frequently cites his venerated predecessors so that of some seventy references to quotations no fewer than fifty occur in parts I and II. Summarized portions are printed in italics, and extracts from the encyclical in Roman type.

The argument begins with the Creation as bringing order out of chaos, and then contrasts the turmoil of individual men and peoples with the perfect order of the universe; but men have a sense of order and justice imprinted in their minds by their Creator, so that the laws by which men must govern their relations with each other are quite unlike the natural laws governing the forces of the material universe. A human being is a person whose nature is to enjoy intelligence and free will, and from this come both his rights and his duties. The rights of man are to life, bodily integrity, and the means that are necessary and suitable for the proper development of life—primarily food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and social services, including social security against hardship. Natural law gives every human being “the right to freedom in searching for truth and in expressing and communicating his opinions and in pursuit of art, within the limits laid down by the moral order and the common good; and he has the right to be informed truthfully about public events.” Natural law, says the Pope, also gives man “the right to share in the benefits of culture and therefore the right to a basic education and a technical and professional

training in keeping with the stage of educational development in the country to which he belongs." He also "has the right to honour God according to the dictates of an upright conscience and therefore the right to worship God privately and publicly." Human beings have the natural right "to free initiative in the economic field and the right to work," and to work in good conditions and to a just wage. Men also have the right to private property, even of productive goods, though private property brings a social duty with it. There is a right of association and a right to freedom of movement, including immigration, and there is a right to take part in public affairs. Pius XII is quoted as saying that the individual must not be regarded as a merely passive element in the social order.

Duties and Responsibilities

To all this there corresponds an equally wide range of duties, to every right a corresponding duty; because there is a right to life there is a duty to preserve it; a right to a decent standard of living means a duty to live decently; a right to investigate the truth means the duty to seek it; and to every man other men's rights spell duties for him to observe. But these rights and duties must be exercised in freedom:

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

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

Such then is human society, to be organized for harmonious co-operation and needing abundant resources, so that the creation of wealth takes a high priority. Human society is a great spiritual reality and must nourish spiritual values.

The Marks of Modern Society

The Pope then looks at contemporary society to note three distinctive characteristics:

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

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

human person both in domestic and in public life.

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

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

From this it follows that "racial discrimination can no longer be justified at least doctrinally or in theory." This concludes the first part.

The Individual and the State

Part II begins with the divine origin of authority, quoting St. John Chrysostom and Pius XII, and the consequent duty of rulers not to abuse their power but always to seek the common good. Ethnic characteristics are to be respected as part of the common good for their communities, and here there is a reference back to Mater et Magistra. Governments must cherish the rights of individuals, and the orders of a government which does not do so will lack juridical force:

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

be to ensure that these rights are acknowledged, respected, co-ordinated with other rights, defended and promoted, so that in this way each one may more easily carry out his duties. For "to safeguard the inviolable rights of the human person, and to facilitate the fulfilment of his duties, should be the essential office of every public authority" (Pius XII, Radio Message, June 1st, 1941).

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

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

Governments thus have a right and a duty to counteract the tendencies that would develop in an unregulated society without giving preferential protection to particular groups. "State activity in the economic field, no matter what its breadth or depth may be, ought not to be exercised in such a way as to curtail an individual's freedom of personal initiative," he quotes from Mater et Magistra. The Pope goes on to consider the structure of public authority.

It is impossible to determine, once and for all, what is the most suitable form of government, or how civil authorities can most effectively fulfil their respective functions, *i.e.*, the legislative, judicial and executive functions of the State. In determining the structure and operation of government which a State is to have, great weight has to be given to the historical background and circumstances of given political communi-

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

If, however, this political and juridical structure is to produce the advantages which may be expected of it, public officials must strive to meet the problems which arise in a way that conforms both to the complexities of the situation and the proper exercise of their function. This requires that, in constantly changing conditions, legislators never forget the norms of morality, or constitutional provisions, or the objective requirements of the common good. Moreover, executive authorities must co-ordinate the activities of society with a discretion, with a full knowledge of the law, and after a careful consideration of circumstances, and the courts must administer justice impartially and without being influenced by favouritism or pressure. The good order of society also demands that individual citizens and intermediate organizations should be effectively protected by law whenever they have rights to be exercised or obligations to be fulfilled. This protection should be granted to citizens both in their dealings with each other and in their relations with government agencies.

