Irish Writers on Catholic Social Principles

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Loyola University Chicago

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IRISH WRITERS ON CATHOLIC SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

by

David Francis Wall

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LIFE

David Francis Wall was born in Dromcollogher, Co. Limerick, Ireland, April 1, 1927.

He was graduated from St. Munchin's College, Limerick, June, 1944. After a year at the Seminary of St. Columban's Foreign Mission Society in Navan, Ireland, he became a member of the same Society. He continued his studies at this Seminary and was ordained a priest, December 21, 1950.

He began his graduate studies at Loyola University in February, 1952.
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KEY TO SIGLA

IER    Irish Ecclesiastical Record
ITQ    Irish Theological Quarterly
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND SOURCES USED

Father Plater S.J. in his book The Priest and Social Action, written in 1914, when treating of Ireland said:

A few books have been written by priests, such as Father Kelleher's volume on Private Ownership, Father O'Laughlin's translation of Dardano's Elements of Social Science and Political Economy, and a volume by Father McKenna... But on the whole the Irish clergy have up to the present given us singularly little in the way of social literature as compared with the numerous works by French and German priests. This indeed might naturally have been anticipated from the circumstances of the past, but with the brighter prospects now opening out before the country there is every reason to expect a great advance in this direction.¹

To what extent the hopes of Fr. Plater have been realised will be examined in this thesis.

This purpose of this thesis is to examine and evaluate the work of Irish writers on Catholic social principles over a period covering approximately the last sixty years.

The literature examined will be that of Irish writers in Ireland, both clerical and lay. Only original writing, not translations, will be treated. The literature, which is the sub-

ject of this thesis, deals with the exposition, interpretation and application of Catholic social principles. The Subjects treated in Father John F. Cronin's Catholic Social Principles, have been taken as guide in determining whether or not a particular piece of writing should be included in the sources. 2

In writing the thesis, it was found that though the number of books, coming under the above classification, was small, there was an extensive amount of periodical writing on Catholic social teaching. The examination of all periodical writing, including articles in popular magazines and newspapers, was clearly too enormous a task. So it was decided to include a limited number of Irish reviews, those which were of a more scholarly type, and which carried articles which expanded knowledge on Catholic social principles, and were not popularizations merely. The reviews chosen were, The Irish Theological Quarterly, The Irish Ecclesiastical Record, Studies, Irish Monthly, and Christus Rex.

The thesis is divided into twelve chapters as follows:

1) The Problem and Sources Used.
2) False Philosophies.
3) The Church and the Social Problem.
4) The Social Virtues.
5) Property.
6) Capital.
7) The Living Wage.
8) Labour Organisation.
9) The Role of the State.
10) The Rural Problem.

11) Industry Councils

12) Summary and Conclusions.

Some of the topics treated could have been suitably put in any one of two or more of the chapters listed above. For example, profit-sharing could be placed either in Chapter VI on capital, or in Chapter VII, which deals with wages. So, the allocation of the subject-matter to the different chapters has, to a certain extent, been arbitrary.

In each chapter, the writers dealt with are taken in a more or less chronological order. Thus, the development of thought on a particular topic is seen over the years.

The writer hopes to show, in the course of the thesis, that

1) Irish writers on Catholic social principles have adhered closely to the teaching of the Papal Social Encyclicals,

2) at the same time, they have shown originality and independence of thought, in developing, interpreting and applying these principles. They have made a considerable and a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Catholic social teaching.
CHAPTER II

FALSE PHILOSOPHIES

In the Irish Ecclesiastical Record from 1890 on, there were a number of articles dealing with Socialism. The writers, while admitting the urgent necessity of social reform, argued that Socialism could not be accepted as a solution. They were not so much concerned with developing a positive solution based on Catholic principles.

Father Thomas Finlay S.J. did not think that the movement towards Socialism would end in its permanent establishment. But he foresaw profound changes in the existing industrial system under the influence of the socialistic ideal.

A large development of State interference in the process of industry; and increase of factory legislation; a legal eight hours' day; an increase of State monopolies in various branches of industry; the control by the State, not only of the Post Office, the telegraphs, the railways, but much of the mechanism of production and distribution besides -- all this is possible, and in view of the current tendencies in the industrial world even probable.¹

Father Finlay did not consider this development an unmitigated evil. He saw in it a change for the better because it

would help to "give social questions precedence over those that are merely political." The Church should guide the movement in the proper channels.

The history and position of Socialism at the time were treated in detail by Father Hogan. He pointed out its anti-religious bias. Socialism would mean the destruction of all individual rights and freedom.

In his book, Private Ownership; Its Basis and Equitable Conditions, Monsignor Kelleher examined the various types of Socialism, and put forward principles to secure true reform of the Social question. He admitted the abuses of Capitalism, and said that these must be removed. "The practical question of social reform has to be faced, the extremely difficult question of how we shall get rid of existing abuses without destroying the substance of Individualism on which they are engrafted."

Msgr. Kelleher showed that the Socialists made a fundamental mistake in assuming that individuals are for the sake of society. The different types of Collectivism are very difficult to work, and in order to achieve some measure of efficiency, the free

2 Ibid.


4 J.Kelleher, Private Ownership; its Basis and Equitable Conditions, Dublin, 1911, 40.
dom of the individual has to be sacrificed. Complete Government ownership, which is the aim of Socialism, would destroy all private enterprise.

Monsignor Cronin argued that Socialism could bring little increased prosperity. He considered that the evils of the existing system of Capitalism would be mitigated in time. The self-interest of Capitalists would urge them to give to Labour what was its due.5

In his work on Ethics, Monsignor Cronin gave a full exposition and criticism of Socialist theory. He proved that the materialist view of history, by which industry would be increasingly concentrated, until inevitably all industry would be in the hands of a few owners, was not being verified in practice and was based on false suppositions. He came to the conclusion that Socialism would be financially unworkable. It would involve the certain violation of every essential right of the individual, violation of the most sacred family rights, bankruptcy to the race in the financial sphere, and, we may add ... discontent and confusion in every social relation.5

In examining the historical background of Individualistic Capitalism and Socialism, George O'Brien found that they both had one source, the Protestant Reformation.

Capitalism found its roots in the intensely individualistic spirit of Protestantism, in the spread of anto-authoritative ideas from the realm of religion into the realm of political and social thought, and, above all, in the distinctive Calvinist doctrine of a successful and prosperous career being the outward and visible sign by which the regenerated might be known. Socialism, on the other hand, derived encouragement from the violations of established and prescriptive rights of which the Reformation afforded so many examples, from the growth of heretical sects tainted with communism, and from the overthrow of the orthodox doctrine on original sin which opened the way to the idea of the perfectibility of man through institutions.7

Father Edward Cahill S.J. also, stated that the Protestant Reformation brought about the break-up of the old social system and ushered in the era of Individualism. Father Cahill showed that the evils that afflict society at present are rooted in the past. They spring from a rejection of the true Christian principles for order.

Father George Clune finds the sources of present-day social evils in history. Protestantism, with its rejection of authority in religion, prepared the way for individualistic capitalism. The influence of Liberalism on thought and on economic and political life, beginning in the eighteenth century, is another factor that explains present social problems. Liberalism meant the rejection of a supernatural order and of the authority of the Church. "It demanded -- rather it asserted -- the right to an absolute freedom of thought, conscience, creed, religion, speech,

press, and politics." Liberalism in the economic order has fostered the laissez-faire policy of free trade and unlimited competition. Prosperity would be automatically achieved by each individual striving for his own advantage and gain only. Fr. Clune asserts that the influence of Liberalism has been responsible for the unjust distribution of wealth, the unjust treatment of the workers and chronic unemployment among other evils. "It is . . . false and absurd to say that liberal principles, when applied to economic life, lead of necessity to social harmony and prosperity.

Capitalism, as an economic system, is not wrong in itself, but its abuse due to Individualism is to be condemned. "Because of the vicious individualistic spirit that inspires it, it is not merely suffering from certain excesses, but is incapable of fulfilling the true purpose of a social economy. As it is at present, therefore, it must be condemned." At present, capitalism means ownership by the very few, and the existence of a large property-less proletariat. It is based on a wrong idea of the rights of ownership of property. The social obligations of the owner are denied or ignored. Individual-

8 George Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, Dublin 1940, 55.

9 Ibid., 71.

10 Ibid., 75.
istic capitalism is also based on a false concept of the function of the State. It says that the State must not intervene in the working of economic life, but allow it to operate freely in accordance with its own laws.

The fact that so many workers are completely dependent on wages, and have no productive property of their own, has a bad effect on their character, depriving them of the spirit of self-reliance and responsibility and of a true sense of security.

The financial system developed under capitalism has immense power and has been operated for the advantage of a few to the detriment of the common good. Father Clune concludes with the remark that "it is no exaggeration to say that capitalism of the individualistic type is bringing our civilization to the edge of a precipice."\footnote{Ibid., 101.}

Canon McKevitt thinks that Liberalism "is not so much a coherent system of philosophy as an attitude of mind with a characteristic expression in different domains."\footnote{Peter McKevitt, \textit{The Plan of Society}, Dublin, 1944, 154.} Liberalism would make the State completely independent of the Church and relies on democracy to secure the common good automatically.

Applied to the sphere of commerce, Liberalism sees in the enterprise and resourcefulness of the individual the main-spring of progress, and opposes, as hindrances to progress all restrictions imposed on trading, whether these restrictions come from the rulers of the State or from organized
private groups such as trade unions. 13

In the final analysis Liberalism means the rejection of the moral law. "Liberalism is a form of anarchy and its philosophy provides no defence against socialism or Marxism." 14

Capitalism has defended private property and has encouraged private enterprise and stimulated industry by the promise of material gain. In these Capitalism has benefited society. But it has been radically defective in "setting up, as the objective of life, the accumulation of material wealth." 15 It rejected religion and refused to recognize the moral rights of those engaged in industry. Based on materialism, it induced a materialistic outlook on life in the minds of men. Individualistic capitalism has prepared the way for the growth of communism.

In his book, The Failure of Individualism, Father Devane examines the historical causes of present world unrest. He finds that "the primary and fundamental cause of the break-down of the civilisation of our time is anarchic individualism -- religious, political, economic." 16 Fr. Devane shows by quotation from many different authorities that religious individualism, originating in the Protestant Reformation has led to secularism and

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid., 161.
15 Ibid., 193.
atheism; that political individualism, derived from Locke and Rousseau, has made the individual helpless before the power of the State, thus leading to the Totalitarian State. He shows also how economic individualism has evolved, resulting in intolerable economic conditions for the propertyless workers, and thus producing Socialism and Communism, by way of reaction. The only solution is a return to the Christian life in public and in private.

Father Denis Fahey has written extensively on the causes of social disorder in the modern world. He approaches the problem from an analysis of the history of man's acceptance or rejection of the Church. There cannot be true order in society without acceptance of the Church and its teaching.

Accordingly, Catholic Social Order, viewed as a whole, is not primarily the political and economic organization of society. It is primarily the supernatural social organism of the Church, and then, secondarily, the temporal or natural social order resulting from the influence of Catholic doctrine on politics and economics and from the embodiment of that influence in social institutions.17

The influence of the Church on the social, political and economic institutions has varied with the centuries. Father Fahey takes the thirteenth century, in spite of many defects, as the period when the Church had the most influence in shaping the temporal order. The rise of Protestantism forced religion out of the political and economic spheres of public life and made it merely

a matter of individual concern. Then followed the development of Individualism and later, Economic Liberalism. The French Revolution marked another milestone in the rejection of the Church by society and the growth of Naturalism.

Naturalism consists in the negation of the possibility of the elevation of our nature to the Supernatural Life and order, or more radically still, in the negation of the very existence of that life and order. In our day owing to the progress of the anti-Christian revolt, the more radical meaning has become common. Naturalism may be defined, therefore, as the attitude of mind which denies the reality of the Divine Life of Grace and of our Fall therefrom by Original Sin. It rejects our consequent liability to revolt against the order of the Divine Life, when this life has been restored to us by our membership of Christ, and maintains that all social life should be organized on the basis of that denial.20

According as naturalistic ideas rule society, the possibility of true social reform grows less.

Treating of the social situation in Ireland, Father Clune points out that

the social question in Europe is due to the fact that some of its peoples in whole or in part abandoned the Faith which could, at the very least, teach them sound social principles. In Ireland it exists, not because the people were disloyal to and lost the direction of, the Faith, but because an unChristian social system was forced on the country by England, a system that was English and Protestant, and therefore neither Catholic nor Irish.19

SOCIALIST INFLUENCE IN IRISH LABOUR

The men who had the greatest influence on the growth of


19 Clune, Christian Social Reorganisation, 17.
the Irish labour movement were Jim Larkin and James Connolly. Larkin was the practical leader and organiser while Connolly was the theorist and writer. Both men were Catholics. James Connolly was among those executed by the British for their part as leaders of the 1916 Rising. He had written much on the Labour Question and the fact that he had proved his patriotism in his death gave his writings prestige. The doctrines and theories propounded by James Connolly were criticised by other Catholic writers as being Socialist and opposed to Catholic principles. A critical examination of James Connolly's writings is beyond the scope of this thesis, but a summary of criticisms by some writers will be given.

Father L. McKenna S.J., in his examination of Connolly's teaching, did not think that he was a follower of Marx's materialist philosophy. "He did not seem, however," writes Father McKenna "to have had any firm grasp on Catholic principles, or indeed to have thought, except in a very superficial way, of the relations between his socialism and his religion."20 In Father McKenna's opinion, Connolly thought that his socialism like natural science, was concerned merely with material fact, and so did not come under the domain of religion or morals.

"The dominant note in all Connolly's teachings is the call to revolt."21 This revolt would be brought about through the

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21 Ibid.
class war and would result in the overthrow of Capitalism. In advocating the class war, Connolly was following Marx. The workers are to perfect their own organization, and strive after improved material conditions and try to gain control over the various industries. Connolly favoured greater State ownership of industry, so as to hasten the day of worker's control. "The great weapon to be used by the labouring class in the Class War is the Strike, especially the Sympathetic Strike."

Father McKenna pointed out that Connolly recognised no moral limitations in the workers' right to strike. The sole justifying reason was the solidarity of the working-class, an injury to one section of the workers was an injury to all. When, through constant strikes, the value of the capital owned by the capitalists has been lessened and the workers have gained large control over the management of industry, then it will be easy for the workers to take over completely. The Capitalists are to receive no compensation for the property taken from them. Connolly would not approve of private ownership for productive capital. It is obvious that this idea of the class war is not morally acceptable.

Father McKenna thought that it was impossible to say definitely whether Connolly held Marx's materialistic view of his-

tory or not. His writing on this point are open to different interpretations.

What we know of Connolly's attachment to religion, and the importance which in various places he attaches to patriotism, religious conviction, principles of honesty, justice and purity, would rather incline us to read into the above declaration of Marxism an expurgated version of Historic Materialism; we should be inclined to see here another example of the way in which he prefers to misrepresent his Socialist authorities rather than to acknowledge his disagreement with them.23

For Connolly, the goal to be aimed at is the Co-operative Republic. But he does not elaborate what this means and how it will work. Father McKenna concludes that Connolly was misled by "German philosophical doctrines which he either misunderstood or interpreted in a sense different from their authors."24 If James Connolly had really appreciated and understood Catholic social teaching he would not fallen into these errors and his influence for good would have been immense. Father Cahill S.J. also shows the confusion of thought and inconsistency in Connolly's writings.

Father Peter McKeivitt points out that Connolly had a very distorted idea of the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the evils of the Capitalist system. Connolly condemned the Church because it "has perpetuated the exploitation of the helpless classes of the community by its insistence on meekness and

24 Ibid., 542.
patience." In his confused thinking, Connolly ranked the Church with the other institutions intimately connected with and supporting the system of capitalist exploitation. The social theory of Connolly was basically materialistic.

It organizes life to cure poverty. The first concern is to secure abundance of the necessities of life, and all other things shall be added to us. If religion stands in the way, then it must be prepared for hard knocks. Economics are given the primary place.

The Irish labour movement has suffered because of its leaders in the early days who supported Connolly's type of socialism. Public support was lacking even though genuine evils existed which the movement aimed to remedy. Canon McKevitt urges that the Irish labour movement whole-heartedly embrace and champion Catholic social teaching showing that it repudiated, without question, the unsound teaching of James Connolly.

The danger is that Connolly's name and prestige as a patriot will be used to propagate Marxist ideas at the present time, through interpreting his writings in a strictly Marxist sense.

Father Denis Fahey asserts that the tragedy of James Connolly's life was "his simultaneous acceptance of contradictory


26 Ibid., 137.
doctrines," Christianity and Marxism. He did not realize what Marxist theory logically led to, namely the destruction of the rights of the workers and the establishment of the totalitarian Communist state.

Father Michael Connolly S.J. points out that Connolly was correct in condemning the social abuses of the day, but erred in prescribing a remedy. He believed that the only solution lay in the extreme course of abolishing private property. Connolly's concept of the class war is Marxist and is completely opposed to Christian charity.

The veneration of the Irish Trade Union Movement for James Connolly is unquestionable; but it is rather Connolly, the patriot and labour leader, who is honoured, than Connolly the socialist. There is some danger that admiration of the man may lead to unquestioning acceptance of his social and economic principles. And not all Connolly's principles are worthy of acceptance by Irish trade unionists.

COMMUNISM

Father Cahill S.J., Father Clune and Canon McKevitt have explained and criticised the theory and practice of modern Communism as exemplified in Soviet Russia. They show how Communism denies even the most fundamental human rights and how it is utterly incompatible with the teachings of the Catholic Church.


In his book, *Could Ireland become Communist?*, James Hogan examined the efforts of the Communists in setting up their organisation in Ireland and in trying to infiltrate into the various Irish political organisations. Father Brown S.J. wrote on the danger of Communism and the efforts being made by Communist Russia to propagate it throughout the world. Recently James Hogan has, in a series of articles in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, written on the philosophy of Marxism.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Irish writers have examined the doctrines of Socialism, Communism and Economic Individualism in the light of Catholic teaching. They have shown that these philosophies are not in accord with Catholic teaching and on that account must be rejected. Such philosophies cannot be made the basis of true order in political or economic life since they go contrary to the rights of the individual and the family, and the welfare of society. The fundamental causes of the spread of these errors has been the rejection of the Church and of her teaching. Therefore true order can be restored only by a return to the teaching of the Church and its practice in public and private life.

If the people of Ireland are to have a sound social or-

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der they must see to it that public life and institutions conform to Christian principles. As a Catholic nation with a social order in conformity with Catholic principles, Ireland could be an effective example and proof of the social teaching of the Church.

In the words of Fr. Devane,

[why therefore, cannot that little Christian nation so miraculously preserved from extinction and to-day the link between two hemispheres, the "centre of the world," become a beacon-light to the apostate nations groping amid the thickening darkness of materialism and infidelity, and by her socially constructive example lead them back again to social sanity and to Christ?]31

31 Devane, The Failure of Individualism, 342.
CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEM

The Church is concerned with social problems and social reform, because these are basically moral problems. The Church must teach the truth and must be concerned with economic conditions, since such conditions will help or hinder men in the pursuit of virtue.

THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF SOCIAL REFORM

The Irish writers on the social question are agreed that no attempt to solve it can succeed without a spiritual reform which involves the practice of Christian virtue in public and private life. It is only the Church, which can transform society, and bring about this moral regeneration.

Fr. Cahill S. J. states that religion is necessary not only for the spiritual welfare of a people but also for their prosperity in the temporal order. Religion "is a more important factor in temporal happiness that political liberty or national wealth or imperial power, or all these combined."\(^1\)

Fr. James Bastible stresses the need for religion when

\(^1\) Cahill, The Framework of a Christian State, 291.
he says:

Peligion is indeed the greatest, the most powerful agency in civilizing and socialising mankind. It is the only adequate source whence come the motives and methods for the practice of justice and charity, of self-restraint and due consideration for the rights of others—virtues on which depends the well-being of human society.2

Speaking of the relation between Church and State, Fr. James O'Mahony, O.F.M. Cap. says,

if the future democracy is to be a success, modern Christianity must find a way of relating life to religion so that every side of human existence, public no less than private, may be brought under the effective influence of religion. The Church remains what it has always been, an Organism of Life and Grace, and though different conceptions of a modus vivendi between the Church and State are possible, it would seem that the hope for the future must lie in men convinced of the primacy of the spiritual, in men enlightened in their minds by the Christian philosophy of life, in men whose lives, individual, social, and political, are nourished at the true sources of Life and Grace.3

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

One of the earliest articles by Fr. Peter Finlay S.J. was on the teaching authority of the Church. The Church has the right to pronounce dogmatically on questions of faith and morals. It is clear that purely spiritual matters are under the authority of the Church while, purely technical matters or business are outside it. There is also a third field which touches both the material and spiritual and the authority of the Church extends to this also. Men are both body and soul and their activities in the pur-

2 James Bastible, Radio Talks on Politics, Cork, 1944, 17.
3 James E. O'Mahony, O.F.M. Cap., Reform or Revolution, Cork, 1944, 59.
suit of material welfare have an intimate connection with their spiritual welfare. The Church has the right and duty to guard Her members from evil influences, and to determine whether certain economic activity is to be morally condemned or not. Only the Church can determine how far the domain of faith and morals extends. "The Church, then, decides authoritatively on questions of faith and morals, and decides, too, whether in questions that arise, faith and morals are involved." 4

Purely spiritual matters are exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Church. Over matters purely of technique in the economic or industrial field the Church has no authority. These two principles are accepted without question by Irish Catholic writers. In regard to matters that are "mixed," that have temporal and spiritual aspects and consequences the principle is clear but its application may not be so clear. With regard to this question, Fr. Clune has the following to say:

it is also true that in political, social, economic, commercial, and industrial matters not merely temporal but spiritual interests may be at stake; that is, these matters may not be purely temporal; and when considerations of justice or charity enter into what would otherwise be a purely temporal or secular matter the authority of the Church enters also. These considerations enter at a hundred points. Wages for instance, prices, hours and conditions of work, profits and dividends, quality of work done, treatment of women and children, strikes, lock-outs, booms and depressions, danger to workers' health, and similar considerations are not merely

4 Peter Finlay, S.J., "The Church and Civil Society," Irish Monthly, XXI, November, 1897, 593.
temporal matters but involve moral issues, and therefore come under the authority of the Church.5

But the objection is made that the Church is not in a position to pronounce on economic questions since she is not competent in regard to the technical principles and practice of economics and industry. In reply to this Bishop Michael Browne adduces the example of medicine. The Church can pronounce on the morality of certain practices in medicine and surgery when she knows what these practices mean and accomplish. Likewise the Church can determine the morality of a particular economic activity when she knows what the essential nature of the activity is. "So the Church can determine the morality of business or industrial transactions without being either banker, manufacturer or trader."6

In order to deal effectively with these problems it is necessary that Catholic ethicicians be informed on current economic theory and practice.

(I)t is necessary for the development of moral science that the Church be kept informed - either by her own specialists or by Catholic laymen working in these occupations - of the latest practices and procedures in order that she may promptly apply to them the moral law and call things by their right names. Hence the great importance of Catholic Universities where there are men who are trained observers and specialists in all the sciences, of reviews and journals which discuss

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5 Clune, Christians Social Reorganization, 266.

6 Michael J. Browne, "The Priest and Social Actions," A Christus Rex Society Publication, 5
new developments, of contact with unions and associations of professional and business men. Through all such means Catholic Social science develops and keeps pace with modern developments.7

STUDY OF THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL TEACHING

The study of the social teaching of the Church, as found especially in the Papal Encyclicals, has always been vigorously urged by Irish writers on the social problem.

Alfred O'Rahilly was one of the pioneers in promoting the study of Catholic social teaching in Ireland. Organized works of charity were very necessary, but, he asserted, action can be overstressed to the neglect of study of the social problem. Studies and statistical reports on the existing social situation were necessary for effective action. The ignorance of Catholic social principles among Irishmen must also be remedied. Some do not think that such study is necessary.

The truth is that study and action should never be divorced, neither can be fruitful without the other. Those who deprecate study really wish to prevent further study; they are satisfied with the existing stage. Meanwhile the world is moving on.8

All his life, Alfred O'Rahilly has urged and worked for the education of the workers. He believes that "we require an elite, a picked body of men, thoroughly equipped in sound social

7 Ibid.

principles and in professional technique, anxious to act as lay apostles and leaders. . . . The education of adolescent and adult workers is an urgent problem which must be faced.9 He has done much, as President of University College, Cork, to solve that problem, by inaugurating courses for workers in Catholic social teaching, economics and other subjects helpful for preparing men for positions of leadership.10

Msgr. Kelleher, in 1927, commenting on the lack of social action and study on the part of Irish priests in comparison with those of other Catholic countries, said that this could be explained on historical grounds. "They had to face in turn the problems of Religious Liberty, Education, Land Tenure and National Independence. Preoccupation with these left them little time or inclination for other activities which are now more in evidence in . . . other countries."11 However, Irish priests must now turn their attention to the social problem and by study and action work towards its solution.

True religion must penetrate into all our conduct and relationships. To me it appears that it is only the active interven-

9 Alfred O'Rahilly, "Trade Union Leadership To-Day," Christus Rex, Ill, January, 1949, 68.
10 Cornelius Murphy, "Adult Education in University College, Cork," Rural Ireland 1951, Tipperary, 58.
tion of the priests that can maintain this necessary connection between religion and man's secular life, and I am strengthened in this conviction by the consistent action of the Church. 12

Bishop Michael Browne asserts that priests, above all, are bound to know the social teaching of the Church thoroughly. "The education of public opinion," he says, "on the social teaching of the Church is the right and duty of every priest." 13 The priest must also be the guide of the employers and workers in his parish in moral questions. The priest must seek out and train men who will be leaders and who will direct economic activity and guide the labor movement in accordance with Catholic principles.

The Christus Rex Society of Irish Priests was founded in 1941 and is flourishing. Its objects are to foster the study of Catholic social teaching among the clergy and to enlighten public opinion on social questions and "to inspire co-ordinated effort by Irish priests for the reform of social evil and the realization in public life of the principles of the Social Encyclicals." 14 This society is evidence of the active interest in social matters on the part of the Irish clergy at the present time.

12 Ibid., 431
13 Browne, The Priest and Social Action, 6
14 "The Christus Rex Society," Christus Rex, VII, October, 1953, Statement inside front cover. See also Appendix II, of this thesis.
SUMMARY

The Church is the custodian of revealed truth, infallibly protected from all error. She has the right and duty of proclaiming and interpreting the moral law. The sphere of morals embraces all man's activities whether in private life or in the public fields of economics or politics. So the Church can pronounce on economic activities according to their morality. She has the duty of caring for her children and so the Church strives for a healthy social environment that will be a help and not a hindrance to the practice of virtue.

Membership of the Church brings the right and opportunity to share in the spiritual helps and means of Grace with which she has been endowed. The member of the Church can thus direct his life to God and fulfil the moral law. Such spiritual life and action on the part of the individual must be the basis of any social reform. True co-operation and union among the members of society must be based on supernatural charity.
CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIAL VIRTUES

The virtue of Justice is of three kinds, commutative justice, legal justice and distributive justice. Fr. Cahill S.J. defined commutative justice as "the relation of equality between two fully distinct persons in virtue of which each is bound to render to the other what is his due."¹ The Irish writers were concerned chiefly with the obligations of commutative justice in their early work. The just wage was regarded as binding under commutative justice. The just price was also a matter for commutative justice. Since the wage problem was of such primary importance then, attention was concentrated on strict or commutative justice, and on the conditions under which an employer was or was not bound to pay the living wage.

LEGAL JUSTICE

Fr. Cahill S.J. defined Legal Justice as "the virtue or law of nature binding every member of the State to contribute his due share in safeguarding and promoting the common good."² The

¹ Cahill, The Framework of a Christian State, 491
² Ibid., 493
virtue of Legal Justice binds all members of the State, both rulers and subjects, and its obligations vary according to each member's capacities and functions, and the needs of the State. The principal obligation of Legal Justice for subjects is to obey the just laws of the State and to pay just taxes. If the public good is seriously in danger in a very grave matter, Legal Justice would urge individual citizens who are able to avert it, to do so even at great personal cost. Apart from such urgent danger, Legal Justice would forbid such practices as corruption in politics, and commercial speculation that is injurious to the common good, even though the strict rights of no individual are harmed.

Fr. Cahill gives a number of provisions regarding industry which he considers rulers are bound to enforce in virtue of Legal Justice. The State has the duty of stimulating and protecting home industry. Industries must not be allowed to pass under foreign control. The Government should fix the main outline of economic policy so that it will be in accord with the common good, while leaving its execution as far as possible to be carried out by free associations and private individuals."3 The State must ensure that industrial activity is carried on so as to benefit the whole community and not for the advantage of a small group, while at the same time respecting the right of private enterprise. The

3 Ibid., 504.
State must stimulate and co-ordinate industrial activity, while leaving it under private ownership and control. Industrial unions, whether of employers or workers, must be national, and not allowed to come under the control of foreign or international committees. Likewise the Government should see that the control of Credit and Currency is not subject to a power outside the State.

On the other hand, it is desirable for many reasons, that the bank or banks which issue fiduciary money should be distinguishable from the Government; hence, banks should be established, which, while enjoying independent management, would act under the supreme direction not of any outside power, but of the Government of the country and in accordance with a policy shaped solely with a view to the needs of the people. Small firms and enterprises should receive special protection. Legislation should also favour and facilitate co-operative industry. The policy of the State should be to secure wide distribution of ownership, corporate organization of industry which would be independent, and whose rights would be protected by the Government.

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Fr. Cahill defines Distributive Justice as:

[the law of nature by which the State is bound to secure for each of the citizens his due and proportionate share of the advantages and helps which are the end and purpose of civil society; and to allot the public burdens in due and equitable proportion.]

4 Ibid., 506
5 Ibid., 514
The rulers of the State are bound by Distributive Justice to allot equitably the advantages and burdens of citizenship. In the social organism . . . the main considerations determining the distribution must be party the public good, which is the raison d'être of civil society and, subservient to this, the relative capacity and the normal needs of the members.

The State should see, through just laws, that there is an equitable distribution of wealth, and that it doesn't become concentrated in the hands of a few. The State is organic, and the lesser societies within it should be fostered and left to contribute their share to the common good.

Taxation must not be excessive. Taxes should be really necessary before being imposed. They should be equitable distributed, and within the limits of the taxable capacity of the nation.

INDUSTRY AND DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Dr. Alfred O'Rahilly maintains that Distributive Justice binds people outside the State Government when they are acting on behalf of the various institutions to which they belong. He gives as examples, a man as head of a household, a doctor on behalf of the medical profession, an employer or local government deputy.

"In all such cases we are acting as active agents of some social organisation which is one of the categories of the juridical order required for developed human existence to-day."7 In industry, em-

6 Ibid., 516
7 Alfred O'Rahilly, Social Principles, Cork, 1948, 8.
ployers and managers are acting on behalf of the community in distributing goods and services and so are bound by Distributive Justice to make this distribution fairly.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

In an article on The Framework of a Christian State by Fr. Cahill, Bishop Lucey⁸ stated that Fr. Cahill had failed to explain and give due importance to the virtue of Social Justice. Social Justice is not to be identified with Commutative, Distributive or even Legal Justice. Bishop Lucey follows the teaching of the Solidarismus school as elaborated by Pesch, Nell-Breuning and Messner, on Social Justice. Social Justice takes into account the existence of other lesser societies within the State, and regulates their activities so that they make their contribution to the common good. There is danger of leaving everything to the State, and the State, in trying to be a universal provider, ignores the rights of those lesser societies of which it is formed.⁹

Canon McKevitt in his work, The Plan of Society, refers briefly to social justice and states that in the social encyclicals, "it is equivalent to legal or general justice."¹⁰ He does not go

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⁸ Bishop Lucey was consecrated Coadjutor Bishop of Cork in 1951. Previously he had been Professor of Ethics in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

⁹ Cornelius Lucey, "On a Recent Study in Social Science," IER, XLI, April, 1935, 374.

¹⁰ McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 58.
into any further discussion of the virtue beyond making this statement.

Alfred O'Reilly shows that observance of commutative justice is not enough, the members of society are also bound by social justice. Society is composed of institutions and organisations in which individual men are involved. Social justice arises from this institutional order, and binds the members to secure the good of the various institutions of which they are members. In doing this, the liberty of the individual is destroyed because "the only effective guarantee of individual liberties is organisation, that is, institutional liberties." Besides the State, which is supreme, men need other lesser societies.

Each of us is a member of many institutions, each of which, as a particular system of juridical order, we are bound in social justice to uphold. And this obligation is a serious one, for the proper functioning of these organisations is vital for our cultural and economic life, more so to-day than ever.

Modern Corporate industry is an institution whose workings are governed by social and distributive justice as well as by commutative justice. The purpose of this institution is to enable the people engaged therein to realize their natural rights. "We can say of modern specialized production taken as a whole that its end or object is the allocation of incomes to individuals (or

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11 O'Reilly, Social Principles, 6.
12 Ibid., 7
rather to families) to enable them to utilize goods and services for human life."13

Since the worker is completely dependent on his wage for his needs, these necessary requirements must be the first charge on industry. Thus an objective order exists, and the justice of wages is not determined primarily by the contract but by their conformity with this order.

The employers and managers are performing the task of distributing the required goods and services, they are acting not indeed on behalf of the State (which is only one organ) but of the community; and employees are also serving the community, their work is necessary for economic life; hence they have towards the community the obligations which we call social justice. Business firms not only distribute products but also purchasing-power; this latter is an essential service to the community; hence the payment of salaries and wages is an acquittance of social justice.14

Father Jeremiah Newman points out that social justice differs from Legal justice. Legal justice, as understood today, "is concerned with procuring the common good of the State by civil legislation and its observance."15 It is not concerned with the smaller groups in society and the part they are to play in securing the common good. Social justice, on the other hand, "is altogether inimical to the idea of the centralised State."16

13 Ibid., 19
14 Alfred O'Rahilly, Aquinas versus Marx, Cork, 1948, 67.
16 Ibid., 135
Social Justice recognises the existence of lesser societies within the State, and in their absence demands that they be established. It binds each person to secure the good of the societies to which he belongs. Society must be organised organically, with lesser societies contributing to the common good, while the State watches over and co-ordinates their activities. A man practices social justice in striving for the common good of his country, his family, his profession, or of any society of which he is a member.

Social justice then is diametrically opposed to the atomistic centralized State. It involves, on the contrary, a federal and organic structure. This is the inevitable consequence of its insistence on the order of creation - on the Divine Law as well as the human. It embraces all man's social relations and comprehends his every virtuous act looked at from the view point of its social effects. And as - owing to the fact that the social needs of man are various - there is a hierarchy of social orders within the primal order, there are as many sections in, or rather embodiments of social justice as there are social orders for man. Justice in the Family and Corporative orders, Justice in the Political and Ecclesiastical orders, Justice in any order whatsoever, is but an embodiment of that Justice in the Social order which is founded on the Law of God.17

SOCIAL CHARITY

Many writers in the early part of the present century, were urging Catholics to engage personally in social work for the relief of poverty and unemployment, and not be content with almsgiving alone.

Fr. McKenna S.J. stated that one of the important objects

17 Ibid., 143
of Catholic social action should be the organization of unskilled workers and women. Catholics in Ireland should practice a more constructive type of social charity. Hitherto they had been generous in relieving the effects of poverty, unemployment, etc. They should also try to prevent the causes of these evils. "Society, if properly constituted, ought to support and widen and render more fruitful the activities of its natural organisms, the family, the city, the association, and thus render superfluous a great part of our charitable institutions.

Fr. Cahill emphasised that justice alone will not ensure social well-being. Social charity must also be practiced. Without charity the observances of justice will soon cease. Charity supplies greater motives for the practice of justice, and urges us to do for our neighbour and the common good, far more than we are strictly obliged to do. "Thus, Charity, strengthens the whole social organism, rendering its working smoother and more efficient."

Charity is a "love of benevolence for others." For the Christian, charity is a supernatural virtue, and is a part of and an expression of his love for God.

The giving of alms is one of the practices of charity,

20 Ibid., 541.
which we are bound to fulfil, in accordance with our means and the needs of others.

Fr. O'Mahony O.F.M. Cap. states that the spirit of Charity must pervade the institutions of society if they are to function properly. Social reform must be based on a renewal of the Christian spirit.

The order of justice, linking up the individual with the State and the State with the individual, binding men together in the mutual fulfilment of their duties, suggests an organic body. But it is a body that is living only when the spirit of charity penetrates and flows through all these relationships. For charity is not only alms-giving; it is life, the very Life of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, that has power to make of the social body a living thing, the very Body on earth of Christ Himself. 21

SUMMARY

Irish writers recognise that the foundation of social order is the virtue of justice. In the early period the emphasis was on the rights of the workers, and so on commutative justice. The obligation of the State to intervene and correct social injustice when necessary was urged as binding in legal justice. Legal justice is opposed to the attitude of laissez-faire, which was the policy of Governments for the most part in the beginning of the present century.

Since the appearance of Quadragesimo Anno a few Irish writers have been writing on social justice. Alfred O'Rahilly, especially, has emphasised its importance and has shown how it

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21 James O'Mahony O.F.M. Cap., Reform or Revolution, 44.
applies to modern conditions. With growing recognition of the importance of social justice, we may expect that in Ireland writers will devote greater attention to its theoretical development and exposition and its practical application.
CHAPTER V

PROPERTY

The right to the ownership of property has been denied and attacked by two philosophies which have many followers in modern times, Socialism and Communism. The Catholic Church has always vigorously defended private property. The classic defence of the right to private property is found in the Encyclical Rerum Novarum. Irish writers have reiterated and explained Pope Leo XIII's defence of private property against the false views of the Socialists.

THE RIGHT TO OWNERSHIP

In discussing the basis of private ownership, Alfred O'Rahilly maintained that according to St. Thomas Aquinas private property was not a matter of absolute natural right. St. Thomas said that it was natural for man to possess property. But "it was only property in the generic sense, abstracting from collective and individual forms, that is, according to St. Thomas, of natural right."¹ The right to private property comes to man not directly

from the Natural Law but from the Jus Gentium. The Jus Gentium, according to the Scholastics is "positive human law, largely consuetudinary, deriving its authority from human consent." This world law is derived from natural law by human reasoning. Dr. O'Rahilly said that St. Thomas's teaching leads to the conclusion that

private property, so far as pertains to production and distribution, is a matter not of absolute abstract right but of experienced necessity; it is not to be assumed a priori as self-evident and irrevocable, it can be defended only on the


"The ius gentium, ... is constitutional world-law. It is concerned solely with setting up certain world wide social institutions such as private property and we may add, capitalism. This setting up is, of course, not a definite chronological event, for as yet at least there is no world parliament; world-law, in other words, is customary and unwritten, but by no means unreal. The Legal validity of such institutions depends essentially on the tacit or formal consent of mankind; needless to say, there may be a moral obligation to yield such consent. But so long as such institutions validly exist, they claim our allegiance in virtue of natural law ... Reverting, then to St. Thomas's statement, that world law is added to natural law by human reasoning and consent, we can free it from all obscurity. "To world Law," he says (I,2, q. 95, a.4), "pertains all those things which are derived from natural law as conclusions from principles; such as just buying and selling and other such like, without which men cannot live together - which living together is of natural law for man is naturally sociable." The principle of natural law in this case is human social co-existence; the "conclusion", i.e. the practical deduction which in given circumstances men draw from the law of sociability, is the institution of certain types of social and economic intercourse; without which - so it is reasoned with probability - social life is impracticable; the observance of which, so long as the institution holds, is of natural law."

3 Ibid., 579.
ground that the alternative is less desirable. 4

Father Crofts says that this interpretation of St. Thomas weakens his defense of private property and furthermore that it is an erroneous interpretation.

Making the right depend on social necessity destroys, not alone the nature of the right, but even the necessity. The right does not arise out of a social necessity, but vice versa. The right is a natural thing, springing from the very nature of the individual, and because of this there must be a cogent necessity to maintain the exercise of proprietary right in society. 5

Father Crofts says that the Jus Gentium, or Right of Nations, from which the right of private property flows, is derived from the Natural Law and is called positive by St. Thomas "because of the human reasoning implied." 6 He equates the Jus Gentium with the secondary principles of the Natural Law. The right to private property is rooted in human nature and is a strict natural right.

Writing more recently, Alfred O’Rahilly states that St. Thomas’s arguments for private property, based on utilitarian reasons, are not conclusive in present-day conditions. Nowadays

6 Ibid., 94.
we must base the justification for private property on a more
fundamental reason, on the fact that it is the safeguard of lib-
erty.

The State, with its monopoly of force and its army of bureau-
crats can to-day be limited by no paper or academic guaran-
tees. Its invasion of the whole life can be prevented only
by the existence of living institutions capable of resis-
tance. Military and police powers are necessarily central-
ised. But economic power can be so diffused and so multi-
ply organised as to be a buffer between the State and the
individual. To-day this is the greatest argument for pri-
ivate property.7

Fr. Coyne S.J. states that the right of private proper-
ty is a natural right. He says; "both Leo XIII and Pius XI em-
phasises quite definitely that the right to private property
comes from the very nature of man himself, given to him directly
by his Creator, not indirectly through any human law or conven-
tion."8

Fr. Clune states that if a man has a right to wages for
his work, then he has the right to use those wages by acquiring
property. "The shares in the business, the motor car, or the
land are simply the money - that is, his wages, - is a less fluid
form"9

Man can look to the future and make provision for him-

8 E. J. Coyne, S.J., The Peace of Christ in the Reign
9 Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, 194
self and his family. The normal way to provide for the future is through the ownership of permanent productive property. Without such property a man would be too dependent on others.