Citizens should be enabled to participate in one way or another in the public life of their communities, so that there may be close contact all the time between the rulers

and the ruled, and written constitutions can be very useful to proclaim guiding rules and agreed objectives.

Part III: RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES

Subjects of Rights and Duties

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

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

It would be absurd, moreover, even to imagine that men could surrender their own human attributes, or be compelled to do so, by the very fact of their appointment to public office, whereas they have been given that noble assignment precisely because the wealth of their human endowments has earned them their reputation as outstanding members of the body politic. Furthermore, authority is a necessary requirement of the moral order in human society. It may not therefore be used against that order; and the very instant such an attempt were made, it would cease to be authority, as the Lord has warned us: "A word, then, for the king's ears to hear, king's hearts to heed: a message for you, rulers, wherever you be! Listen well, all you that have multitudes at your command, foreign hordes to do your bidding. Power is none but comes to you from

the Lord, nor any royalty but from One who is above all. He it is that will call you to account for your doings with a scrutiny that reads your inmost thoughts" (Wisdom vi: 2-4).

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

But a fundamental factor of the common good is acknowledgement of the moral order and respect for its prescriptions. "Order between the political communities must be built upon the unshakable and unchangeable rock of the moral law, made manifest in the order of nature by the Creator Himself and by Him engraved on the hearts of men with letters that may never be effaced. . . . Like the rays of a gleaming beacon, its principles must guide the plans and policies of men and nations. These are the signals—of warning, safety and smooth sailing — they will have to heed, if they would not see all their laborious efforts to establish a new order condemned to tempest and shipwreck" (Pius XII, Christmas Message, 1941).

In Truth

First among the rules governing the relations between States is that of truth. This calls, above all, for the elimination of every trace of racism, and the consequent recognition of the principle that all States are by nature equal in dignity. Each of them accordingly is vested with the right to existence, to self-development, to the means fitting to its attainment, and to be the one primarily responsible for his self-development. Add to that the right of each to its good name, and to the respect which is its due. Very often, experience has taught us, individuals will be found to differ consider-

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

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

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

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

In Justice

Relations between political communities are to be further regulated by justice. This

implies, over and above recognition of their mutual rights, the fulfilment of their respective duties.

Political communities have the right to existence, to self-development and to the means necessary for this. They have the right to play the leading part in the process of their own development and the right to their good name and due honours. From which it follows as a simultaneous consequence that they have also the corresponding duty of respecting these rights in others and of avoiding any act of violation. Just as an individual man may not pursue his own interests to the detriment of other men, so, on the international level, one State may not develop itself by restricting or oppressing other States. St. Augustine rightly says: "What are kingdoms without justice but bands of robbers?" (Civ. Dei. iv:4).

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

The Treatment of Minorities

From the nineteenth century there has been a rather widespread tendency in historical evolution for political communities to equate themselves with national communities. However, for various reasons, it has not always been possible to make geographical boundaries coincide with ethnic ones; this gives rise to the phenomenon of minorities

and to the relative complex problems.

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

On the other hand, the demands of justice are admirably observed by those civil authorities who promote the natural betterment of those citizens belonging to a smaller ethnic group, particularly when that betterment concerns their language, the development of their natural gifts, their ancestral customs, and their accomplishments and endeavours in the economic order.

It should be noted, however, that these minority groups, either because of a reaction to their present situation or because of their historical difficulties, are often inclined to exalt beyond due measure anything proper to their own people, so as to place them even above human values, as if that which is proper to humanity were to be at the service of that which is proper to the nation. Reason rather demands that these very people recognize also the advantages that accrue to them from their peculiar circumstances; for instance, no small contribution is made towards the development of their particular talents and spirit by their daily dealings with people who have grown up in a different culture. This, however, will be true only if they will know how to act as a bridge, which facilitates the circulation of life in its various expressions among different traditions or civilizations, and not a zone of discord which can cause great damage and choke natural development.