As St. Thomas has shown, men work best with their own property and look after it better.

"If private property were abolished, the community or the State would become the sole owner. Under this system human freedom would be destroyed."10

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

Monsignor Michael Cronin, after proving that private ownership is "a requirement of natural law," went on to examine the ways in which the use of property is limited by the natural law. There are three principal ways in which the use of property is limited. "In the first place a man is bound in charity and friendship to be open-handed, neighbourly and generous with others, particularly with the poor, and to lend or give in reason, according to their requirements."11 Secondly, charity demands that a man does not use his property in ways injurious to society. Dr. Cronin gives the following case as an example: "A landowner should not depopulate a countryside simply in order to extend his

10 Ibid., 195.

11 Cronin, The Science of Ethics, II, 133.
parks and hunting grounds, unless, the people can be as easily accommodated and as easily find employment elsewhere.12 Thirdly, an owner is bound in justice to help those in extreme necessity.

In an article on Msgr. Cronin's book, The Science of Ethics, Professor T. Smiddy gives the example of the landlord cited by Msgr. Cronin and says that the landlord's action is a violation of justice and not of charity merely.13

Msgr. Kelleher stated that the cause of evils in the ownership of land was the owners' excessive individualism. "The owner's only interest is what will give him the largest return. . . . On the same principle he prefers large grazing tracts giving employment to a few herds, to well cultivated small farms maintaining a large agricultural population."14 The State must regulate the use of land for the common good. The best way to do this is through discriminate taxation, to discourage owners from leaving land idle or using it wastefully. The individual, as a social being, in exercising the right to private property is subject to social authority.

Fr. William Moran asserted that the cause of social un-

12 Ibid., 135
13 T. Smiddy, "Ethics and Economics: Professor Cronin and Social Justice," IER, IX, May, 1917, 369
14 J. Kelleher, "Land Reform," ITQ, VIII, April, 1913, 199.
rest was not private property, but because owners were unaware of and did not respect the rights and duties of property. The only thing that can save the worker from invasion of his rights by the State is the possession of property.

If the individual is to have true and lasting freedom, he must be in a position, on the one hand, to bargain and contract on equal terms with his fellow-citizens and on the other, to reject if necessary the 'benefits' offered by the State, and to resist the prying interference of State officials in his domestic affairs. These conditions will be fulfilled only when the average worker has at his back a solid economic resource.

Writing in 1930, Fr. P. Coffey condemned the grazing system, whereby large tracts of fertile land were devoted by their owners solely to the raising of cattle, without any tillage. This meant that the population of those areas was sparse, as little labour was required, and production was low. These lands should be redistributed and smaller family farms created which would have more tillage. The Government should do this, giving compensation to the existing owners. Although the distribution of wealth in Ireland is not so unequal as in other countries, yet social reform must aim at greater diffusion of private ownership of land and capital.

17 P. Coffey, The Social Question in Ireland, Dublin, 1930, 10.
Men have a right to the ownership of private property but, Fr. Cahill pointed out, the exercise of this right is limited by the virtues of charity and justice and by the demands of the common good. People are bound to relieve the material needs of others according to the Christian teaching on almsgiving. Fr. Cahill stated that one of the best forms of almsgiving is the provision of work for the unemployed. The virtue of legal justice which binds members of the State to protect and promote the common good according to their status and capabilities, may at times bind the owner to relinquish his right to the free disposal of his property, in favour of the State.

Should the public good require it, the State has the power and sometimes a duty to over-ride vested rights in regard to superfluous goods, and especially to prevent the natural resources of the country being withheld from the people by owners who are unwilling to develop them. 18

The Government should take over uncultivated lands from large landowners in return for fair compensation. These lands should be divided in small farms and settled. However, some restrictive laws are also necessary.

Peasant proprietorship of itself, however, will not produce a stable rural population. The history of all nations tends to show that for the preservation of a peasant population the cottier must not have the power freely to sell, mortgage or unduly subdivide the holding. If he has, the peasant holdings will sooner or later become absorbed by the large owners, or by the moneyed interest. 19

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19 Ibid., 334
Fr. Cahill suggests that the best way of settling these uncultivated lands would be through voluntary associations of small farmers, with the assistance of the Government. These associations would work on the principle of mutual self-help through co-operation.

Bishop Lucey, however, did not agree with Fr. Cahill's view that small farmers should be denied all "power to sell, mortgage or unduly subdivide the holding." He considered that such restrictions were an unwarranted interference with the right of private property.

The present economic system, asserts Fr. Cahill, where almost all property is in the hands of a few owners, although all are legally free to acquire property, is not in accord with Christian principles. The right of the poor man to some private property should be actualised. The State should encourage private ownership and one of its first aims should be that every family have a suitable home of its own.

In his book, Property and Poverty, Fr. Crofts O.P. expounds the teaching of St. Thomas on the social obligations of almsgiving and of the duties of owners regarding surplus wealth. As regards the distribution of property, he says:

The modern tendency towards the absorption of small holders of property or industries by larger capitalist interests
should be prevented. The State should protect the property of the small man by preventing his being bought out. Aquinas is against indiscriminate selling of property in this way, since the danger is always there of an inordinate monopoly of power in the hands of the few, with the consequent impoverishment of the many.

DUTIES OF SHAREHOLDERS

Shareholders are owners and have obligations and responsibility as a result. Canon McKevitt summarises them as follows:

(1) The individual shareholder who controls only a negligible proportion of the shares is exempt, in practice, from the obligations attached to ownership when his action would not be effective.
(2) Those who possess or control a considerable portion of the shares, must exercise the influence they possess to secure that the business is run in accordance with the principles of moral law including social justice.
(3) While the smaller shareholder is powerless when unorganised and can, at most, be bound to make a protest under certain circumstances, the case is different when a suitable organization for such shareholders exists. When such a means of combining their voting strength exists, the smaller shareholder must avail of it to ensure that the business is honestly run.

TAXATION

Fr. Cahill declares that members of the State are bound by the natural law to co-operate so as to enable the State to attain its end, one of the chief means towards this is payment of taxes, so citizens are bound to pay just taxes. Taxation should be so levied as to encourage rather than check home industry.

21 Crofts, Property and Poverty, 259.
22 McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 54.
Irish writers rejected the single tax system of Henry George, Msgr. Kelleher said that it amounted to the confiscation of all land and so was unjust.

Fr. Coyne states that property includes not only capital and land as such, but also the unearned increment of land. The theory of State ownership of unearned increment is untenable.

Credit, though intangible, is also a valuable form of private property. The schemes of many social credit reformers would involve the taking over or control of the credit of private owners and corporations by the State, and this is unjust. "For the State to forbid individuals or corporations to make use of their credit would be to forbid them to use their most valuable property in the only way in which it can be used, for there is this peculiarity about credit -- that its economic value lies in its use, not in its possession." 23

SUMMARY

Man has a right to private property as a necessary means towards living a decent human life. The possession of property gives a man and his family that security and independence which human nature requires for its proper development. So the wider distribution of property must be one of the primary aims of

of social reform.

The possession of property brings duties as well as rights. In the use of property, the owners are bound by the obligations of justice and charity. Social justice demands that owners further rather than hinder the common good.

The State must protect the right of private property and in levying taxes must not destroy the exercise of that right or hinder the more widespread distribution of private property.
CHAPTER VI

CAPITAL

Writing over forty years ago, Monsignor Kelleher relied on man's natural self-interest to ensure the success of private enterprise in providing for the needs of society.

As long as individuals own and are free to use productive goods, there will be fluidity about the production by which it can readily respond to every effective demand. We may safely rely for this on man's natural greed, not a very noble but a perfectly trustworthy factor on which to calculate. Wherever there is an opportunity of making profit, and that is in any branch of industry for the produce of which there is a genuine demand, we may be sure that individualist capitalists will not fail to see to it that there is abundant production. 1

In order to prevent abuses, however, private enterprise should be subject to legislative restraint. Property cannot be used in a way that will injure the public welfare.

Father Cahill says, that the capitalist economic system is not to be condemned in itself. 2

1 J. Kelleher, Private Ownership; its Basis and Equitable Conditions, Dublin, 1911, 132.

2 Capitalism is "that economic regime in which the capital and labour jointly needed for production are usually provided by different people." Pius XI, Quadragesimo Anno, English translation published by Catholic Social Guild, Oxford, 38.
The Church does not condemn the owner of capital who keeps a reasonable profit for himself in recompense for the part his capital has played in production, provided he gives just wages and ensures decent conditions for his workers.

On the other hand, individualistic capitalism by which the whole economic process becomes a means for the enrichment of a small group of owners, while the great majority are completely dependent on wages, is to be condemned.

PRICES

Monsignor Kelleher rejected the theory of exchange in modern economics as non-moral. Supply and demand are considered as natural forces which automatically determine market prices. This price is a subjective price which results from the interplay of the necessities and desires of the contracting parties. There must be a return to the Catholic teaching which "has ever regarded onerous contracts as moral, and consistently insisted that there should be found in such contracts an objective equivalence between the commodities or rights exchanged." This system regulated economic life in the Middle Ages. Exchange value could be estimated objectively then, because the prices of the most ordinary commodities or services were fixed by law or custom.

But a different system prevails now, the competitive system. The present system has failed to achieve the end of a proper system of exchange, one which will provide the members of society with the material means "for developing and perfecting their individual and social endowments." 4 The system must be reformed and this can only be done by making economic activities conform to moral standards.

I do not mean that we must return again to legal and customary prices. For many reasons that would not be possible. Industrial competition is established and is going to remain and all things considered it is best that it should remain. But the State must resume the moral function which it has long abandoned of securing conditions of exchange that shall be equitable as between individuals and advantageous to society. 5

Regarding prices, Doctor Harty maintained that they should allow fair wages to be paid to the worker. The common estimate determines the just price, but this estimate is invalid if it doesn't enable the employer to pay a just wage. 6

Monsignor Cronin considered that the just price of any commodity is the market price, that is, the price which results

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5 Ibid.,
in the public market from the interplay of free competition. He said that it is the duty of the Government to fix prices if the market cannot operate freely. The factor that determines the just "natural" price is the common estimate of buyers and sellers. This common estimate is the measure of the objective value of the commodity and so of the just price.

To large extent prices and the common estimate are determined automatically by the conditions of the market. They are the prices at which things actually sell. But these prices will always reflect in a rough and ready manner the judgement of the buying public and the true inner value of the commodity . . . . There will be a maximum and a minimum price, and in general, justice will be satisfied with any price that falls between the higher and the lower limits. 7

Alfred O'Rahilly gives the teaching of St. Thomas and applies it to present-day conditions. According to St. Thomas, he says, price levels must be so set that those who produce may obtain a decent level of existence and that nobody may be deprived of the necessities of life. The teaching of St. Thomas on wages and prices cannot be understood apart from the social institutions of his time, which he took for granted. Dr. O'Rahilly points out that the view of exchange-value held by the School men and embodies in the institutions of the time was the functional theory of exchange-value.

Whoever served society was entitled to a decent livelihood. A man was rewarded in accordance with his service to society, on the performance of social functions.

In discussing prices, Dr. O'Rahilly says that the view that just exchange demands an objective quasi-physical equivalence between the objects exchanged is a misrepresentation of St. Thomas's meaning. Use-value is the only value that can be termed objective.

But exchange-value and relative prices have no physical basis at all, they are ratios, how much for how much; directly or indirectly they are the result of human decision. . . . Prices are therefore a quantitative means for allocating rights to goods and services among persons.

Prices must be such that the producers of commodities receive a sufficient income.

[It is the task of the community, by its action or by its deliberate choice of inaction, to settle the price system - both as regards stability and as regards relative prices - so that it will provide a fair, human and functional, livelihood for those engaged in serving the community. In other words the equivalence of goods is social not physical; it is fixed (or ought to be fixed), with a margin of tolerance, by distributive justice.]

PROFITS

Bishop Lucey writes that in estimating just prices, allowance must be made not only for just wages, interest on capital and on borrowed money, allowance for depreciation and

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8 Alfred O'Rahilly, Aquinas versus Marx, Cork, 1948, 12.
9 O'Rahilly, Social Principles, 17
10 Ibid., 63.
other costs but also for a fair rate of profit. The entrepreneur
is entitled to profit on the grounds of the risks he runs in en-
gaging in business. However, the profit rate must not be ex-
cessive as there is a just profit rate.

We may take it that the entrepreneur operating under con-
ditions of free competition is always justified in keeping
whatever surplus earnings he can secure, provided he treats
his staff and his customers justly in the matter of wages
and prices - if he is not entitled to them on the score of
the risk run, he is in all human probability entitled to
them on the score of his exceptional business efficiency or
business opportunities. 11

Since profit is primarily remuneration for the service
of risk-bearing, businesses conducted on monopolistic lines
should only get a moderate profit.

If three per cent, be the maximum just rate of pure interest,
then an allowance of three per cent, for risks would make
five to six per cent, on the real capital employed a reason-
able average profit rate for monopolies controlling essential
commodities or services. 12

The State has the power and duty to restrain monopolies
from exceeding just prices. The State should also supervise pro-
tected industries so that they do not prosper at the expense of
the public good. However, such supervision as regards monopolis-
tic or protected industries should be strictly limited, in order
to avoid excessive State control 13

THE WORKERS' SHARE

11 C. Lucey, "The Just Profit Rate," IER, LVIII November
1941, 397.
12 Ibid., 398.
13 C. Lucey, "The Industrial Efficiency and Prices Bill"
Following the Papal teaching, Irish writers hold that the wage-contract is not an essentially unjust system.

However, wages mean dependence on others, especially when the worker does not possess any other property as a means of support. Hence, Father Clune states "the wage-system, although good in itself does not promote that sense of freedom and independence which should mark every true man." 14

For the sake of greater peace in industry, and for the welfare of the workers, the Irish Bishops, in their Pastoral Letter of 1914, suggested profit-sharing and co-partnership.

an opportunity to share in the profits or to acquire a co-partnership, or at least to benefit in some permanent way by the continued prosperity of the undertaking, might with great advantage be embodied in a scheme of employment. In this manner good, steady, wholesome work would be encouraged and the men would have a chance of becoming masters through their own exertions. 15

The Bishops allowed that there might be difficulties at that time, in the way of giving labour a share in management, but in the future labour may have a voice in the management of industry and it is desirable that it should.

Father William Moran thought that the existing wage-system should go and a better system take its place. The system, suggested by Father Moran, was industrial co-operatives. The objective must be to make the workers in each industry the

14 Clune, Christian Social Reorganizations, 178.
15 "Pastoral Address of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland," IER, III, March, 1914, 315.
owners of the industry in which they work. "The ideal of the Catholic social reformer . . . is an equitable distribution of wealth in a community in which every labourer will be owner, or at least part-owner of the business in which he works. 16

Father P. Coffey said that in industry, profit-sharing and co-partnership should be introduced so as gradually to take the place of the wage-system. 17

Father Cahill urged the fostering of home industries and handicrafts. In the field of industry, as an alternative to ownership by the few, he recommended "some system of co-operative control or ownership of industries." 18

The Catholic ideal, states Father Clune, is that every worker should be an owner of productive property. Joint-management and profit-sharing are beneficial and good but they do not go far enough. "[T]he worker must get beyond joint-management and profit-sharing, and must become a joint-owner." 19

This is brought about in various ways so that the worker becomes a shareholder in the company in which he works. However, trade-unions cannot be dispensed with even though workers are part-owners of the concern.

16 W. Moran, "Some Causes of the Present Social Inrest". ITQ, XIV, April, 1919, 97.
17 P. Coffey, The Social Question in Ireland, Dublin, 1930, 4.
Bishop Lucey argues for profit-sharing on the plea that it will promote co-operation and harmony between employers and employees, make for efficient and increased production, and improve the status of the worker as a partner in the industry and give him a more equitable share in the distribution of the income from industry.

Profit-sharing is not sufficient, however, without sharing of control. In order to participate effectively in the management of industry, the workers must have representatives on the board of directors and among the managerial personnel. Co-partnership on these lines will create a better spirit among the workers and increase their efficiency.

The ideal to be aimed at is the greatest amount of personal responsibility for each man in the conduct of his affairs and in earning his livelihood. Such responsibility for the welfare of the industry as a whole is the outcome of co-partnership in management.

It would be a mistake to conclude that the workers have a strict right to a share in either the control or the profits of the firm employing them. But as is obvious from the words of the Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno... it would be no less a mistake to conclude that it would be wrong for them to seek such a share, or that sharing control and profits with them savours of Communism. The true position is that such modifications of the existing system are advisable in the case of large undertakings but not imperative, social

expedient but not morally urgent. 21

INTEREST

The right to receive moderate interest on money loans has been defended as lawful by Irish writers. Concerning the Church's attitude to interest on loans of money, Doctor Harty said that the principles on which the Church has condemned usury are unchanged and still valid, but that economic circumstances of the present are different from those prevailing in the Middle Ages, and so justify the taking of interest. "There has been a development of the principles because of their application to new circumstances; but the principles themselves have always remained the same." 22

In his book, *The Church and Usury*, Father P. Cleary showed the consistency of the Church's attitude through the ages. Father Cleary comes to the conclusion that economic circumstances have so changed as to justify interest. Interest can be regarded as a just price for a loan which is determined by the common estimation of men at the present time. 23

In a survey of Catholic views on the morality of

21 Ibid., 299.


interest-taking, Father P. Conway concludes that "from the strictly practical point of view, we must always remember that the arguments for interest have sufficiently sound authority to make them solidly probable. Even the weakest of them is perfectly sound in practice." 24

As regards the rate of interest, Father Conway rejects the view that bank interest rates "are only legitimate in so far as they represent the bankers' actual 'costs.'" The volume of bank credit and its distribution is closely connected with the rate of interest.

It is of the utmost importance to the economic life of the community that the optimum volume of credit should be reached and maintained but not exceeded; and that in its distribution a distinction should be made between public and private borrowing, as well as a due allowance for the social and economic desirability of the purposes for which loans are sought. Now a flat rate of interest based upon some actuarial computations of 'costs' would be a singularly inept means to attain these ends. And whatever our moralizing reformers may say, no rate of interest can be regarded as 'just,' if its social consequences are likely to prove injurious or even disastrous. 25

Father Conway does not think that a fixed rate of interest based on so-called costs is acceptable as the just rate of interest. The rates of interest should be "adaptable and


differential" so that the volume of credit will be so regulated as to secure the greatest economic prosperity for the community.

**MONETARY REFORM**

In seeking the causes of world unrest and economic disorganization, Father P. Coffey found that the system of financing and money were primarily responsible. The system of production was not at fault since it was potentially capable of supplying all people's needs due to great scientific and inventive progress. Therefore the cause must be in defective distribution. But the medium of distribution is money and so the monetary system is failing in its function of making the products of industry available to consumers. 26

At the present day the whole economic and industrial process of society finds itself in the grip of a financing policy which has in fact frustrated this purpose and plunged mankind into world war and chaos. The money system that has been allowed to evolve during the last few centuries all over the world is an impossible one. 27

As a result of this, Father Coffey maintained that the control of industry is really in the hands of those who issue financial credit, the Banking system. It is an injustice to the community for banks to charge interest on money created by them.

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26 P. Coffey, "The Economic Crisis: Some Suggestions towards Diagnosis and Remedy," IER, XLVIII, August, 1936, 134.

through loans. It is the duty of the Government to remedy this
defective system through legislation. Monetary reform by State
action, will enable employers to pay a family wage, and will
bring about wider diffusion of capital ownership among the workers.
Father Coffey summarises his solution as follows:

Government must (a) resume their rightful prerogative of
supreme control of their peoples' monetary systems; (b) base
the nation's money on the nation's wealth-producing capacity;
(c) issue it not as an interest-bearing debt to private
bankers, but as interest-free currency; (d) extend all forms
of unemployment benefit, health insurance, old age pensions,
etc., by converting all into a national dividend for all, to
be issued as in (c).

Simultaneously retail prices should be regulated by a
national discount estimated periodically by comparison of
rate of wealth-production with rate of wealth-consumption.
This would automatically preclude inflation." 28

Father Fahey puts reform of the monetary system as a
primary need in the return to social order. Following other
writers with the same outlook, he thinks that misuse of the finan-
cial system and the dominance of finance over politics and econo-
mics must first be eliminated before reform is possible. Monetary
reform would include the 100 per cent money system, whereby banks
would be prohibited from creating new money through loans. The
State alone would have the right to create new money.

The landing of the lawful money issued by the governmental
monetary authority should not be carried out by the govern-
mental monetary authority, but by privately owned Corporations

28 Coffey, "The Economic World Crisis: Some Suggestion
towards Diagnosis and Remedy," IER, XLVIII, 140.
erected into a Guild and functioning under a Guild Charter.29

Stability of the price-level must also be attained, by abandoning the policy of fixed exchange, and full development and use of the country's resources.

Father Fahey proposes the programme of the Social Encyclicals as the basis of social reform, although he does not examine Catholic social principles in detail or try to apply them to existing problems.