Active Solidarity

Certainly relations between States must

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

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

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

There are groupings of people of more or less different racial backgrounds. However, the elements which characterize an ethnic group must not be transformed into a watertight compartment in which human beings are prevented from communicating with their fellowmen belonging to different ethnic groups. That would contrast with our contemporary situation, in which the distances separating peoples have been almost wiped out. Nor can one overlook the fact that, even though human beings differ from one another by virtue of their ethnic peculiarities, they all possess certain essential common elements, and are inclined by

nature to meet each other in the world of spiritual values, whose progressive assimilation opens to them the possibility of perfection without limits. They have the right and duty therefore to live in communion with one another.

The Proper Balance Between Population, Land and Capital

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

Here we deem it opportune to remark that, whenever possible, the work to be done should be taken to the workers, not *vice versa*.

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

The Problem of Political Refugees

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

Such expatriations show that there are some political régimes which do not guarantee for individual citizens a sufficient sphere of freedom within which their souls are allowed to breathe humanly; in fact,

under those régimes even the lawful existence of such a sphere of freedom is either called into question or denied. This undoubtedly is a radical inversion of the order of human society, because the reason for the existence of public authority is to promote the common good, a fundamental element of which is the recognition of that sphere of freedom and the safeguarding of it.

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

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

Wherefore, on this occasion, we publicly approve and commend every undertaking, founded on the principles of human solidarity and Christian charity, which aims at making migration of persons from one country to another less painful.

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

Disarmament

On the other hand, it is with deep sorrow that we note the enormous stocks of armaments that have been and still are being made in more economically developed countries, with a vast outlay of intellectual and economic resources. And so it happens

that, while the people of these countries are loaded with heavy burdens, other countries as a result are deprived of the collaboration they need in order to make economic and social progress.

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

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

Justice, then, right reason and humanity urgently demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control. In the words of Pius XII, our predecessor of happy memory: "The calamity of a world war, with the economic and social

ruin and the moral excesses and dissolution that accompany it, must not be permitted to envelop the human race for a third time" (Christmas Message, 1941).

All must realize that there is no hope of putting an end to the building up of armaments, nor of reducing the present stocks, nor, still less, of abolishing them altogether, unless the process is complete and thorough and unless it proceeds from inner conviction: unless, that is, everyone sincerely co-operates to banish the fear and anxious expectation of war with which men are oppressed. If this is to come about, the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another, which declares that the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone. We believe that this can be brought to pass, and we consider that it is something which reason requires, that it is eminently desirable in itself and that it will prove to be the source of many benefits.

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

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

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

by peace; everything may be lost by war" (Radio Message, August 24th, 1939).

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

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

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

In Liberty

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

The Evolution of Economically Under-developed Countries

Because all men are joined together by reason of their common origin, their re-

demption by Christ, and their supernatural destiny, and are called to form one single family, we appealed in the encyclical *Mater et Magistra* to economically developed nations to come to the aid of those which were in the process of development.

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

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

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

the natural, as well as international, law. In this way, and in this way only, will they be able to obtain a fitting share of the common good, and assure the material and spiritual welfare of their people" (Christmas Message, 1941).

It is vitally important, therefore, that the wealthier States, in providing varied forms of assistance to the poorer, should respect the moral values and ethnic characteristics peculiar to each, and also that they should avoid any intention of political domination. If this is done, "a precious contribution will be made towards the formation of a world community, a community in which each member, whilst conscious of its own individual right and duties, will work in a relationship of equality towards the attainment of the universal common good" (*Mater et Magistra*, AAS LIII:443).

Signs of the Times

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

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

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

There is reason to hope, however, that by meeting and negotiating, men may come to discover better the bonds that unite them together, deriving from the human nature which they have in common; and that they may also come to discover that one of the most profound requirements of their common nature is this: that between them and their respective peoples it is not fear which should reign but love, a love which tends to express itself in a collaboration that is loyal, manifold in form, and productive of many benefits.

**Part IV: RELATIONSHIP OF MEN AND
OF POLITICAL COMMUNITIES
WITH THE WORLD COMMUNITY**

**Interdependence Between
Political Communities**

Recent progress of science and technology has profoundly affected human beings and influenced men to work together and live as one family. There has been a great increase in the circulation of ideas, of persons and of goods from one country to another, so that relations have become closer between individuals, families and intermediate associations belonging to different political communities, and between the public authorities of those communities. At the same time the interdependence of national economics has grown deeper, one becoming progressively more closely related to the other, so that they become, as it were, integral parts of the one world economy. Likewise the social progress, order, security and peace of each country are necessarily connected with the social progress, order, security and peace of all other countries.

At the present day no political community is able to pursue its own interests and develop itself in isolation, because the de-

gree of its prosperity and development is a reflection and a component part of the degree of prosperity and development of all the other political communities.

**Insufficiency of Modern States to
Ensure the Universal Common Good**

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

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

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

structural defect which hinders them.

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

Connection Between the Common Good and Political Authority

There exists an intrinsic connection between the common good on the one hand and the structure and function of public authority on the other. The moral order, which needs public authority in order to promote the common good in human society, requires also that the authority should be effective in attaining that end. This demands that the organs through which the authority is formed, becomes operative and pursues its ends, must be composed and act in such a manner as to be capable of bringing to realization the new meaning which the common good is taking on in the historical evolution of the human family.

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

Public Authority Instituted by Common Consent and Not Imposed by Force

A public authority, having world-wide power and endowed with the proper means for the efficacious pursuit of its objective, which is the universal common good in

concrete form, must be set up by common accord and not imposed by force. The reason is that such an authority must be in a position to operate effectively; yet, at the same time, its action must be inspired by sincere and real impartiality: in other words, it must be an action aimed at satisfying the objective requirements of the universal common good. The difficulty is that there would be reason to fear that a super-national or worldwide public authority, imposed by force by the more powerful political communities, might be or might become an instrument of onesided interests; and even should this not happen, it would be difficult for it to avoid all suspicion of partiality in its actions, and this would take from the efficaciousness of its activity.

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

The Universal Common Good and Personal Rights

Like the common good of individual political communities, so too the universal common good cannot be determined except by having regard to the human person. Therefore, the public authority of the world community, too, must have as its fundamental objective the recognition, respect, safeguarding and promotion of the rights of the human person; this can be done by direct action when required, or by creating on

a world scale an environment in which the public authorities of the individual political communities can more easily carry out their specific functions.

The Principle of Subsidiarity

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

The public authority of the world community is not intended to limit the sphere of action of the public authority of the individual political community, much less to take its place. On the contrary, its purpose is to create, on a world basis, an environment in which the public authorities of each political community, its citizens and intermediate associations, can carry out their tasks, fulfill their duties and exercise their rights with greater security.

Modern Developments

As is known, the United Nations Organization (UNO) was established on June 26, 1945, and to it there were subsequently added intergovernmental agencies with extensive international tasks in the economic, social, cultural, educational and health

fields. The United Nations Organization had as its essential purpose the maintenance and consolidation of peace between peoples, fostering between them friendly relations, based on the principles of equality, mutual respect, and varied forms of co-operation in every sector of human society.

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

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

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

political communities, are showing an increasing interest in the affairs of all peoples, and are becoming more consciously aware that they are living members of a world community.

Part V: PASTORAL EXHORTATIONS

Duty of Taking Part in Public Life

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

Scientific Competence, Technical Capacity and Professional Experience

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

Apostolate of a Trained Laity

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

For this end it is certainly necessary that human beings should carry on their own temporal activities in accordance with the laws governing them and following the methods corresponding to their nature. But at the same time it is also necessary that they should carry on those activities as acts within the moral order: therefore, as the exercise or vindication of a right, as the fulfilment of a duty or the performance of a service, as a positive answer to the providential design of God directed to our salvation. In other words, it is necessary that human beings, in the intimacy of their own consciences, should so live and act in their temporal lives as to create a synthesis between scientific, technical and professional elements on the one hand, and spiritual values on the other.