Regarding the possibility of vocational organization, Father Clune says that before it can become a reality the money must first be satisfactorily solved. He examines the financial and banking system in Ireland and concludes that it is in great part responsible for many social evils, such as poverty, unemployment and emigration. The unemployment question can be largely solved through development of national resources. If the money is not readily available then the State should raise it, if necessary by undertaking a policy of monetary reform.

Alfred O'Rahilly in his book Money, goes into the whole question of money and finance. He examines the working of the banking system in great detail. He advocates "a strict measure of social control" over the bank's power of manufacturing and

cancelling money. 30

Speaking of Currency and credit control, Canon McKevitt states:

The State must see that resources needed by the people are not excluded from the market solely through an inadequate monetary techniques. The State is not bound to assume the direct management of the monetary institutions, nor should it do so if private enterprise is adequate to the public needs. Where the function is entrusted to private institutions, the State must exercise strict control and supervision. 31

SUMMARY

The teaching of the early Socialists that the private ownership of capital should be abolished, urged Irish writers to defend the lawfulness of capital ownership. The danger of Socialistic doctrines spreading among the workers made it imperative that the true teaching on property be emphasised and set forth.

The problem of land ownership had been solved by political agitation resulting in a series of land acts in the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The land had been purchased from the landlords by the State and made over to the tenants on condition of paying an annual sum.

30 Alfred O'Rahilly, Money, Cork, 1941, XXV. Since this book is difficult to obtain in America, and since further condensing might only obscure his meaning, Professor O'Rahilly's own summary of his book is given in Appendix III.

31 McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 131.
usually much less than the former rent - for a limited number of years. 32 Thus one great social problem was solved and what might be regarded as the ideal situation as regards ownership prevailed on the land, small farms occupied and owned by the farmers and their families.

Industrial capitalism in Ireland was on a very small scale in comparison with other countries since the country was woefully under-industrialised. However, the abuses of individualistic Capitalism existed and Irish writers were keenly aware of them. To defend the rights of the workers they looked to legislation and action by the State, and they urged the obligation of the State to interfere and protect those rights. As an alternative to the type of Capitalism then prevailing some writers proposed a system of part-ownership by the workers or of co-operatives. 33 This trend is evident in the years immediately following the First World War.

Later writers are careful to distinguish between the technique of capitalism and the evils that have arisen from its abuse. Father Coyne calls Capitalism "a perfectly indifferent and

32 John E. Pomfret, The Struggle for Land in Ireland, Princeton, 1930.


extremely efficient economic system,"34 and this statement may be taken as representative of the attitude of Irish writers at present to the technique of Capitalism as such.

Modern Irish writers are favourable to schemes of profit-sharing and sharing of ownership and management. However, they do not look to them as a sure remedy for all industrial conflict and difficulties. 35 Profit-sharing and co-partnership have been adopted by very few Irish industries, and manufacturers generally have been unfavourable to them. 36

Father Coffey had somewhat extreme views on the subject of monetary reform. He pointed out the financial and banking abuses of the time, but he relied on monetary reform as the one and only reform that would automatically secure the family wage for all workers and wider distribution of property among the wage-earners. 37 Father Denis Fahey has been classed among the extremist writers on monetary reform by Father John F. Cronin. 38


36 Ibid., 61.


38 John F. Cronin, Catholic Social Principles, Milwaukee, 1951, 693.
Alfred O'Railly gives a more moderate and reasoned criticism of modern monetary and banking practice. It may be said that in recent years the subject of monetary reform has been little discussed by Irish writers. It seems to have quietly faded away from the scene. Likewise the subject of interest has not lately been under discussion. It seems to be accepted that moderate interest on loans is lawful, and the matter is left at that.

Irish writers have treated the theoretical basis of just prices from different approaches. During the last war the question of the moral obligation of legally fixed prices for certain commodities was treated in the pages of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* by Father McCarthy. Father McCarthy concluded that the prices fixed by the Government for these scarce commodities were binding in commutative justice and that those who exceeded the legal prices were bound to restitution. This was an application of well-known moral principles to actual conditions.

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CHAPTER VII

THE LIVING WAGE

In what was described by the well known American writer on social matters, Msgr. John A. Ryan, as a "splendid article," Rev. Dr. J. M. Harty discussed the ethical basis of the living wage. He argued that the living wage is due in strict justice since the Natural Law demands that wages should be the means of preserving the worker's life "in a manner worthy of his personality." Treating of the family wage, Dr. Harty stated that "[i]t seems more probable that a labourer has a right in strict justice to at least an absolute family living wage." An absolute family, which he defined as one consisting of five or six members.

The basis of the right to the absolute family wage is man's natural destiny to found and be the head of a family. "It follows that married and unmarried men have a right to the same

1 John A. Ryan, "Note on the right to a living wage v. the right to profit on an investment," ITQ, III, April, 1908, 225.

price for their labour, since both have equally the natural destiny which gives the claim." 3 The standard of frugal comfort varies in different places and in different ages. In estimating the living wage, strict justice would demand sufficient only to supply what was really necessary for frugal comfort.

Dr. Hartly would not say that labour came first in the division of income between labour and capital, to the extent that labour could take all this income, if necessary, to fulfil its rightful claims. Capital has a strict right to a fair return, and this can be taken away only when labour is in the position of a man in extreme necessity.

Fr. Walter McDonald based the doctrine of the living wage on the ordinary conditions for just price, regarding the contract as one of sale "which may be unjust to either of the parties as a result of error or pressure." 4 The labourer sells his labour as the manufacturer sells a commodity and the just price of either is determined by the common estimation of their values. 5 Common estimation expects that the worker should get a family wage in return for his labour. The just wage is then the family wage, though if industry, through no fault of the employers, cannot pay

3 Ibid.

4 Walter McDonald, "The Living Wage," ITQ, III, January, 1908, 73.

this wage it is excused from paying it in full.

The most important of the teachings of the Church on social matters, was, in the opinion of Fr. L. McKenna S.J., the duty of paying a living wage. "The payment of proper wages will, more than almost anything else, lead to an equitable distribution of wealth among men, and thus bring peace to the world."6 An employer is bound in strict or commutative justice to pay at least an individual living wage to his workers, whether men or women. He is also bound to pay men, whether or not, a family wage; but Fr. McKenna does not state whether the obligation of the family wage is one of legal or commutative justice. If an employer, owing to general business conditions beyond his control, is unable to pay a family wage, then he is not bound to do so.

Fr. McKenna strongly condemned the underpayment of women. They have a strict right to a wage "which will assure them decent housing and clothes, good food, and something over to brighten their present life with some joy, and their future with some hope."7 The principle of equal pay for equal work cannot be applied absolutely. The employer is within his rights in giving lower wages to women than men for the same type and amount of work, provided that he pays his women workers a just wage.

The Bishops Pastoral Letter of 1914 touches very briefly

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6 McKenna, The Church and Labour, 24.
7 Ibid., 47.
on the question of the just wage. It states, that in normal conditions, the average thriving business should pay a wage sufficient to procure "worthy maintenance" for the worker and his family. The workers should not expect that the full family wage be paid by industrial concerns in "backward districts, or where foreign competitors have got far ahead, or where from other reasons existing circumstances are unfavourable," as long as these conditions prevail.

In his book on private ownership, Monsignor John Kelleher maintained that when Leo XIII spoke of the obligation of the living wage in Rerum Novarum, he wanted principally to point out that the State is morally bound to secure that the worker receives his just claims. The workman has a strict right in justice to a living wage. But Msgr. Kelleher, writing at the beginning of the present century, thought that many employers were unable, through circumstances beyond their control, to pay a living wage. Therefore, these employers could not be accused of injustice even though they paid less than a living wage. Since, however, there is always injustice when the workers do not get a just wage, "it is only the public authority that can always be held responsible

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for the fulfilment of this social duty."9 "The wage . . . to be
secured for them [the workers] should be sufficient not only to
provide for their actual needs at the time of work, but also to
enable them to insure against the effects of old age, accidents
and unemployment."10 It is more equitable, economically better,
and more in accordance with their dignity as human beings, that
the workers should not be dependent on State relief. The proper
function of the State "is to control, not to administer; in this
case to secure to the workmen the means of providing for themselves,
not to assume the office of making the provision itself."11

Besides a minimum legal wage, Msgr. Kelleher advocated
compulsory insurance through trade unions or benevolent societies.

In his work on Ethics, Rev. Dr. Michael Cronin stated
that the worker has a right to wages sufficient to support the
average family. The unmarried man has this right also, because
the value of labour is determined by its essential function, and
this value is intrinsically attached to it whether the function is
exercised or not. However, Dr. Cronin did not make clear whether
the obligation of paying the family wage binds in commutative jus-
tice or not.

In an article on Dr. Cronin's book on Ethics, Mr. T.

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9 Kelleher, Private Ownership, 183.
10 Ibid., 207.
11 Kelleher, Private Ownership, 207.
Smiddy said that an employer must pay the family wages even if it means sacrificing his profits and interest on his own capital. However, he claims, the employer is first entitled to his own and his family's decent support.

Therefore, this right to a living wage may be suspended and hypothetical in the event of industry or its present organization not making possible the giving of it. If these employees are free to seek other employment and cannot get it, it is obviously better socially that they should get less than a minimum just wage; and it is justifiable for the employer to offer it in the circumstances in which he is placed. Whether an employer is justified in foregoing paying interest for borrowed capital in these circumstances rather than pay a full just minimum wage to his employees would appear, on account of its social consequences to demand a negative answer.12

Fr. Patrick Coffey held that the minimum just wage was the family wage, and that the owner could not take any profit on his capital, beyond what was necessary to support himself and his family, until his workers had received a family wage. The full family wage is not obligatory where "the industry is unable to yield a decent family wage to the workers in addition to fair remuneration of the employer."13 It is here that goodwill and mutual co-operation between employer and men is most needed, since it is in the common interest of both parties to keep the industry in operation.


13 P. Coffey, The Social Question in Ireland, Dublin, 1930, 15.
Pf. E. J. Coyne's interpretation of the teaching of the Encyclicals on the just wage was that at least a family wage was due in strict justice to the adult working man. The importance of the just wage is such that

the just wage and private property stand and fall together; the one will not long endure without the other. They are the two feet around which truly human, social and economic life must revolve. To deny, in theory or in practice, one, inevitably brings with it the denial of the other.14

This wage should be sufficient to provide for the normal family according to the standard of living of the society in which it is. Through it, by contributing towards private insurance, the worker should be able to provide against sickness, unemployment and old age. "Insurance is the normal way and the proper way, to provide security against these hazards for this requires the active thought and participation of man himself, and so develops certain specific human qualities and virtues."15 Direct State aid is the least desirable form of social security. A just wage should enable the worker to save and become a property-owner. "[T]he common good, or . . . social justice, demands that wages be such as to enable proletarians to become property-owners, either of land, as Pope Leo XIII suggested, or of shares in the enterprise in which they work."16

15 Ibid., 12.
Fr. Coyne points out that wages should be at such a level as to give the greatest amount of employment.

In his book, *The Framework of a Christian State*, Fr. Edward Cahill gives and explains the teaching of the Encyclicals on the living wage. He points out that the aim must be not only to secure a wage for the worker that will enable him and his family to live in frugal comfort, but such as will allow him to acquire some property also. Regarding the obligation of employers, he says:

Employers ordinarily are bound under an obligation of Commutative Justice to give their employees a wage sufficient for the support of the worker and his family in becoming conditions. The worker's right to such a just wage is prior to the capitalist's claim to a dividend on his investment. Hence the employer or capitalist owner cannot justly appropriate from the industry anything more than a just wage for his own personal labour until the claims of the worker to a just wage are satisfied.17

"Becoming conditions," mean for Fr. Cahill, the ownership of a home with at least three bedrooms, and means for providing the family with not only the absolute necessaries but also those things which can be classed as necessaries owing to custom and modern circumstances and environment. The worker should not have to depend on the State for support in "periods of unemployment, sickness and old age, or the premature death or disable-


ment of the bread-winner." Christian ideals demand that the worker should be able to provide against these difficulties out of his own earnings. As an aid to this, Fr. Cahill recommends family allowance schemes on the French model, where the employers and workers share the burden.

Bishop Lucey did not agree with Fr. Cahill's view of the obligation of the family wage. Bishop Lucey thought that only the individual living wage is a matter of strict justice. The family wage is demanded by social justice and not by commutative justice. The payment of a family wage will put an end to the necessity of child labour and of mothers working outside the home.

Catholic teaching is agreed that a woman is entitled in strict justice to at least an individual living wage. Bishop Lucey points out that the principle "equal pay for equal work" is applicable only where women are doing the same type of work and producing the same amount as men. The measuring unit should be the output of the ordinary unskilled male worker; for this he is entitled to a family wage. If a woman produces equally with such a worker in the same job, she also is entitled to a family wage. If she produces less, her wage should be correspondingly smaller, provided she still receives an individual living wage. Women

18 Ibid., 400.
should be paid according to "efficient output."

What a man could do at the job, even though de facto no men are employed on it - for example, typewriting - is the standard of output and so of wages. In occupations such as nursing, where women excel, the average woman's activity is itself the standard and, of itself, merits a full family wage. . . . If wages are the worker's share of the fruits of industry which he has helped to create, it is only fair that the service rendered, not the sex of the person rendering them, should determine how much the worker is to get. . . . Charity also requires this method of wage-fixing. It is the only way of avoiding antagonism between men and women in industry. For it is the only way of ensuring equality of competition and, therefore, of opportunity between them. 19

Bishop Lucey rejected the demand that women should get a full family wage, no matter how their work or output compared with men.

Women are ordinarily slow to organize effectively in defence of their just claims. So, the State should pass legislation to make the individual living wage compulsory for women. "Legislation ensuring that women get equal pay when employed at equal work with men is also desirable." 20

Canon McKevitt holds that the family living wage, is due in strict or commutative justice, "when the general prosperity admits of its payment." 21 A personal living wage should be given to women engaged in work that is specifically women's work.

20 Ibid., 466.
Social justice demands that in employment where women do equal work with men, women should get a family wage. The family wage must be estimated according to the standard of living common to families in a particular social class in a particular community. This will vary in different communities according to their economic prosperity. Such a wage must not only provide for the necessaries but also for conventional necessities, which increase with economic progress. However, Canon McKevitt warns that:

In a particular civilization the conventional necessities may have so expanded that they encroach on what is necessary for decent sustenance. At a given moment there may be a serious disequilibrium, and a society may have created for itself a multitude of artificial needs which really reduce the standard of life when this is viewed from the moral and cultural and not from the purely material viewpoint. 22

The State can help through legislation by discouraging the creation of new conventional needs. But what is really needed is a change in outlook on the part of consumers. They must have a sounder appreciation of true values and the relative importance of different needs. Such a reformation must be a group work, aiming to reeducate the tastes and habits of society. Catholics should be active, moulding society, and not "passive, unquestioning receivers of what the world gives." 23

23 Ibid., 154.
In his work, *Christian Social Reorganization*, the question of wages is treated in detail by Father Clune. The minimum just wage is the family wage and is binding in commutative justice. It should be sufficient to support the normal family, which Father Clune considers should be more than three children for Ireland, although he doesn't give any definite figures. The worker should be able to provide, through insurance paid by himself, for such hazards as illness, unemployment and old age, leaving over sufficient "to acquire a fair amount of productive property." The worker should be able to live in a suitable house, which should have at least three bedrooms. The minimum wage should also enable workers to enjoy reasonable recreation and those conventional necessities according to the standard of living of the time. If necessary, wages should be supplemented by family allowances, preferably by contributions from industry, or if not by the State.

Father Clune reiterates the Papal condemnation of the situation where mothers of families are forced by economic circumstances to work outside the home. The provision of a family wage for the adult male worker will eliminate the evil, and will prevent men from being forced out of jobs through competition with women workers. The minimum wage for women workers is a personal living wage.

But the minimum wage is merely the lowest which the employer may in justice pay in normal circumstances. Beyond that there is the wage which we term adequate or sufficient, and which is based not on the worker's needs but on the contribution he makes to industry. It is not possible to determine here what this wage would involve; but one may say of the two elements of production, capital and labour, the latter, being personal, is more important; and that, as a consequence, it is not right that the employer, just because he supplies the necessary capital, should be entitled to appropriate all the profits, no matter how large, provided he has paid the minimum wage which we have been discussing. 25

Doctor Alfred O'Rahilly says that modern corporate industry is an institution whose workings are governed by social and distributive justice. The purpose of this institution is to enable the people engaged therein to realise their natural rights. "We can say of modern specialised production taken as a whole that its end or object is the allocation of incomes to individuals (or rather to families) to enable them to utilise goods and services for human life." 26

Since the worker is completely dependent on his wage for his needs, these necessary requirements must be the first charge on industry. Thus an objective order exists, and the justice of wages is not determined primarily by the contract but by their conformity with this order.

25 Ibid., 342.

26 O'Rahilly, Social Principles, 19.
The employers and managers are performing the task of distributing the required goods and services, they are acting not indeed on behalf of the State (which is only one organ) but of the community; they are therefore bound by distributive justice. Both employers and employees are also serving the community, their work is necessary for economic life; hence they have towards the community the obligation which we call social justice. Business firms not only distribute products but also purchasing-power; this latter is an essential service to the community; hence the payment of salaries and wages is an acquittance of social justice. 27

In Doctor O’Rahilly’s opinion the family wage is due in both commutative and social justice.

Father J. McCarthy after discussing the views of the moral-theologians on the living wage come to the conclusion that "It is the function of social justice to determine what amount of wages must be paid by the employer in order to maintain this labourer and his family in frugal comfort, and that, per se, the employer is bound in commutative justice to pay the amount thus determined." 28

SUMMARY

The obligation of the just wage has been constantly discussed by Irish writers. It may be said that practically all of them favour the view that the family wage binds in strict justice. Bishop Lucey, writing in 1933, stated that the family wage was

27 O’Rahilly, Aquinas versus Marx, 67.

binding in Social Justice. This was his interpretation of the teaching of Quadragesimo Anno. The conclusion of Canon McKevitt that "a family living wage, is, apart from an exceptional case of impossibility, due in strict or commutative justice," seems to represent the opinion of Irish writers at the present time on the obligation of the family wage.

One theme is generally present in Irish writing dealing with the living wage and that is that such a wage should make the worker, as far as possible, independent of State grants and aid.

Employers are excused from paying a family wage, if through no fault of their own, general industrial or business conditions prevent them from so doing. If their inability is due to obsolete equipment or defective organization, then the employer is bound to remedy such a situation, and if he neglects to do so, the obligation of paying a family wage still binds, when he could pay it by changing his methods of production or industrial machinery. Employers are bound to co-operate to secure that conditions are such that industry is able to pay a living wage to all workers.

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29 C. Lucey, "On a Recent Study in Social Science," IER, April, 1933, 379.

30 McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 59. Father J. McCarthy states: "We have given ... the principle relevant texts from the Encyclicals, and it seems fair to conclude that, whatever they may insinuate, in none of them do we find a definite indisputable statement that a family living wage is the minimum due in strict justice to the worker." McCarthy, "The Family Living Wage and Strict Justice," IER, LX, 436.
CHAPTER VIII

LABOUR ORGANISATION

The labour struggle known as the Great Strike which occurred in Dublin in 1913-1914, was the occasion of a Pastoral address to the Irish people by the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland.¹ The purpose of the letter was to prevent a further outbreak of labour trouble by urging fair and proper treatment for the workers. The Bishops praised the Trade Union movement and urged the formation of strong Irish unions which would be in a position to bargain effectively for a living wage. These Irish unions should be independent and not under the control of British trades unions.

The trade union, in the judgement of Fr. L. McKenna S.J. is fully in accord with Catholic teaching. "The right of those who have common interests to defend them by common action is not a right which any human law can give or take away."² Those en-

¹ "Pastoral Address of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland," IER, III, March, 1914, 306.
² McKenna, The Church and Labour, 85.
gaged in the same occupation have in their work a natural bond of union.

Strong organizations of Labour and Capital are the only institutions that give the remotest hope of bringing back peace to the world. In the first place, they, and they alone, seem likely to provide adequate machinery for the establishment of collective labour contracts. Without such associations, the labour contract is the most part merely the exterior consent of the workman to the employer's conditions.3

Besides securing liberty of contract and just wages for their members, Trade Unions help in developing the spirit of initiative, self-reliance, foresight and responsibility. They should benefit the moral and social life of the community of which they are a part. Trade unions can do much to further such activities as "technical schools, laboratories for research, libraries, statistical and scientific journals, labour exchanges, insurance funds, loan funds, clubs of various kinds, and cooperative institutions."4

Monsignor Kelleher was very favourable to the labour movement which grew rapidly in Ireland during and after the years of the first World War. He held that the workers should put their hopes in the Trade Union movement, and avoid anything like revolutionary Socialism. They should keep the strike weapon, because it is that which enables them to benefit from collective bargaining. The workers must become aware of their social responsibil-

3 Ibid., 84.
4 Ibid., 86.
itities. "I have always," he said, "attempted to present the labour
movement as something altogether higher than a class struggle, and
to consider it as affecting society in general rather than a par-
ticular section, no matter what claims that section may have on our
support."5 The body of the workers must be so educated as to have
an intelligent grasp of general economic and Catholic social prin-
ciples. Leaders of trade unions must see that they do not abuse
their power.

In his book, The Framework of a Christian State, Fr. Ed-
ward Cahill S.J. gives and explains the teaching of the Encyclicals
on the right of the workers to form unions.

Unions should be independent of foreign control, and the
Government

should not allow industrial unions within the State (such as
Trade Unions, Employers' Unions etc.), whose functions and
activities are so closely and essentially connected with the
common good of the whole State, to be under the jurisdiction
of foreign and international committees. The only authority
to which such unions are lawfully subject is that of the State
and the Church.6

Later writers also, such as Fr. Clune and Canon McKevitt
declare and prove the natural right of the workers to organise
unions, and the duty of the State to protect them.

TRADE UNION AIMS

5 J. Kelleher, "The Future of Labour," Irish Monthly,
ILVII, 1919, 183.

6 Cahill, Framework of a Christian State, 506.
Writers such as Fr. McKenna and Magr. Kelleher emphasised the purpose of the trade unions, as a means of obtaining the rights of the workers, especially fair and just wages. They gave the workers unity and consequently bargaining strength, which could be backed up by strike action.

Fr. Clune states that the aim of the trade union "should be to help each member to better his condition in body, property, and soul, it being understood that justice and charity are observed in its efforts." This includes, just wages, reasonable hours and healthy working conditions. The union also should strive for the ideal that as many of the workers as possible should become owners of property.

Canon McKevitt points out that the general objects of the trade union movement have been confined to material things. They look for higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions and also take an interest in the social betterment of the poor classes. This policy is good but it does not go far enough.

It constitutes too narrow a view of reform and tends to seek a solution of social problems in a victory over opponents rather than in a spiritual transformation of society. It is liable to become egotistical and to overlook the need for social co-operation. Of itself it tends to generate a class-war mentality. When the trade union is not founded on a definite social philosophy, control easily passes into the hands of socialists who use the organisation as an effective

7 Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, 357.
weapon in their campaign of revolution.8

Father Michael Walsh summarises the functions of a trade union as "(a) to protect the workers vis-a-vis the employer; (b) to represent the worker at the level of management and policy planning; (c) and to insure him against emergencies he cannot meet out of his daily earnings."9 Another aim of unions should be to maintain high standards of workmanship. Unions give the workers certain advantages of a non-material nature which the State cannot give, such as a spirit of solidarity and security, and a feeling of status. Fr. James Bastible says that Trade Unions should strive to restore true Christian dignity to the worker and to give him security, a family wage, and personal freedom "especially in regard to the duties of virtue and religion."10

OBLIGATION TO JOIN A TRADE UNION

Rev. Dr. Walter McDonald asserted that workers have an obligation to join a union, since unions would be ineffective if a considerable body of workers remained outside them.

It seems to me, then, not so manifestly unreasonable that labourers are not independent of one another; that, as without combination, they cannot safeguard their interests, they are bound to combine in so far as is necessary for the common

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8 McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 75.


Fr. L. McKenna S.J. did not speak of a personal obligation on the part of the worker to join a union, although he urged that, in order to obviate the difficulty of the "blackleg" and "scab" all workers should be legally bound to belong to some union.

Msgr. Cronin did not hold for any obligation on the worker to belong to a union.

Fr. Clune makes a distinction between the conditions prevailing in the time of Leo XIII and the present time. In earlier days there may have been an obligation to join a union, because failure to join a union meant the "continuance of unjust condition for labour as a whole." Nowadays, however, Unions are strong and well-supported, and there cannot be any positive obligation on the individual worker to join one.

Fr. James Bastible states, that although the Common Good demands the formation of Labour Unions, "[i]t does not seem possible, however, to affirm that a strict obligation to join a Trades-Union falls on each individual worker."14

11 Walter McDonald, Some Ethical Aspects of the Social Question, 98.
12 McKenna, The Church and Labour, 96.
13 Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, 357.
CATHOLIC UNIONS

In 1914 when the majority of Irish unions were branches of British Unions or subject to control from England, Fr. L. McKenna S.J. urged the formation of Irish unions which would be thoroughly Catholic. He feared that the British Unions were Socialist and would influence the Irish Unions to adopt courses of action contrary to Catholic teaching.

Fr. McDonald favoured unions which would be open to non-Catholics rather than exclusively Catholic unions, which would not be strong enough to obtain their objects. The task of the clergy is to co-operate with and guide the policy of the unions, but the trade union leaders should be laymen.

Fr. Cahill S.J. expounded the teaching of the Church on the matter. The Church while tolerating neutral or mixed unions in certain circumstances, urged that where possible Catholic workmen should be in Catholic unions.

Fr. Clune follows closely the Papal teaching on the question of neutral unions. If there is no Catholic union at hand, and if the bishop of the place has given permission, a Catholic may join a neutral union, i.e. one in which religion is supposed to have no part. In this union,

he must be left free to follow his conscience and to obey the Church; and the union must be just in its demands. He must, therefore, not be forced to accept or to adopt any attitude or course of action of which his conscience does not approve. There must be no question of so-called loyalty
to the union, right or wrong.15

Fr. Clune condemned the neutral character of the Irish
Unions whose members are almost entirely Catholic.

Fr. Cahill S.J. urged the formation of Catholic Associa-
tions of working men already in neutral trade unions. He did
not think that the formation of strictly Catholic trade unions
was practicable at the time [1932], since "the field is already
occupied by neutral organisations."16

Fr. James Bastible points out that the position of the
Trade Unions in Ireland, a Catholic country, is peculiar. Irish
Unions are neutral because they started "as branches of British
Unions." He proposes as the best solution of the problem "a Con-
gress of Unions accepting Christian principles but willing to
enroll in their ranks members of any religion who accept their
principles."17 Besides this Congress it is necessary "to found,
side by side with the Unions, Catholic Associations of working-
men which will infuse virile Catholic principles into at least an
elite amongst them."18

15 Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, 362.
17 Bastible, "Modern Trade Unionism in the Light of
Catholic Principles," Christus Rex, III, 8.
18 Ibid., 9.
ACCESS TO UNIONS

In the early days the emphasis was on getting workers to join the unions. Dr. Walter McDonald did not think that the workers were unjust in refusing to work with non-union men.

Bishop Lucey does not favour the closed shop, in the sense that membership of a particular union is necessary either to get or to retain a particular job.

In these countries unionism is firmly established. The more immediate danger is not that it may fail for want of support but that it may use its strength, if not irresponsibly at least dictatorially. Hence the need here is for emphasis on the rights of the individual vis-a-vis the union. 19

The worker should have the freedom to stay outside the union or unions who are made up of workers in his particular type of work, if he doesn't care for those unions. He should also have the right to choose the particular union that he likes most.

Bishop Lucey allows that the majority union in an industry may have the right to negotiate agreements binding on all, but such agreements may not discriminate against the members of other unions. The closed shop must be rejected because it entails too much power for the union over its individual members, and leaves the way open to restrictive practices and "to a host of other abuses ranging from intimidation and victimisation to patronage and corruption." 20

20 Ibid.
Father Bastible says that a Trade Union is entitled, for its own protection, to forbid its members to work with non-Unionists. He thinks that the Closed Shop principle, however, is dangerous "since, in theory at least, workers might be compelled to join a Union, which professed anti-Christian principles." 21

The term "Closed Shop" is also applied to the claim that workers in an industry or establishment, covered by Union agreements, should be in a recognised Union. In practice this also involves restriction, since new Unions are recognised only with difficulty. This last interpretation seems to provide a measure of compulsion which is morally unexceptionable. 22

THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Monsignor Kelleher upheld the right of the workers to strike and declared that the evils of strikes were exaggerated by their opponents. Writing in 1912 he stated:

The present tendency to strikes marks a crisis in our industrial development, but a crisis which will not precipitate us into a revolution and disaster, but which will rather set us on the way to more general happiness and prosperity. 23

For a lawful strike, the workers must have a just cause. The weighing of the evils caused by a strike is a matter of legal justice, whether the strike seriously or not injures the common good. But, he said, "even from the standpoint of the common wel-


22 Ibid.

Strikes are wrong "first, where there was no reasonable probability that the strike could be carried to a successful issue; secondly where the advantages that are expected from the strike are secured by less drastic methods; and, thirdly, where strikes are resorted to frequently and for slight causes." 25

Men on strike cannot prevent others from working in the same plant, by unjust means such as physical violence or injury. However, there is nothing to prevent them from using persuasion to influence men to join in the strike. This persuasion can be lawfully backed up by the penalty of exclusion from membership in a trade union for "whoever remained at work after strike had been declared, or whoever took up work which strikers had laid down." 26

In giving the conditions for a just strike, Fr. McKenna stated that the object besides being just, must be sufficiently weighty to justify the evils resulting from a strike. However, it may be lawful for workers to strike over a comparatively trifling incident if an important principle is involved. Strikes must also have hope of succeeding, and other more peaceful means must have been tried in vain before resorting to strike action. The sympath-

24 Ibid., 14.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid., 13.
etic strike is lawful

only in the case where a body of workers is united by some real and strong bond of trade-interest with those whose cause it espouses; and this could generally be the case only where the organisations helping each other are employed by the same employers or by employers in similar businesses, for instance, in the case where a Union of masons' labourers supports the quarrel of a masons' Union or of a carpenters' Union; or in the case where the workers on one railway system support those who work on another system.27

Workers on a just strike may not use violence to prevent strikebreakers from working in their place. Such professional strikebreakers would be acting unjustly, however, "if, not being themselves in grave need, they professed their willingness to take the place of the strikers for less than a living wage, or to submit to other unjust conditions of work."28

Magr. Cronin, in his work on Ethics, stated that, for a just strike, workers must have a just cause, and must use just means in carrying out the strike, besides the object sought must be proportionate to the evils involved in the strike. Concerning the object of the strike, Dr. Cronin writes, "a strike undertaken for some light or trivial cause could never be lawful. It must, if it is to be justified, concern the means of sustenance or some of the other things necessary for a proper human life."29

27 McKenna, The Church and Labour, 98.
28 Ibid., 94.
...Msgr. Cronin declared that the sympathetic strike as such is unlawful. For him, a sympathetic strike is one which is carried out on the principle that an injustice to one body of the workers is an injury to the whole working-class. He failed to distinguish between a sympathetic strike based on this principle merely and one based on the closeness of the relation between the strikers and those whose cause they are supporting.

Strikers may not compel their fellow-workers to join in a strike against their wills. Likewise it is unlawful for them to use violence or threats against other workers from outside who come to take their jobs while they are on strike.

Just as the strikers have a right in justice to vacate a position even at the expense of their employers, so also outside workmen have a clear right in justice to accept employment from any source that offers itself, and strikers have no right whatever to prevent them from so doing.30

Besides fulfilling the usual conditions, a strike, to be just, can, in Fr. Clune's opinion, be only for something to which the workers have a strict right in justice. The workers have a right to strike and the State may forbid them only in the cases in which they are opposed to the common good; such would be the case in certain public services such as the police, the civil service, necessary public utilities etc. Fr. Clune thinks that

if each vocational group were organised to regulate its own

30 Ibid., 357.
internal affairs, there seems to be no reason why, with or without assistance from the State, it should not have power to settle, by compulsory arbitration if necessary, its industrial disputes.31

The sympathetic strike is lawful in certain conditions and Fr. Clune discusses these conditions in detail. The State may be bound to prevent strikebreakers from attempting to break a just strike but the workers may not use force to prevent them from working.

Canon McKevitt states that a strike should not be undertaken without a serious cause and only after other means such as arbitration or conciliation have been tried without success. There should also be a reasonable hope that the strike will succeed.

The Strike should be conducted in a morally lawful manner.

In investigating these conditions, we must not forget that an apparently trivial dispute may involve a serious question of principle affecting a very large class of workers. We must remember the solidarity of the workers. A demonstration of strength may be necessary to forestall threatened victimisation. Therefore, we cannot assess success or failure on purely financial grounds. The immediate success may appear small in comparison with the loss of wages and the drain on workers funds. Yet the union gains prestige and retains the confidence of the workers when it protests against injustice.32

The State may prohibit the use of the strike weapon by those employed in the civil service, the army, and other essential public services.

31 Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, 358.
32 McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 76.
**COMPULSORY ARBITRATION**

Irish writers are agreed on the desirability of settling strikes by voluntary methods such as negotiation between representatives of labour and employers, or by some method of conciliation or voluntary arbitration. Compulsory arbitration, however, has been favoured by some and rejected by others.

Magr. Cronin declared that the exclusion of strikes is a grave public necessity, and the Government can and ought to prevent them.

In every country there should be set up special tribunals authorised to deal and to deal compulsorily, with all questions concerning the nature and conditions of labour, and these tribunals being once set up, both strikes and lockouts should be strictly forbidden as at once unnecessary and opposed to the public good. 33

Mr. T. Smiddy, on the other hand, rejected compulsory arbitration because it brings too much State control. However, compulsory arbitration, he said, may be necessary when strikes threaten essential public services or endanger the welfare of the community in a serious manner.

Magr. Kelleher opposed compulsory arbitration as an interference with freedom.

Bishop Lucey has emphasised the great evils of strikes and the necessity of finding a remedy for them. The remedy he proposes is compulsory arbitration. He defines it as

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the system wherein the Government compels all disputes in industry to be submitted to a special tribunal when the parties themselves have reached a deadlock. The judicial award of a civil or criminal court. Strikes and lockouts are illegal; to organize or take part in one is therefore a criminal offence.34

Bishop Lucey thinks that the common good demands compulsory arbitration. The common good is in the care of the State, and the State alone is able to see that arbitration courts will function impartially and competently, and impose their decisions. Compulsory arbitration is especially desirable for unorganised labourers and for women workers, since it would ensure fair wages and treatment for them. Other methods of fixing the dispute should be tried, such as mediation or conciliation, before turning to compulsory arbitration. In Bishop Lucey's opinion, "[c]ompulsory arbitration is the price to be paid for the elimination of industrial warfare."35 He concedes that it is not the ideal way, but it is better "than a trial of strength by strike or lookout."36 There is no guarantee that justice will be secured through the strike or lockout, it is more likely that the stronger party will win irrespective of the merits of the case.

There should be a gradual approach to the setting up of

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35 Ibid., 184.
36 Ibid., 189.
compulsory arbitration by the State. Bishop Lucey thinks that vocational organization, a comprehensive code of industrial laws, impartial courts having the confidence of employers and employees and empowered to secure the carrying out of their decisions, are necessary preliminaries. It could be applied immediately to essential public services, and for other workers, compulsory investigation should be enforced for the time being, involving the abolition of the lightning strike and unofficial strike. Compulsory investigation means that strike action cannot be taken until the facts of the case have been investigated by an impartial commission and published, thus bringing public opinion on the side of the aggrieved party. 37

Bishop Lucey proposes that the Labour Court consist of two distinct courts, a court of First Instance and a Court of Final Appeal. "I would have compulsory investigation by the Courts of first instance of all labour disputes whatever and compulsory arbitration by the Supreme Labour Court of such disputes as either party refers to it." 38 A strike would be permissible only after compulsory investigation, and when both parties refuse to go to the Court of Final Appeal. If either party should call on the


Court of Final Appeal for a decision, then that decision is binding on both. Penalty for refusal to obey the Court's decision would be a fine imposed on the union or on an employer.

In addition I would have it an offence for an employer to take those illegally on strike back into his employment save on the original terms, or for the strikers to picket, parade, or otherwise deter workers willing to take the employment they have vacated. But further than that we should not go.39

The objection that compulsory arbitration takes away freedom of action from the workers and employers, cannot be sustained, because collective bargaining and conciliation must first be tried and only when these have failed can compulsory arbitration be employed. In Bishop Lucey's opinion, "[c]ompulsory arbitration of this kind admittedly is not the ideal; but at any rate it constitutes a more rational, a more convenient, and a more Christian way of adjusting differences between employers and their staffs than the strike does."40

Msgr. Kelleher, in contrast with his earlier views, agrees with Bishop Lucey's proposals. He says that the cause of the trouble is unrestrained competition between employers and workers. As restraint is necessary in every department of social life, so also it is needed here. "Once this necessary restraint is secured, voluntary methods of arriving at agreements through

39 Ibid., 394.

mediation and arbitration will tend to be more availed of because the temptation to the arbitrament of force will have been removed."

Alfred O’Rahilly, on the other hand, is opposed to compulsory arbitration for a number of reasons. It has not been a success elsewhere, and the workers are not favourable to it. Compulsory arbitration would increase the discontent of the workers and would "irritate and shackle the employers," "What we need is not to supersede voluntary arbitration — but to increase the number of those willing and able to act as mediators and arbitrators." The State should come to the rescue of the rural workers, who are without any organisation.

Dr. O’Rahilly agrees that strikes are not the ideal method of settling disputes. But at present they are the last guarantee of the workers’ liberty. In the existing system, the introduction of compulsory arbitration, would be "unjust and disastrous." The real solution to industrial conflict must be sought in the vocational organisation of society, or, as it is better known in America, in the Industry Council Plan.

If we had a guild structure in our economic life, in which


the workers were recognised as human beings and not merely as "hands," in which they were regarded as co-functionaries with employers in producing for the community, then indeed there would be little reason for strikes.45

Fr. Gerald Crotty C.SS.R., in discussing the working of the Labour Court in Ireland says;

I do not think that the Court would work better if given compulsory power against strikes. I deprecate any form of compulsory arbitration except when absolutely necessary. I do so primarily because it tempers with the right of the worker to strike; and that right is in the last resort the fundamental weapon at his disposal. It is the power to withhold his work which gives him bargaining strength; it is the basic sanction of collective agreements.44

Father Crotty says that sharing of profits and of management with the workers will help to eliminate many strikes. Vocational organization is the answer to the question of strikes in industry.

Fr. Robert Connolly S. J. points out that the Church has defended the right of the worker to strike when the strike is just. Abuse of the strike does not take away that right.

Any attempt to set up compulsory arbitration by law would, in fact, be a denial of the right to strike. The solution to strained relations in industrial life does not lie along that road. The true solution will be found in a re-examination of the conditions which reason and the Church require to be fulfilled before a particular strike may conform with the moral law.46


Fr. Connolly relies on direct negotiation, conciliation and voluntary arbitration for settlement of strikes.

SUMMARY

The subject of Trade Unions was brought to the forefront in Ireland by the labour struggle in the years immediately preceding the first World War. Irish writers were sympathetic to the cause of the workers. The right of the workers to organise was clearly recognised and affirmed. It was true that the Irish labour movement was tainted in the beginning with a sympathy for Socialism among some of its leaders. Catholic writers were aware of that, and warned the workers of Socialist errors.

Irish writers have constantly urged the formation of unions that would be truly national and not controlled from Britain. They realised that there was a greater hope of union policies being based on Catholic social teaching if the unions were free of foreign influence. Many unions in Ireland subsequently severed their connection with British unions.45

Irish writers assert the right of the workers to strike when the strike is just and they proclaim the conditions which make a strike just. The prevalence of strikes in Ireland and the

45 Godefroid Kurth, The Workingmen’s Guilds of the Middle Ages, Cork, 1943.

See the Introduction by Rev. Denis Fahey C.S.Sp. where a list, compiled in 1940, of Irish unions with Headquarters in England or the Six Counties is given. The list is taken from the Forty Sixth Annual Report of the Irish Trade Union Congress for 1940.
readiness of the workers to resort to them, has led Bishop Lucey to look for a solution along the lines of compulsory arbitration. His proposals have not been accepted by the general body of Irish writers as the solution to the problem of strikes. At present, voluntary methods seem to be regarded as the only safe and feasible methods of settling labour disputes.

In recent years the adult education movement for the training of workers, and especially of union leaders, in Catholic social teaching, and in other courses which would fit them to do their work as union members and officials competently and effectively, has made great strides. Under the guidance of well-trained leaders, we may hope that the Irish labour movement of the future will solve its problems effectively and in accordance with the norms of justice and charity.

Alfred O'Rahilly emphasised the need for trained leaders in the trade unions. He believes that "we require an elite, a picked body of men, thoroughly equipped in sound social principles and in professional technique, anxious to act as lay apostles and leaders." 47

47 Alfred O'Rahilly, "Trade Union Leadership To-day," Christus Rex, III, January, 1949, 68.
CHAPTER IX

THE ROLE OF THE STATE

The earlier writers emphasise the duty of the State to secure justice for the poor and the workers. Governments were still under the influence of laissez-faire doctrine and were slow to interfere in the economic life of the country. Trades-unions as yet were small and struggling for recognition, and their efforts to better the condition of the workers would be a long-drawn out and bitter struggle. Irish writers had seen the land question solved through enlightened legislation and they hoped that legislation would go a long way to solve the social problem created by laissez-faire capitalism.