Integration of Faith and Action

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

It is beyond question that in the creation of those institutions many contributed and continue to contribute who were believed to be and who consider themselves Christians;

and without doubt, in part at least, they were and are. How does one explain this? It is our opinion that the explanation is to be found in an inconsistency in their minds between religious belief and their action in the temporal sphere. It is necessary, therefore, that their interior unity be re-established, and that in their temporal activity faith should be present as a beacon to give light, and charity as a force to give life.

Integral Education

It is our opinion too, that the above-mentioned inconsistency between the religious faith, in those who believe, and their activities in the temporal sphere, results — in great part if not entirely — from the lack of a solid Christian education. Indeed, it happens in many quarters and too often that there is no proportion between scientific training and religious instruction: the former continues and is extended until it reaches higher degrees, while the latter remains at elementary level. It is indispensable, therefore, that in the training of youth, education should be complete and without interruption: namely, that in the minds of the young, religious values should be cultivated and the moral conscience refined, in a manner to keep pace with the continuous and ever more abundant assimilation of scientific and technical knowledge. And it is indispensable too that they be instructed regarding the proper way to carry out their actual tasks.

Constant Endeavour

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

be applied to reality.

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

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

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

The doctrinal principles outlined in this document derive from or are suggested by requirements inherent in human nature itself, and are, for the most part, dictates of the natural law. They provide Catholics, therefore, with a vast field in which they can meet and come to an understanding both with Christians separated from this Apostolic See, and also with human beings who are not enlightened by faith in Jesus Christ, but who are endowed with the light of reason and with a natural and operative honesty. "In such relations let the faithful be careful to be always consistent in their actions, so that they may never come to any compromise in matters of religion and morals. At

the same time, however, let them be, and show themselves to be, animated by a spirit of understanding and detachment, and disposed to work loyally in the pursuit of objectives which are of their nature good, or conducive to good" (*Mater et Magistra*, AAS LIII: 456).

However, one must never confuse error and the person who errs, not even when there is question of error or inadequate knowledge of truth in the moral or religious field. The person who errs is always and above all a human being, and he retains in every case his dignity as a human person; and he must be always regarded and treated in accordance with that lofty dignity. Besides, in every human being, there is a need that is congenital to his nature and never becomes extinguished, compelling him to break through the web of error and open his mind to the knowledge of truth. And God will never fail to act on his interior being, with the result that a person, who at a given moment of his life lacks the clarity of faith or even adheres to erroneous doctrines, can at a future date be enlightened and believe the truth. Meeting and agreements, in the various sectors of daily life, between believers and those who do not believe or believe insufficiently because they adhere to error, can be occasions for discovering truth and paying homage to it.

It must be borne in mind, furthermore, that neither can false philosophical teachings regarding the nature, origin and destiny of the universe and of man, be identified with historical movements that have economic, social, cultural or political ends, not even when these movements have originated from those teachings and have drawn and still draw inspiration therefrom: because the teachings, once they are drawn up and defined, remain always the same, while the

movements, working on historical situations in constant evolution, cannot but be influenced by these latter and cannot avoid, therefore, being subject to changes, even of a profound nature. Besides, who can deny that those movements in so far as they conform to the dictates of right reason and are interpreters of the lawful aspirations of the human person, contain elements that are positive and deserving of approval?