Monsignor Kelleher relied on legislation to achieve social reform although he admitted that it could not cure all social ills. Writing some forty years ago, he urged the duty of the State to control the excessive individualism of the owners of capital. "I have insisted as strongly as I could that all property is under the jurisdiction of the State and that it is the duty of the State to provide by the exercise of its jurisdiction that all
property shall minister to the needs of the entire community."¹ The State must protect the right of private property, but it must also regulate its use in accordance with the common good. Msgr. Kelleher believed that if the State is allowed only to regulate the use of private property and not allowed to take it over, then the evils of Collectivism will be avoided. "The fundamental thing is the right and power of proprietors subject to modifications by the exercise of the State's jurisdiction."²

The principles behind the old Poor Laws was defective, since it urged the State to provide directly for the destitute instead of striving for a condition of affairs where these people would be able to support themselves. "The problem was not approached in a spirit of justice towards the destitute, for it was not recognised that they had any strict rights in the matter of property at all."³ The State should aim for a wider distribution of property, so that all will have sufficient property to enable them to provide for themselves. Private ownership on a broad basis would secure freedom and efficient production. As a first step towards wider distribution of property, Msgr. Kelleher urged a sufficiently large legal minimum wage. Such a wage would eliminate the need for dependence on public relief to a great extent.

¹ J. Kelleher, Private Ownership, 194.  
² Ibid., 195.  
³ Ibid., 203.
If some undertakings must be conducted as monopolies, then, Msgr. Kelleher said, it is better, that such monopolies be public, in order to prevent abuses by private owners. However, he stated, "[m]onopolies in any circumstances are bad, and if necessary can only be regarded as necessary evils."4

Father Moran pointed out that the workers were helpless to prevent the gradual taking over of their rights by the State. The only safeguard of liberty is the possession of private property. "The State is bound to take all reasonable measures . . . to enable as many as possible of its citizens to become owners."5 The purpose of the State is to protect the rights of its citizens, and to promote the common good. "The State has no authority to abolish the natural rights of any of its citizens, or transfer these rights to others; it can only limit their exercise in so far as limitation is required by the equal right of others or by the common good."6

Father Moran assigned the major role to the State in initiating and carrying out social reforms, and the he asserted that the diffusion of ownership must be the basis of such reforms. "The Irish State must, of course, be the reformer; and the process of repossession or redistribution - in so far as redistribution

4 Ibid., 144.
6 Ibid., 6.
may be necessary - will be its most serious problem." There would be redistribution to land to a certain extent, in that the Irish Government should compel any existing large landowners and ranchers to sell out and establish more widespread peasant proprietorship. In the field of industry, Fr. Moran proposed that the State, while avoiding direct interference, "would try the effect of encouraging such conditions of production and distribution, as would create a large number of small owners rather than small number of large owners." The State should encourage and prepare the way for the co-operative ownership and control of industries by the workers who work in them. "With the possible exception of certain transport services and certain industries connected with national defence, banking and insurance are the only kinds of business that need, we think, to be nationalised." Writing while the country was still under the control of Britain, Fr. Moran proposed that these measures be put into effects as soon as a native Irish Government could freely do so. It is also, he said, the Government's duty to provide suitable housing for the workers in crowded industrial centres.

7 W. Moran, "Social Reconstruction in an Irish State, II," ITQ, XV, April, 1920, 111.


9 Ibid., 257.
The Bishops Pastoral Letter of 1914 calls attention to the urgent necessity of providing houses for the workers, and states that private initiative in this matter should be supplemented by State aid. In the field of industry, the State is bound to see that the national resources are developed and used for the welfare of all the people. "[c]onsequently, the State or Municipality should acquire, always for just compensation, those agencies of production, and those agencies only, in which the public interest demands that public property rather than private ownership should exist." 10 

The purpose of the State, Rev. Dr. Michael Cronin stated, is to secure the common good. Dr. Cronin pointed out that since the 17th century, writers have been restricting more and more the State's field of activity. Some have restricted the action of the State to that of protecting individuals from aggression and hindering them from interfering with the rights of others. This is in opposition with the theory of Aristotle, who held that the end of the State was positive and "co-extensive practically with life, or at all events with the developed life." 11 The latter view is, in Dr. Cronin's opinion, the correct one. "Anything, . . which is necessary, whether for the individual or for society at large, and which the individual or the family is not in a position

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10 "Pastoral Address of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland," LBR, III, March, 1914, 314.

11 Cronin, Science of Ethics, II, 476.
to supply, may legitimately be regarded as included in the end of the State."12 It is not the business of the State to promote the private interests of its citizens, or to take over control of things that they are well able to look after themselves.

The State may not nationalise all industry, but State ownership of property within certain limits is not in itself wrong. "The State has right even to create a monopoly in certain industries or lines of business . . . but only for very grave reasons, and only after full compensation has been made to existing owners."13 The State may nationalise and set up a monopoly in an industry if, for instance, private control would give power to exploit the public, or if the health of the nation demanded public control. The State may take over also, if private interests are wasting the national resources. "A frequent cause of nationalisation and monopoly is found in the fact that the State has had to start some very necessary business for which private capital could not be obtained and for which protection is absolutely required if it is to be kept alive."14 Nationalisation cannot go so far as to endanger the freedom and opportunity for private enterprise and investment. Thus Dr. Cronin accepts a policy of nationalisation of a limited number of industries if and in so far as

12 Ibid., 474.
13 Ibid., 278.
14 Ibid., 277.
the common good of the country demands it.

The State has the right and duty of restraining individuals from pursuing their own interest to the detriment of the common good. However, the State cannot prevent its citizens from exercising those rights that are fundamental to human nature, as the right to marry and to found and raise a family.

The purpose of the State was defined by Fr. Edward Cahill S.J. when he wrote that "[t]he sole end and purpose of the State is to assist each and every person within it in his efforts to attain perfection and temporal happiness." The object of the State is the common good of its members. The State must protect the rights of the individual, the family and the Church, and help them, where necessary, to exercise their rights. The public good consists of two elements, peace and prosperity. "Peace means security from violent interference with one's rights." Prosperity is twofold, public and private. The direct object of the State is the provision of public prosperity which is "the sum of the helps and facilities, which are required in order to place private prosperity within the reach of all." This includes public utilities in so far as they are necessary to supplement private initiative. The State must ensure that industrial activity is carried on so

16 Ibid., 463.
17 Ibid., 464.
as to benefit the whole community and not for the advantage of a small group, while at the same time respecting the right of private enterprise. "The central authority . . . must not absorb the activities of other lesser forces or organisations, but should foster private initiative whether individual or collective, while directing it along lines conducive to the public good." The State must stimulate and co-ordinate industrial activity, while leaving it under private ownership and control. The State should ensure through just laws, that there is an equitable distribution of wealth, and that it doesn't become concentrated in the hands of a few. Small firms and businesses should receive special protection. Legislation should also favour and facilitate co-operative industry. The policy of the State should be to secure wide distribution of ownership, and corporate organization of industry which would be independent and whose rights would be protected by the Government.

The government should see that the control of credit and currency is not subject to a power outside the State.

On the other hand, it is desirable for many reasons, that the banks which issue fiduciary money should be distinguishable from the Government; hence, banks should be established, which, while enjoying independent management, would act under the supreme direction not of any outside

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18 Ibid., 456.
power, but of the Government of the country and in accordance with a policy shaped solely with a view to the needs of the people.19

Fr. Cahill gives a number of provisions regarding industry which he considers that rulers are bound to enforce in virtue of Legal Justice. The State has the duty of stimulating and protecting home industry. Industries must not be allowed to pass under foreign control. The Government should fix the main outline of economic policy so that it will be in accord with the common good, "while leaving its execution as far as possible to be carried out by free associations and private individuals."20

As regards the form of government, the Church does not condemn any particular form, "so long as the duties of government can be fulfilled under it."21 Fr. Cahill thinks that in modern times and conditions, a democratic form of government is best suited to promote the common good of its subjects.

Among the essential conditions for good democratic government, Fr. Cahill places the following:

That the people retain the real control of the State, it is essential that the municipal, industrial and professional units be strongly organised, and that the deputies for the governing assembly should at least to a considerable extent be the representatives of the organic units, of which the State is made up - viz., the municipalities, labour unions, etc. It is essential, too, that these deputies be well instructed in Christian social principles and that the people

19 Ibid., 456.
20 Ibid., 504.
themselves be organised under such systems as now obtain in the countries in which Catholic Action is highly developed.22

Canon McKeveitt warns that the State, in promoting the common good, must not supplant the responsibility and private initiative of the people. The right of the citizens to enter into organizations for mutual help and benefit must be respected and favoured in accordance with public welfare. There is a danger that if the State tries to be a universal provider, the self-reliance and sense of responsibility of the citizens will be destroyed through the unlimited growth of State social services.

The State must safeguard private property. The social aspect of property demands that its use be limited, and the State has the right to so limit its use or to take it over in particular instances, but only in accordance with the common good.

Treating the question of public ownership, Canon McKeveitt says:

public ownership must be introduced when private ownership proves unequal to the requirements of the general welfare. Whatever form of ownership may obtain, the State must see that the citizens are properly served . . . . The different categories of goods . . . l that should be nationalised will depend on the circumstances of the country, and also to a large extent on public sentiment.23

The form of government that is best suited to attain the end of the State "will depend on historical circumstances and on the needs of the times."24 Provided the State secures the

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22 Ibid., 480.
23 McKeveitt, The Plan of Society, 45.
24 Ibid., 128.
common good," a particular regime will excel in perfection to the
degree in which it is capable of calling forth the co-operation
of its citizens."25

Fr. Clune states that the purpose of the State is the
Public Good, which consists in "providing all the help that the
individual needs to supplement his own efforts to achieve temporal
well-being."26 The duty of the State is to protect the rights
of the individual and enable him to exercise them. In common with
writers mentioned previously, Fr. Clune declares that the State
should see that as many of its citizens as possible become owners
of property. He says that necessary public works must be under-
taken by the State and suggests that there is much that the State
could do in Ireland, such as Housing, Afforestation, Reclamation,
etc.

THE OMNIGOMPETENT STATE

The vast growth of State control in so many departments
of human life, even in countries with democratic forms of govern-
ment, has engaged the attention of Irish writers in recent times.
The legislation of Irish Governments, especially since the last
war, has been influenced also by this general trend. Certain so-
cial welfare measures proposed by the Government have been sharply
criticised as being out of harmony with rights of the individual

25 Ibid.
26 Clune, Christian Social Reorganisation, 252.
and as an encroachment on his responsibility and independence. We can say that the informed criticism of Catholic writers has been one of the reasons why State control and interference has not gone so far in Ireland as it has in other countries. "The real enemy to Catholic social principles, practices and institutions," wrote Fr. Coyne S.J., is no longer liberalism or laissez-faire or Nazism or Fascism or Marxism . . . . it is bureaucracy."27

In analysing the causes of growing State control, Fr. Aegidius Doolan O.P. finds that this growth is the result of false philosophical ideas. This monistic philosophy teaches that all man's rights are conferred on him by the State, since, "he has no juridical being, no existence at all, apart from the State."28

On the other hand, true philosophy shows us that man has certain "primordial" relations which are opposed to any subjection on his part to an omnicompetent State. There are first of all his relation to God, and secondly his relation to his family, with consequent rights and duties. It is also natural for man to form societies. So the State has a limited field for the exercise of its authority. The end of the State is the temporal common good and this specifies its responsibilities, its rights and its functions.


To bring about, and maintain, that peaceful situation, with every member knowing and keeping its place in the body politic, and every group in harmony with every other, each recognising the other's rights, and fulfilling its own obligations in Social and Distributive Justice - that precisely is the end or object of the State. 

With regard to lower societies, the function of the State is to supplement them, and provide those things which are beyond their power and competence. The virtue of Social Justice must be exercised by all members of society. While emphasising the rights of lesser societies, Fr. Doolan warns that, "[a]n the other hand, to determine what is required for the common good, or to take measures to effect this, is not within the competence of any lower authority than that of the State itself."

Fr. William Conway in analysing the causes of the growth of State power in the fields of industry, business and social services, divides them into two classes, psychological and economic. The misery occasioned by past depressions and mass unemployment has brought a desire for security at all costs. The State is expected to produce results more surely and more quickly than private enterprise. State intervention has a "drug-like" quality which weakens individual initiative and makes for ever greater dependence on the State. Besides these, the complexity of modern economic life, with its dependence both on national and international conditions, demands some degree of central control.

29 Ibid., 11.
30 Ibid., 12.
Fr. Conway says it is very hard to determine precisely how far the common good demands this control should extend. "Broadly speaking we may say that the changing factors of the economic situation has [sic] rendered some measure of central control necessary and, . . . the social teaching of the Church readily accepts this fact."

However, the State does not give any indication of staying within limits in extending its control over the lives of its citizens. "There appears, in fact, to be an inherent law in State intervention by which it tends to gather momentum as it goes along. Each new intervention seems to demand further intervention "to make it work." When economic control reaches the "saturation point" then the Government will embark on a policy of control of public opinion and eventually of elections in order that the men who run the nation's economic machine may retain their important positions.

Professor James Hogan adopts a similar line of reasoning, to show the necessity of vocational organisation. Commenting on nationalisation of industries, he says "the weight of the evidence tends to the conclusion that it is impossible for a state,

31 William Conway, "The Church and State Control," Christus Rex, VI, April, 1952, 118.

32 Ibid.
once it launches out on a programme of collectivism, to stop short of full totalitarianism."

Fr. William Conway shows that this tendency towards universal State control can be restrained by putting into practice the principles of subsidiary function, and giving lesser societies within the State an opportunity to contribute to the common good. The notion of the common good, should not be confined merely to economic well-being. The effects of a particular measure on other spheres of man's life, such as his family, his responsibility, private initiative and liberty must also be taken into consideration.

Fr. William Conway admits that it is often very difficult to say whether or not a particular measure carries State control too far. The Church seeks to form public opinion so that the people may have an appreciation of the principles involved and judge correctly on such matters. "Only when a particular measure manifestly involves an unwarranted extension of State-control will the Church express an opinion on a particular situation."

Fr. Michael Connolly S.J. thinks that there is no alternative in Ireland at present to "extensive State initiative." However, according as private initiative has got sufficiently

33 James Hogan, Modern Democracy, Cork, 1938, 66
34 Conway, "The Church and State Control," Christus Rex, VI, 128.
strong, it is the duty of the State to decrease its share in economic activities.\textsuperscript{35}

According to Fr. Patrick Conway, the functions of the State in economic life are the regulation of industrial conditions to protect the consumers and those employed in industry and also the stimulation of private enterprise while leaving it free from control, especially as regards undertakings of great social importance. "It should at other times go further still, and participate actively in enterprise, by some form of guidance, regulation, control, or ownership. It is this third function of the State that raises the most difficult and controversial question.\textsuperscript{36}"

Before deciding on State intervention we must see if such an extreme measure is necessary. Fr. Patrick Conway points out that there are various degrees of public control. If a lesser degree of public control, such as control by local authorities, or control by semi-independent bodies, or State control without State ownership, is sufficient, then complete State ownership and control should not be resorted to. Nationalisation is to be regarded as the last expedient since "it is contrary to the Catholic ideal of the wide distribution of goods."\textsuperscript{37}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{35} Michael Connolly S.J., "Full Employment in Ireland," \textit{Irish Monthly}, LXXIV, May, 1948, 189.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 7.
\end{itemize}
Before State participation in industry is justified it is also necessary that such participation be very important for the common good and something which is outside the scope of private enterprise. Among the fields where State participation is necessary are national defence, promotion of large-scale essential public works and the control and limitation of private economic power which is detrimental to the public interest. The State may also have the responsibility of developing the nation's material resources. "If the full capacities of the country are not being utilised by private enterprise and there is wide room for development, the State may well give a lead and adopt a bold policy."38

Fr. Patrick Conway states that the State has a duty to see that the fundamental economic needs of the consumer can be satisfied, although this may lead to the abuse of "bureaucratic tyranny." "But I think, nevertheless," he says, "that there is a duty resting on the State of directing the country's economic activity towards the satisfaction of the basic needs of the ordinary consumer."39

The danger of State ownership must be remembered. State ownership is subject to inefficiency, and if it grows it may lead the way to Socialism. State economic organisation makes democrat-
ic control difficult, and endangers the rights of privately owned businesses.

James Hogan fears that public ownership, having encroached on private property may eventually eat it up altogether.

The only safe rule is therefore to treat public ownership as exceptional and to insist on private ownership as the normal and necessary state of ownership. The other danger to be avoided is the inherent tendency of the management of public services to harden along bureaucratic lines, and as a consequence, the tendency of conditions of employment to become fixed to the disadvantage of the lower grade of workers.40

Regarding the actual position in Ireland, Fr. Patrick Conway does not think that the Government has gone too far in the field of economic activity. He thinks that extensive State economic co-operation was necessary in Ireland because of the backward state of the country on achieving independence and also because technical advances have opened up a greater field for State intervention. "The extension of State participation in economic life appears to be a natural development of the capitalism of our time."41

However other writers think that the Irish State is moving too far in certain segments of economic and social life. For example, John Busteed criticises the public transport monopoly for seeking to eliminate competition from private companies.

40 Hogan, Modern Democracy, 86.

thereby putting the ideal of so-called 'efficiency' before the interests of society. 42

The lessening of the powers of local authorities in Ireland is another example, in the opinion of Fr. Pierce Ahearn, of the sacrificing of the common good in the name of efficiency. He thinks that the new system of Government appointed county managers with extensive powers has taken considerably from the prestige and value of the elected county councils. Direct State interference in the running of local affairs, when the local authorities are doing their job in a satisfactory manner, is a violation of the principle of subsidiarity. Before the State may interfere in the activities of local authorities the following principles must be verified:

(1) that what the individual or group of individuals does is in fact injurious to the temporal welfare.
(2) that this injury can be prevented in no other way except by State intervention.
(3) that the extent of State intervention employed is that which is necessary to prevent injury to the common temporal welfare. 43

The necessity of local community organisation as a defence against State encroachment is emphasised also by Professor James Hogan. The strong local community is "indispensable . . .


to the maintenance of free institutions."  

PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

The various Public Health and Welfare schemes proposed by the Government in Ireland since the last World War have given rise to much writing on their merits or demerits from the Catholic standpoint. The adoption of an all-embracing programme in England has given greater point to the discussion.

Bishop Lucey and Canon McKevitt, in discussing the Beveridge Plan, say that a similar plan is not for Ireland, because the conditions in Ireland, where there are many small property-owners, are different from those prevailing in England, but especially because the Plan is based on unnecessary State intervention. They both agree that some plan of Social security is needed, but the primary emphasis must be placed on measures which will remove the causes of poverty and enable people to provide for their own needs and so make them independent of State welfare schemes.

"Work for the out-of-work, a family living wage the national minimum wage, property for the property-less - these and in this order we must make the main objectives of our social and economic planning." 45 When these objectives have been attained, the problem of social security and welfare will have been reduced to propor-

44 James Hogan, Election and Representation, Cork, 1945, 224

tions which will not be too difficult to deal with.

In discussing the Irish Government Proposals for Social Security of 1949, Father E.J. Hegarty took the stand that "comprehensive State Welfare Schemes are opposed generally to moral, legal, social and economic principles, and are utterly discredited by experience and history."46

Such comprehensive welfare schemes interfere with the duty of parents of providing for and caring for their children. The role of the State is subsidiary, and it should see that conditions prevail in which the family can fulfil its functions through its own efforts rather than by direct State help. Father Hegarty criticised these particular proposals fo the Irish Government on the ground that they violated distributive justice, by giving benefits to Trade Union workers, while ignoring many classes of workers, self-employed men, small farmers and traders etc.

One of the great objections to universal State welfare plans is the enormous taxation involved. Such taxation destroys the family wage.

[If employers are morally bound to pay workers enough to provide for their families, the State is equally bound not to extract from the workers' wage-packets so much in taxes as to render the residual net wage insufficient for family maintenance. Yet this is precisely what the full-blown Wel-

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47 Ibid., 321.
fare State does, ignoring the dignity of work and regarding wages as only a basis of taxation.47

The claim of the State to such taxation on the plea that it is only a redistribution of income cannot be justified. Incomes are private property and cannot be distributed as if they were State property. Excessive taxation also prevents wage-earners from becoming owners of property. Compulsory welfare schemes also interfere with the individual’s liberty. "A man able and willing to provide for his own family may not normally be forced into a benefit scheme against his will."48

One of the greatest drawbacks of State Welfare schemes is their bad effect on the character of the recipients. They weaken responsibility and initiative, and promote improvidence and idleness. Fr. Hegarty admits that such schemes may be necessary, but they should only be of a temporary nature.

True social policy must co-operate with true Religion to re-establish a natural form of security through widespread private ownership and moral use of real wealth; economic and political stability to secure adequate employment with proper wages; free vocational associations; and a Public Spirit of self-reliance, initiative and responsibility. Temporary unnatural Welfare measures such as State Schemes of subsidies, housing, hospitalization, and land reclamation may be a practical necessity now, as the earlier Poor Laws were in an age of sweated labour, but they are no less evil in principles. If continued unnecessarily they would only supplant and stifle those very blessings of personal initiative and re-

47 Ibid., 321.
48 Ibid., 326.
ponsibility whose re-establishment is the true goal.49

Frederick C. King pointed out that the Social Security plan was defective because it made no provision for the payment of voluntary contributions in order to obtain increased benefits. It also ignored and rejected any possible co-operation with voluntary or trade union benefit schemes already existing.

Bishop Dignan is of the opinion that there would be no need for social security schemes if the minimum wage was a family wage. However, he does not think that many employers are able to pay a wage sufficient to provide for a family today "when the social needs of men are so many and so expensive."50

I am all in favour of a scheme; and I want it to be national in the sense that virtually all our citizens will be included in it. I want it to be comprehensive in the sense that it will go far in providing all the benefits, monetary and otherwise, that are implied in the term "social security". And I want an autonomous committee to administer it.51

In order to avoid bureaucracy, Social Security schemes should be administered by autonomous bodies or committees, rather than directly by the State. The State should help in financing them, since it benefits through greater security and stability in the lives of its citizens, and greater peace in industry. Besides including the workers it should be universal, in that all

49 Ibid., 338.


51 Ibid., 104.
who wish to enter it may do so. There should be a sliding scale of benefits corresponding with the amount of the weekly contributions. Bishop Dignan advocates generous benefits allowances, but not so great as will encourage idleness and malingering.

THE STATE AND MEDICINE

In 1947 the Irish Government made public a proposed public Health Scheme. This scheme became the target of severe criticism from the Catholic standpoint.

Dr. James McPolin stated that the proposed Health Scheme put the health of the community first, and disregarded the rights of the individual person. Medicine is an art which has to deal with human persons, and so it must be guided by ethics and must not disregard the dignity and immortal destiny of the person. Health, which is the object of medicine is only a means to an end and must be subordinated to higher interests. Dr. McPolin criticised the scheme for its disregard of the principles of natural law involved and for its treatment of public health in a materialistic way. The authority of parents is usurped when public health officials can enter a home to examine children against the wishes of the parents, when the common good does not demand it. Professional secrecy is violated when doctors are required to hand in records of the condition of their patient's health to the public authorities. Dr. McPolin regarded the question of professional secrecy as the most important principle involved.

"Destroy the traditional notion of professional secrecy and the
State can take possession of the body and mind of the citizen."52 He thought that the whole plan weakened "the independence of the medical profession and the family and the personal self-reliance of the citizen."53

Alfred T. Byrne objected to the scheme because of its abolition of the principles of free choice of doctor on the part of the patient. The private independent doctor would have his practice taken away from him because of a free government service, and this involves the confiscation of "private property" without just reason and without compensation.

A new Irish Government introduced a Bill for a "Mother and Child Service" in 1949, which would give medical and nursing care free of charge to all mothers in respect of motherhood and for infants.

This scheme became the object of intense discussion and received very adverse criticism from Catholic writers. The Irish doctors were among the most out-spoken opponents of the "Mother and Child Service" as proposed by the Government.

The Irish bishops were also opposed to the scheme on moral grounds. The chief feature to which they objected was the proposal to make the service universally free.

52 James McPolin, "Health Services, Modernism, the Medical Profession and the State," Christus Rex, October, 1948, 28.
53 Ibid., 29.
The doctors and the bishops alike maintained that it was wrong to use the taxes of the poor to provide free medical attention for the well-to-do, and that some form of means test should be used to ensure that public money was spent only for the benefit of those really needing it. Those who could make provision for their own children should not be deprived of their responsibilities. 54

Discussions between the Hierarchy and the Minister of Health did not result in a satisfactory solution of the difficulties, as the Minister wanted a universally free scheme and would not change on this point. In a letter of April 4th, 1951, to the Prime Minister, from the Catholic Hierarchy, it was stated:

The Archbishops and Bishops desire to express once again approval of a sane and legitimate Health Service, which will properly safeguard the health of mothers and children. The Hierarchy cannot approve of any scheme which, in its general tendency, must foster undue control by the State in a sphere so delicately and so intimately concerned with morals as that which deals with gynaecology or obstetrics and with the relations between doctor and patient. Neither can the Bishops approve of any scheme which must have for practical result the undue lessening of the proper initiative of individuals and the undermining of self-reliance. 55

The letter then went on to discuss in detail the different proposals in the scheme to which the Bishops objected. This condemnation resulted in the withdrawal of the scheme by the Government.


55 Ibid., 308.

56 Ibid.

"Firstly, in this particular scheme the State arrogates to itself a function and control, on a nation-wide basis, in respect of education, more especially in the very intimate
The proposal to eliminate any Means Test in this scheme, making its benefits available for all no matter what their income, was criticised by many writers. Fr. Coyne S.J. stated that the citizen has a right to essential commodities and services, if he is in need of them and is unable to pay for them, through no fault of his own. But the State has no right to use public money to give commodities and services free to those who don't need them or who are able to pay for them without great difficulty.

matters of chastity, individual and conjugal. The Bishops have noted with satisfaction the statement of the Minister of Health that he is willing to amend the scheme in this particular. It is the principle that must be amended, and it is the principle which must be set forth correctly, in a legally binding manner and in an enactment of the Oireachtas. The National Parliament of Ireland. The Bishops believe that this result cannot be achieved except by the amendment of the relevant sections of the Health Act 1947.

Secondly, in this particular scheme, the State arrogates to itself a function and control, in a nation-wide basis, in respect of health services, which properly ought to be, and actually can be, efficiently secured, for the vast majority of the citizens, by individual initiative and by lawful associations.

Thirdly, in this particular scheme the State must enter unduly, and very intimately, into the life of patients, both parents and children, and of doctors.

Fourthly, to implement this particular scheme the State must levy a heavy tax on the whole community, by direct or indirect methods, independently of the necessity or desire of the citizens to use the facilities provided.

Fifthly, in implementing this particular scheme by taxation, direct or indirect, the State will in practice morally compel the citizens to avail themselves of the services provided.

Sixthly, this particular scheme when enacted on a nation-wide basis, must succeed in damaging seriously the self-reliance of parents, whose family wage or income would allow them duly to provide of themselves medical treatment for their dependents.

Seventhly, in implementing this particular scheme, the State must have recourse, in great part, to ministerial regulations, as distinct from legislative enactments of the Oireachtas.
State taxation must be kept within the limits dictated by the common good. "We cannot accept as true the proposition that the State has a moral right to take away property of one citizen in order to give arbitrarily some free service to another citizen or even to all other citizens." 57

In a recent article Bishop Lucey examines the whole question of Means Tests. 58 He comes to the conclusion that Means Tests, though not desirable in themselves are nevertheless necessary. The ideal is that all should be able to provide for their wants out of their own resources. However at present many would not be able to meet the expenses of serious illnesses, childbirth or hospital care directly unless they provided for such expenses by saving or through some form of insurance.

The duty of the State towards this latter class of citizens is to see that there is a suitable insurance scheme available for them and to encourage them - e.g. by paying part of the contribution - to join it. Only when one's wage or income is not at the "saving" level, or when others would suffer in the event of non-insurance should insurance of this kind be compulsory. Otherwise the insurance should be on a voluntary basis - the man who could insure and doesn't has


"A Means Test may be defined as a test or examination, carried out by public authority, of the means, property, or income an individual and his family are possessed of here and now; the standard of which varies upwards from the subsistence level; and the purpose of which is to find out who qualify for free social services on the score of inability to pay." (212)
only himself to blame if he comes to be in want.59

Such social insurance will eliminate the need of a Means Test for the majority of people in the lower-income group. The citizens who participate in it are exercising the right and duty they have of providing for their needs in so far as they are able. By encouraging and subsidizing such social insurance the State is fulfilling its function of aiding its citizens to do what they would find it extremely difficult to do alone.

However there are also those who are unable even to avail of such an insurance scheme, through no fault of their own. They also have a claim on the community, and the State has a duty to come to their aid. Such aid must be given only to the deserving, and it is here that the question of a Means Test arises. "The case for a means test rests on the argument that there is no other way, as things now are, of at once relieving the really deserving by means of public assistance and at the same time not opening the door wide to general thriftlessness and irresponsibility."60 Bishop Lucey adds also that Means Tests should be attached only to schemes, which can also be availed of through social insurance.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the State is the temporal common good

59 Ibid., 218.

60 Ibid.,
of its citizens. The common good consists in those benefits and services in the temporal order which are necessary or useful for the physical, intellectual and moral welfare of men but which are beyond their power to attain by their own individual efforts. The State in pursuing this aim must not take away independence and responsibility from its citizens. It must promote a condition of affairs in which individuals are able and willing to provide for most of their needs through their own efforts. Men have the right to form societies and associations so as to benefit by mutual help and co-operation. The State must not absorb such lesser societies, if their aims are lawful, but allow them to function so that they may contribute their share to the common good. The role of the State is to co-ordinate the activities of these lesser groups and see that they do not act contrary to public welfare. The State must protect and preserve the family with all its rights.

Irish writers in the earlier period stress the duties of the State. The state must step in and curb the power of individualist capitalists and ensure that they treat their workers justly. They look to the State to defend the rights of the poor and the workers. However, the totalitarianism of the Socialists is vigorously condemned. The State must preserve private property but control its use.

Of late years due to the growth of State power in many European countries and the tendency in Ireland to follow suit, Irish writers have been concerned about the danger of the State
overstepping due limits in economic and social life. Although the work of social reform is necessary, the State should not make itself responsible for supplying almost all the needs of the individual. The freedom and responsibility of the individual have to be preserved. Irish writers in recent years have been concerned to assert the rights of the individual against the growing power of the State. They take the stand that the ideal situation is where the individual can provide for his needs by his own efforts and with the help of lesser societies within the State. The State must see that this ideal situation is realised as far as is possible. However, there are also cases where State intervention is necessary, wherever it is demanded by the common good. In modern times the danger is that the State may go too far in this respect. The State should not try to do what can be done satisfactorily by lesser societies within the State. Irish writers stress the principle of subsidiarity and the obligations of social justice.

Regarding the nationalisation of industries in Ireland, Catholic writers seem to be of the opinion that the State has not gone beyond what the public good demanded. The matter of social services has provoked much controversy and Government policy and plans for social and health services have been vigorously criticised. Irish Catholic writers have certainly not failed in their duty of proclaiming the Catholic social principles involved and showing how far short of them these State sponsored schemes fall. Such criticism has had a powerful influence on public opinion,
and has helped to bring Government social planning more in line with Catholic teaching. Irish writers are not totally opposed to State aid or a certain measure of State control for social services. Such State aid or control must not go beyond what is necessary and must be beneficial to the community. Within these limits the State has a large field of responsibility. We may expect that in the future Irish writers will contribute greatly to our knowledge of the responsibility and duty of the State in the matter of social services.
CHAPTER X

THE RURAL PROBLEM

The desertion of the countryside and the migration of its people to the cities and abroad has long been considered one of Ireland's major social problems by Irish writers. Even in late years there has been a continual decline in the rural population while the population of the towns and cities has been increasing. As Fr. Cahill S.J. stated over twenty years ago, "at present nothing is more urgently needed in Ireland than to stabilise and increase the rural population."¹

The farmer who owns his farm has that real security and independence which is denied to the city wage-earner. This security is the foundation on which families can best be supported and raised. The farmers of Ireland are in the fortunate position of being, for the most part, owners of their farms. Fr. Cahill points out that many of the difficulties faced by the family in the city, especially the large family, are absent in the country.

Besides, as a rule it is only in the country that the family is attached to a particular locality and a hereditary home.

It is this stable rural population whose interests and traditions are intimately associated with the very soil of their country, that form the core and strength of a nation. It is from them that the most vigorous type of citizen comes, and among them that the best fruits of true patriotism are to be found.²

Canon McKevitt says that the country cannot be neglected while considering only the problems and needs of the cities. The cities depend on the country for the means of sustenance. The cities draw a great part of their population from the country. In modern times city life and city culture have been emphasised and extolled as the ideal to be aimed at by all. But agriculture provides a stable way of life that is absent from the city. Working on the land develops endurance, patience, self-reliance and initiative in a high degree. "Civilisation and life can flourish without towns; without a rural foundation the megalopolis must be short-lived."³

In a recent article on the rural family, Fr. H. Murphy emphasises the advantages of the rural environment. In the city husband and wife tend to be separated for a great deal of the time and tend to have separate interests. In the country, there is a close bond between husband and wife in the working of the farm. Children are welcomed in the rural family. "Rural conditions are more favourable than urban in regard to the education

³ McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 39.
of the children." There is a deeper community life than in the city.

The causes of rural decline have been examined by many Irish writers. However, as yet, no extensive studies of these causes have appeared.

Writing in 1930, Fr. Cahill S.J. said that the root causes of emigration and urbanisation were economic. Among these he placed excessive taxation, an unsuitable financial system, failure to cultivate the land by the large landowners and insufficient protection for home agricultural production. He listed the following as subsidiary causes:

- an entirely unsuitable educational system;
- the increasing dreariness of rural life, which is intensified by the exodus of the younger generation;
- the absence of laws needed to stabilise the agricultural population;
- the lowering prestige of manual labour;
- the prevailing restlessness and craving for excitement and change;
- the inducements to emigration held out by relatives already in exile;
- the complete absence of Catholic rural organisation such as now exists in most of the Catholic countries of Continental Europe.

In more recent times, Fr. Felim O'Briain O.F.M. has stated that "there can be little doubt that the main cause of emigration, of the low marriage rate and late marriages is economic."

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Fr. O'Briain points out that in Ireland the general cost of living has advanced 200 per cent between 1914 and 1947, while agricultural prices have advanced in the same period by only 100 per cent. The farmers have been getting increased prices in recent years. "While his [the farmer's] share of the national income in 1938 was only 25.5 per cent., it had advanced to 35.2 per cent in 1944, a share that is still inadequate for a class that make up 48 per cent of the population."

Fr. O'Briain after examining the statistics says that the national income in Ireland is not fairly distributed. The farmer "still receives glaringly less than his due proportion of the total income, and is a victim of social injustice." The inefficiency of Irish farming must also be blamed for the low production and consequent low income of the farmer. Middlemen also take most of the price paid by the consumer.

James Hogan did not think that the cause of rural decline was purely economic, in the sense that increased production, and better standard of living would keep the people on the land. "This point of view tends, in my opinion, to simplify the problem too much." The real problem is the low marriage rate and this

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will not be solved until "the surplus of our young people from the country-side can be provided with opportunities and openings to make a living elsewhere." Industry must be developed which will provide a living for these young people. Besides this, better economic conditions on the farm are needed.

In analysing the causes of rural depopulation, Canon McKevitt comes to the conclusion that the cause of the desertion of the land is not primarily economic. A rural revival in Ireland must seek first to restore an appreciation of the values of rural life. Modern civilisation stresses and exalts city life, and sets it up as the standard for judging everything else.

The march of industrialism has been so rapid, its achievements so gigantic, that the city way of life has impressed the popular imagination and the country-man despises the tradition in which he was reared. He looks to the city and apes town ways and when an opening appears, he deserts the fields for the factory.11

The countryman has lost respect for his way of life, and his children are not encouraged to follow it. This attitude has been strengthened by the failure of the country to keep up with the material progress of the cities.12

The difficult task before us is the architecting of a way of

10 Ibid., 463.
life satisfying for all who dwell in the country, and using as a support all the amenities which progress has put at our disposal without allowing these to submerge all that is vital in the rural community. If this analysis is correct, rural revival must have its beginning in a changed outlook.13

The rural problem has long occupied the attention of Father J.M. Hayes. He has translated his ideas into action by founding the organisation of Muintir na Tire, which at present is functioning successfully in over three hundred parishes in rural Ireland.

Fr. Hayes believes that revival of the community spirit on the basis of the parish unit is the way to strengthen rural life and keep the people on the land.

When each of us becomes conscious of his unity with his parishioners, not only by the Communion of Saints on the supernatural level, but the mutual aid of farmers, labourers, craftsmen, business people, professional people and all others in the secular sphere, then we shall have a true community. Centralisation, often accepted as nationhood, breeds a bad type of individualism because it destroys all true social life in a unit smaller than the whole country.14

The tendency today is to stress rights and neglect duties. Individuals have a duty to the community in which they are a part. Individuals have a duty to respect and work for the common good. "Duties come first and this is the only way in which rights will be respected and guaranteed."15

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15 Ibid., 33
Fr. Hayes points out that economic betterment for the country folk is not enough.

If you want to retain freedom, if you want to retain humanity, if you want to retain happiness, if you want to retain your Christian heritage, you must build on something more than mere materialism and you must build on all classes united by the living charity of Christ.

It is the neglect of the local community by its members that has brought such a great increase in the power of the State. If the members of the community tried to solve their own problems through mutual help and co-operation, the Government would not be forced to direct action to help that community.

The strong local community can if organised restore prestige and independence to the farmers and rural workers. It can also help them to advance in the knowledge and practice of agricultural science and help them to raise their standard of living.

Canon McKevitt says that rural organisations are required to unite and help the farmers. Education is also necessary in order to bring about a changed outlook on the value, the dignity and the importance of the rural way of life.

Other writers such as Fr. Felim O'Brien, stress the need for increased production by the farmers, since it is only through increased production that their income can be substantially increased.

16 John M. Hayes, "Muintir na Tire," Fireside Chat, Muintir na Tire Rural Week Record 1947, Tipperary, 45.
Farmers should organise co-operative marketing and processing of their products and thus eliminate the need for middle-men.

SUMMARY

The farming community is of vital importance to the nation. On its prosperity depends the welfare of the entire nation. So factors that tend to discourage life on the land must be combated. The farmer must be treated justly in the distribution of the national income.

The rural community should have a vigour and life of its own, fostered by mutual help and the practice of Christian charity by its members. The State must respect this independence and help the community without absorbing it.
CHAPTER XI

INDUSTRY COUNCILS

Since the appearance of the Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno, Irish writers have been discussing the question of vocational organisation, or, as it is better known in America, the Industry Council Plan.

Fr. Cahill S.J. declared that the formation of trade unions is not sufficient. Craft organisations which will include all those engaged in a particular craft of industry are also necessary. These will represent the common interests of the industry before the public authorities and will help to promote union and harmony between the workers and employers.

Fr. Edward Coyne S.J. was among the first to write on Industry Councils. He looked to the vocational organisation of society as the only solution of the social problem. Capitalism has been abused but that does not mean that the techniques of Capitalism are wrong and must be rejected. He did not think that monetary reform was the answer either.

Our present troubles do not arise from any strictly economic flaw and cannot therefore be solved by any readjustment of economic machinery -- such as tariffs, credit, banking, rationalisation. What is wrong is the social organisation, which is using or misusing the capitalistic techniques of production for anti-social ends; in other words the problem is a sociological, not an economic problem.  

The system of individualistic capitalism has produced a reaction whereby the State is gradually encroaching more and more on the rights and private affairs of its citizens. How to avoid these two excesses, Individualism and Collectivism, is, said Fr. Coyne, "the heart of the sociological problem." The solution proposed by Fr. Heinrich Peach S.J. and developed by what is known as the 'Solidarismus' school is the true solution.

The answer to Communism can only be in the positive application of true social principles to society. The primary aim should be the restoration of the organic structure of society. All the various smaller societies and groups within the State have their own powers of growth and development and their own functions. It is not the business of the State to bring them into existence but rather to establish and maintain proper order between them so that they all contribute towards the common good.

The doctrine of Solidarism, as Fr. Coyne points out, is a whole economic and social doctrine. It teaches that society to

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3 Ibid., 196.

4 Coyne, The Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ, II, 47.
function properly must be made up of a number of smaller societies or organisations each helping to secure the good of its members in a particular sphere and contributing towards the common good. Thus the danger of excessive State control and centralisation is avoided. One of the chief ways to bring about this better organisation of society is through vocational groups. Each group would include all those engaged in a particular trade, profession, or industry, whether workers, managers or employers and would seek the common interests of all.

However, in the opinion of Fr. Coyne, it is not possible to work out a satisfactory plan of vocational organisation and impose it on society in a attempt to solve the social problem at once. Such a reorganisation of society on vocational lines can only come about gradually, it must be a process of growth. As a step in the right direction, Fr. Coyne proposed the setting up of a National Economic Council. This central body would meet once or twice annually and would be composed of delegations from the different branches of agriculture, from different industries such as building, textiles etc., and from other divisions such as Transport, Finance, the Professions etc. "Each delegation, in this case, would represent a definite branch of social and economic life, and be composed of representatives of (i) the community as such, (ii) the employers, and (iii) the workers."\(^5\) Such a council would

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deal with the more technical aspects of economic and social problems and leave the general determination of policy to the political institutions. Thus, the dangers of a powerful and inefficient bureaucracy would be prevented.