It can happen, then, that a drawing nearer together or a meeting for the attainment of some practical end, which was formerly deemed inopportune or unproductive, might now or in the future be considered opportune and useful. But to decide whether this moment has arrived, and also to lay down the ways and degrees in which work in common might be possible for the achievement of economic, social, cultural and political ends which are honourable and useful: these are the problems which can only be solved with the virtue of prudence, which is the guiding light of the virtues that regulate the moral life, both individual and social. Therefore, as far as Catholics are concerned, this decision rests primarily with those who live and work in the specific sectors of human society in which those problems arise, always, however, in accordance with the principles of the natural law, with the social doctrine of the Church, and with the directives of ecclesiastical authority. For it must not be forgotten that the Church has the right and the duty not only to safeguard the principles of ethics and religion, but also to intervene authoritatively with Her children in the temporal sphere, when there is a question of judging about the application of those principles to concrete cases.

Little by Little

There are some souls, particularly en-

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

It must be borne in mind that to proceed gradually is the law of life in all its expressions; therefore in human institutions, too, it is not possible to renovate for the better except by working from within them, gradually. Pius XII proclaimed: "Salvation and justice are not to be found in revolution, but in evolution through concord. Violence has always achieved only destruction, not construction; the kindlings of passions, not their pacification; the accumulation of hate and ruin, not the reconciliation of the contending parties. And it has reduced men and parties to the difficult task of rebuilding, after sad experience, on the ruins of discord" (Address to Workers, June 13th, 1943).

An Immense Task

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

Admittedly, those who are endeavouring to restore the relations of social life according to the criteria mentioned above, are not many; to them we express our paternal appreciation, and we earnestly invite

them to persevere in their work with ever greater zeal. And we are comforted by the hope that their number will increase especially among those who believe. For it is an imperative of duty; it is a requirement of love. Every believer in this world of ours must be a spark of light, a centre of love, a vivifying leaven amidst his fellowmen; and he will be this all the more perfectly the more closely he lives in communion with God in the intimacy of his own soul.

In fact, there can be no peace between men unless there is peace within each one of them; unless, that is each one builds up within himself the order wished by God. Hence St. Augustine asks: "Does your soul desire to overcome your lower inclinations? Let it be subject to Him who is on high and it will conquer the lower self: there will be peace in you; true, secure and well-ordered peace. In what does that order consist? God commands the soul; the soul commands the body; and there is nothing more orderly than this."

The Prince of Peace

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

As the humble and unworthy Vicar of Him whom the Prophet announced as the "Prince of Peace," we have the duty to expend all our energies in an effort to protect and strengthen this gift. However, peace will be but an empty-sounding word unless it is founded on the order which this present document has outlined in confident hope: an order founded on truth, built according

to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom.

This is such a noble and elevated task that human resources, even though inspired by the most praiseworthy goodwill, cannot bring it to realization alone. In order that human society may reflect as faithfully as possible the Kingdom of God help from on high is necessary. For this reason, during these sacred days our supplication is raised with greater fervour towards Him who by His painful Passion and death overcame sin — the root of discord and the source of sorrows and inequalities — and by His blood reconciled mankind to the Eternal Father: “For he himself is our peace, he it is that hath made both one. . . . And coming he announced the good tidings of peace to you who were afar off, and of peace to those who were near” (Eph. ii: 14-17).

And in the liturgy of these days we hear the announcement: “Our Lord Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, stood in the midst of His disciples and said, ‘Peace be to you,’ alleluia: the disciples rejoiced seeing the Lord” (Matins for Easter Friday).

He leaves us peace, He brings us peace: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you” (John xiv: 27). This is the peace which we implore of Him with the ardent yearning of our prayer.

May He banish from the hearts of men whatever might endanger peace, may He

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

As a pledge of this peace, and with the ardent wish that it may shine forth on the Christian communities entrusted to your care, especially for the benefit of those who are most lowly and in the greater need of help and defence, we are glad to impart to you, Venerable Brothers, to the priests both secular and religious, to the religious men and women and to the faithful of your dioceses, particularly to those who make every effort to put these exhortations of ours into practice, our Apostolic Blessing in propitiation of heavenly favours. Finally, upon all men of good-will, to whom this encyclical letter is also addressed, we implore from Almighty God health and prosperity.

Given at Rome at St. Peter’s, on Holy Thursday, the eleventh day of April, in the year 1963, the fifth of our Pontificate.

JOHN XXIII