Among the spheres of activity which a National Economic Council should be engaged in, Fr. Coyne enumerated "agriculture, planned industrialisation, development of latent resources, transport, social services, labour courts and conciliation machinery and regulated distribution." The Economic Council could also help to solve the problem of the control of prices of essential commodities. Vocational organisation of the farming community was the most urgently needed, both because of its difficulties and its economic importance.

Fr. Clune also stated that in order to heal social disorder it is necessary that society regain its organic form. In the economic sphere, workers and owners and all engaged in industry should be organised on a vocational basis.

This vocational organisation will bring to an end three evils of great magnitude, free competition, excessive bureaucracy, and hostility between employers and employed, by putting in their place fair competition and ordered national economy, handing control over the vocation to those engaged in it (thus reducing the intervention of the central authority), and bringing about peace and harmonious co-operation between

6 Ibid., 303.
capital and labour. 7

Under vocational organisation workers' unions and employers' associations will still exist to protect their respective interests.

A local council will be made up of representatives from employers and from the workers. Taking the organisation of agriculture as an example, Fr. Clune explained:

Such a joint council will be appointed by each local (that is, presumably, parochial) unit of the occupation. Above these there will be county and perhaps provincial councils; and in addition, and above all, there will be national joint councils. All these national councils [of the different occupations, agriculture, industries etc.] will be federated and form a national corporative council. 8

The national corporative council will co-ordinate the activities of the various vocational groups and see that they conform with the common good of all. The organisation of each particular craft or industry should be voluntary and proceed from below rather than be imposed by the State. However, the State must give legal recognition and authority to plan its own economic affairs to each occupation as soon as it is adequately organised. Among the matters subject to the vocational authority should be conditions for entry into its organisation, standards of conduct, education, standardization of products, imposition of labour contracts, "it can fix prices, at least to the extent of showing

7 Clune, Christian Social Reorganization, 450.
8 Ibid., 458.
what the costs of production are and thus indicating what a fair price would be, allowing a reasonable margin for profit." It will prohibit strikes and lock-outs as illegal and set up machinery to settle industrial disputes. It will take over from the Government the administration of the various social welfare schemes and it will offer expert advice to the Government and Legislature on economic measures.

These vocational organisations will not destroy private initiative and profit, rather they will regulate competition and make it fair. The political institution of the State will retain supreme control and the right and duty to interfere in the activities of the of the vocational groups, or industrial councils, in order to protect the common good.

"The great aim of the Catholic social movement," stated Bishop Lucey, "is or --at least should be,-- the setting up of Occupational Associations." Such occupational groups are a remedy for the evils of absolute free competition, the bureaucracy of growing State control, and the hostility between workers and employers. There must be planning of the national economy to avoid over-production and to ensure co-ordination between the different firms in industry and between the different industries. This work

9 Ibid., 463.

of direction and planning is best undertaken by the people who are directly concerned with the industries and not by the State.

Vocational organisation would mean the organisation of all engaged in a particular occupation, industry or profession into a group or union. Each occupational group would consist of a supreme National Council and various branch councils.11 Workers' unions and employers' federations would still exist with exactly the same functions as before, and with the additional function of electing representatives to the vocational councils. Such councils would have power to deal with problems of their respective occupations. The State has the duty of supervising the councils so that their provisions conform with the common good. But State interference should be limited as far as possible, consistent with the smooth running of economic life. The vocational Council should have the power to standardise products and lay down a code of professional conduct for its members, thus eliminating unfair competition.

Secondly, the council should deal with prices to this extent that it will go into the costs its members have to meet and show what is a fair price for its goods, or services in view of these costs. This entails, of course, agreements as to what is a fair rate of profit for the capital invested in the occupation and what is a fair rate of wages for the labour in it.12

Other powers of the occupational council will be -- the

11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., 228.
imposition of collective agreements, ensuring uniform conditions throughout an industry, providing for machinery to settle industrial disputes, social services and various benefit schemes.

Finally, the council will be the official representative of the interests of the occupation before outside bodies, and, in particular, shall possess the right of being consulted by the State whenever any legislation or administrative measures affecting the industry are contemplated.13

The State should not set up a framework of these occupational organisations according to a pre-conceived plan. However, it should encourage and assist its citizens to form such unions. They should be voluntary and be formed spontaneously by the members of the vocation as the opportunity offers. The State must give such associations legal recognition once they have achieved sufficient stature to be representative of the occupation.

Voluntary corporativism of this kind has two great advantages over dictated corporativism. It ensures that the constitution best suited to each occupation will have been hammered out. And secondly, it strengthens the authority of the professional council because members are more inclined to collaborate with a self-imposed system than with one imposed by State decree.14

In order that a vocational organization will produce the fruits it should, it is necessary that the occupational groups have the right spirit of justice and regard for the common good. The ideal is that every working citizen of the country be a mem-

13 Ibid., 230.

ber of one or more occupational guilds or groups. The number of
such groups will depend on the industrial structure of the coun-
try, it will vary from country to country.

Canon McKevitt declares that in order to prevent the
State from overstepping the bounds of its duty and superseding
the rights and responsibilities of individuals and smaller groups,
it is necessary that the organic structure of society be restored.
Planning and direction is necessary to secure order in economic
life but the State is not competent to attend to the details of
this planning.

The corporation, organised within industry, remains the only
alternative to chaos or universal State regimentation. The
corporation is the industry organised to render a social ser-
vice. All those engaged in the industry -- directors, man-
ger, unskilled workers -- are associated on the basis of
common interests.15

Thus the old class hostility between workers and em-
ployers will be eliminated, though each will retain their respec-
tive organisations. Canon McKevitt gives a general summary of the
functions of the corporation or occupational group. Among these
are the setting up of standards for products, a code of behaviour
for participants in the different industries, establishing of min-
imum or maximum prices, enforcing of collective labour agreements,
determining conditions of labour and of entry into a particular
field of industry, craft or profession.

15 McKevitt, The Plan of Society, 185.
The organisation of industry on vocational lines should not be brought about through a plan imposed by the State. It should begin within industry and voluntarily. The duty of the State is to encourage its growth and see that its development is conducive to the general welfare. The number of corporations or occupational unions will depend on the country in question. A classification of the trades, industries and professions in the country is first necessary. "The actual system of organisation suitable to a country can only be found out after careful investigation."16

As as to secure coordination of the different industries, professions, etc., there should be a "federation of all the corporations in a national council of corporations."17 Such a joint body will serve to check activity on the part of a particular industry which is directed by self-interest to the detriment of the general welfare. The State retains supreme power and has the duty of intervening to safeguard its citizens if a particular vocational group fails to respect the common good. The role of the State is to direct and watch over these groups without stifling their initiative and responsibility for their own affairs.

James Hogan says that corporative organisation by which representation in government is based on the occupational rather

16 Ibidl, 186.
17 Ibid.
than the territorial group is to be rejected. If we should accept representation in Government by professions and vocational groups we would commit ourselves to

a type of representative government in which the economic factor will necessarily outweigh all others . . . . To fashion a State which exists primarily as an outcrop of economics is to run the risk of sacrificing personal and corporate rights and liberties for the sake of economic efficiency.

The State is not competent to run all the details of economic life, and if it tried to, freedom would have to be sacrificed. The answer is that the professions and occupations should be organised and should as far as possible govern themselves in regard to the business of their profession and occupation.

It must be remembered that the supreme power in matters economic and political belongs to the State and not to the occupational organisation. In order to retain its freedom, the occupational group should be distinct and separate from political organisation. The chief function of vocational organisation or of industry councils in relation to the State, is, in the opinion of Professor Hogan, in giving advice to the Government in all matters concerning the economic and industrial life of the country.

Occupational or functional organisation prevents the excessive growth of State power and safeguards freedom, since it interposes between the individual and the state a great variety of intermediate and more or less autonomous.

groups. We need have no hesitation, therefore, in invoking state assistance in order to bring these functional groups into existence. Indeed we cannot dispense with its assistance, for as things are no functional society can institute itself spontaneously. It must be constituted by action from above as well as from below. Moreover, even when constituted, it cannot do without some principle of co-ordination and since, in the last analysis, economics is but one function of the national life, the last word properly beon to parliament which stands for the national life as a whole.  

Alfred O'Rahilly advocates functional councils in order to act as a check on bureaucracy, and in order to give expert advice and criticism to the Government. Vocational organisation fosters self-government in the profession or industry and lessens State interference. As regards the setting up of vocational structure in the country, Professor O'Rahilly says:

Our first act . . . should be to pass a general enabling Act encouraging the formation of joint councils and giving them definite but limited powers. But side by side with this we should, I think, make a definite start by setting up a few publicly incorporated Guilds in a few essential industries. We must experiment on a small scale. No amount of paper discussion or scheming will teach us as much as a single working example.]

Father Hayes believes that the vocational organisation of agriculture should be on the basis of the parish unit. On this principle he has built the rural organisation known as Muintir na Tire.

Our ideal is a parish guild and council in every parish, doing what it can itself and seeking State aid when necessary

19 James Hogan, Modern Democracy, Cork, 1938.

20 Alfred O'Rahilly, "Vocational Organisation in the Past," Irish Monthly, LXVI, May, 1938, 301.
Its activities range from good relations to good economics and from good education to good recreation. Our parish parliament is a vocational one based on unity. We want to build up a sense of independence and responsibility. Based on Christian charity, we believe want and fear can be dispelled.

Each parish guild is composed of different sections for farmers, farm-workers, women, business and professional men according to local circumstances, but all are equally members of the guild and subject to the authority of the parish council. The parish guilds of Muinter na Tire are federated into county and provincial groups. Guilds of Muinter na Tire are set up by purely voluntary action by the members of parishes.

In January, 1939, the Irish Government appointed a commission to examine the whole question of vocational organization. The purpose of the commission was to examine and report on:

(a) the practicability of developing functional or vocational organisation in the circumstances of this country.

(b) the means best calculated to promote such development;

(c) the rights and powers which should be conferred and the duties which should be imposed on functional or vocational bodies and, generally, the relations of such bodies to the Oireachtas and to the Government, and

(d) the legislative and administrative measures that would be required.

The Commission issued its lengthy report in November 1943. The report gives a survey of vocational organisation in a number of countries and of existing institutions in Ireland.

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22 Commission on Vocational Organisation: Report, Dublin, 1944.
The final part of the report puts forward proposals for developing vocational organisation in Ireland on the foundation of existing institutions. Regarding these proposals Canon McKeivitt said:

The scheme put forward by the Commission is a plan for the re-organization of society in accordance with Catholic principles. It is not the only possible scheme, but it is one that has been worked out in reasonable detail and after a careful, painstaking examination of the existing structure with all its merits, defects and possibilities of improvement.

Since the appearance of this Report there has been comparatively little written by Irish writers on vocational organisation or industry councils. Succeeding Irish Governments have not been very receptive of the recommendations of the Commission, and, with some exceptions, have ignored them.

Some of the writers dealt with above would have vocational organisation a purely voluntary movement arising within the industry or profession itself, although they say that the State should facilitate and encourage the formation of such vocational groups. Others say that the initiative must come from the State. All agree that in their operation vocational groups should not be the instruments of the State in carrying out its political program. They must have a measure of independence while leaving supreme power to the State, which has the duty of regulating and co-ordinating the activities of vocational groups in accordance with public welfare.

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CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Irish writers have treated Catholic social principles in a comprehensive manner. They have been guided by and have closely followed the teaching of the Church. It is evident that the social Encyclicals have formed for them the basis of any discussion of social problems. At the same time, in the application and development of Catholic social teaching, in debatable questions where the Church has not propounded a definite solution, Irish writers have advanced different opinions and conclusions. This is clear in such questions as the obligation to join a union, compulsory arbitration, the rural problem etc.

The development of Irish writing on Catholic social teaching has been influenced by past conditions and events in Ireland. For the greater part of the nineteenth century the problem for the Irish people was one of mere survival. Some relief came at the turn of the century when the land question was solved through political agitation resulting in Government action.

The appearance of the Encyclical Rerum Novarum served to arouse a greater interest in the social question among Irish writers. However, the evils that are treated in the Encyclical were not so widespread in Ireland as in other countries, since industry

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in Ireland at the end of the 19th century was practically non-existent. We find that the doctrines of the Socialists were much discussed by Irish writers at this time. There were few Socialists in Ireland, but there was a strong Socialist movement in England and since Ireland was then under British rule, Irish writers were concerned about the dangers of Socialism.

Although small in number, Irish industrialists were not blameless in their treatment of their employees. The conflict between labour and capital came to a head in Dublin in the Great Strike 1913-1914. This event resulted in more attention being paid to labour problems by Irish writers. They supported the trade union movement, and proclaimed the rights and duties of the workers, and the rights and duties of the owners of capital.

Even though the vast majority of the population of Ireland worked on the land, for many years little attention was paid to rural problems by Irish writers. It seems that the focus was taken off the land after the passing of the Land Acts. However, the work of Father Hayes in founding the rural organisation, Muintir na Tire,\(^1\) in 1937, has encouraged more writing on rural problems and their solution in the light of Catholic teaching.

The Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, turned the attention of Irish writers to vocational organisation or the formation of

\(^1\) "Muintir na Tire is an Association for the promotion of the true welfare, spiritual, cultural and material, of Ireland, and, in particular, of its rural people, through the app-
Industry Councils. The setting up of the Government Commission on Vocational Organisation was one result of the great interest taken in Ireland in Industry Councils or occupational organisation according to Christian principles, in the years before the last war.

In more recent times the problem of growing State control in the economic and social fields has occupied the attention of Irish writers. They are concerned lest the State should interfere with the rights of individuals and lesser societies, in its efforts to promote the material welfare of its citizens. Irish Catholic writers have succeeded in drawing attention to these dangers, and have helped to form a healthy public opinion regarding the bad effects of excessive State control.

We can say that there is no specific school as such, of Irish writers on Catholic social principles. Rather, there are individual writers, each bringing his own viewpoint to bear on the social problems in question. The number of books published in Ireland on Catholic social teaching, has not been large. The market for such books, especially those dealing with Irish conditions, is small in Ireland, and this factor may have discouraged Irish writers from producing them. However many fine articles on social principles and action have been and are being written. The appearance of a new periodical, *Christus Rex*, in 1947, devoted to a study.
of social matters, in the light of Catholic teaching, proves that Irishmen are writing more than ever on the social question.

There is a strong Catholic faith and tradition in Ireland and Communism has had little influence except among a tiny group. Irish labour has rejected Communism. However, the Irish labour movement in the past has not been guided and formed by Catholic social teaching to the extent that we would expect in a thoroughly Catholic country. The workers education movement which has been making such progress, can be expected to remedy this defect. It is to be hoped that from these ranks, writers well acquainted with actual economic conditions will appear. A lot of writing thus far has been more on the academic level. There is need of more writing which examines the existing social situation in Ireland, and endeavours to work out the solution of present social evils and problems through the application of Catholic social principles.

Irish writing on social matter is impregnated with the teaching of the social Encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius XI. But up to the present, the pronouncements of Pius XII seem to have been overlooked to a certain extent by Irish writers.

The Catholic social movement in Ireland is in a flourishing state at present and promises well for the future. It is to be hoped that Irish writers will continue to write and to produce many more studies dealing with contemporary economic and social problems, and their solution in the light of Catholic social prin-
principal, and thus add to and deepen our knowledge of Catholic social teaching.
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II. SECONDARY SOURCES

APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON SOME IRISH WRITERS ON

CATHOLIC SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

Cahill, Rev. E.J., S.J., Died in 1941. For a time was Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Social Science at the Jesuit Major Seminary at Milltown Park, Dublin. Founded An Rioghaícthe League of the Kingship of Christ, in 1926, for the promotion of knowledge of Catholic teaching, by lectures and discussions etc. Wrote The Framework of a Christian State, which is in great part a compilation of articles contributed by him to the Irish Monthly and the Irish Ecclesiastical Record.

Clune, Rev. George, Author of Christian Social Reorganization (1940), and The Medieval Gild System (1943).

Coyne, Rev. E.J., S.J., Has written many articles on Catholic social teaching. Active in Rural Co-operative Movement. Was a member of the Government Commission on Vocational Organization. At present is doing much to further workers' education in Dublin.

Cronin, Right Rev. Monsignor Michael, D.D. Was Professor of Ethics and Politics at University College, Dublin. Wrote The Science of Ethics, which has been reprinted a number of times.


Hogan, James, D. Litt. Professor of History at University College, Cork. Author of Modern Democracy (1938), Election and Representation (1945).


Lucey, Most Rev. Cornelius, D.D., D.Ph. Formerly Professor of Ethics at Maynooth Seminary. Was consecrated Coadjutor Bishop of Cork in 1951. Contributor of many articles on social matters to the Irish Ecclesiastical Record and other reviews. Was co-editor with Canon McKevitt of the journal Christus Rex from its foundation in 1947 until 1950.

McKevitt, Peter, D.Ph., Was Professor of Sociology and Catholic Action at Maynooth Seminary until 1953. Has written many articles on Sociology and Catholic social teaching. Was co-editor of Christus Rex with Bishop Lucey until 1950, After the elevation of Most Rev. Dr. Lucey to the Episcopate remained editor of Christus Rex until 1953 when he was succeeded by Father Jeremiah Newman. Dr. Newman also succeeded Canon McKevitt as Professor of Sociology and Catholic Action at Maynooth.

O'Rahilly, Alfred, M.A., D.Sc., B.Ph., D.Litt. Was the first lecturer in Sociology in University College, Cork. Since 1943 he has been President of University College, Cork. Has written Money (1941), Aquinas versus Marx (1943), Social Principles (1943), Moral Principles (1943). Has done a great deal to further adult education courses for workers and employers, with special regard to Catholic social teaching. Was a member of the Government Commission of Vocational Organization.
APPENDIX II

THE CHRISTUS REX SOCIETY

"Christus Rex is a Society for Irish diocesan priests desirous of promoting, by study and action the Christian reconstruction of the Social Order according to the principles of the Social Encyclicals.

Its objects are to stimulate and promote among the Irish clergy the study of the Church's social teaching, and to encourage and assist them in all forms of social action.

It was founded by a group of priests ordained in 1941 who desired to set up some machinery to ensure their own co-operation in social work and who felt that an organisation for priest social workers would supply a general need and have a universal appeal. After four years of quiet building-up, the foundations were secure enough to support an unrestricted membership and to bear the weight of a nationwide effort and programme.

It was approved by their Lordships the Bishops of Ireland in October, 1945, as a society for social action among Irish diocesan priests, and was empowered by them to hold Annual Summer Schools of Social Study for priests and to publish a Journal of Sociology.

Membership of the Society is open to any Irish diocesan priest on the sole condition of paying the annual subscription 5/- and being prepared to further, according to his opportunity, the aims of the Society.

While designed primarily to serve the needs of the diocesan clergy of Ireland, Christus Rex seeks the co-operation of all priests labouring in the social apostolate and will strive in its publications and in its programme to cater for the interests of all priest social workers. Its Summer Schools of Social Study for priests, held annually, are open to all priests, and lectures are given by distinguished priest-sociologists, both diocesan and religious.

OBJECTS OF CHRISTUS REX

Subject always to the guidance and obedient to the directions of the Hierarchy:

To organise the priests of Ireland in one nation-wide society for social reform in which the strength of ordered members may assist the weakness
of single workers; . . . in which the experience and knowledge of the many may supplement the deficiencies of the individual . . . in which the unity of a common plan and concerted effort may ensure that no reforming energy is dissipated.

To inform priests upon social problems by pooling the experience and collating the knowledge of experienced social workers by compiling factual data upon social conditions, by instituting surveys of social problems and by placing this knowledge at the disposal of members through its publications and by correspondence. Christus Rex hopes thus to foster among the clergy an enlightened awareness of social problems and an informed grasp of the principles of true reform.

To co-ordinate the social study and action of Irish priests by planned study and reading oriented towards the topical themes of its Social Study weeks, at which practical measures of action will be elaborated.

To propagate among the clergy and through them among the laity, Catholic social principles as promulgated in the Social Encyclicals, to work out the sound interpretation of these principles in the light of modern developments, and to strive for their wise application to actual problems. It hopes thus to provide authoritative guidance for those responsible for or anxious to work for social welfare.

To enlighten Irish public opinion on social questions and to form a public conscience sensitive to social evils, alive to civic responsibilities, and ardent for social justice.

**METHODS OF CHRISTUS REX**

Information Bureau: The Central Executive Committee, functioning as an Information Bureau, will collect information upon social questions, based on the experience of seasoned social workers, on social surveys carried out by local units, on the conclusions arrived at by study groups and will pass on such information in response to queries from members. Such factual information will give to its publications and to its Study Weeks the salutary atmosphere of practical knowledge and preserve them from mere academic theorising.

Annual General Meetings of Christus Rex will bring together once each year priest members from every Irish diocese, to exchange views and compare experiences, to seek solution of every-day problems and to work out a common policy and programme of social action by priests in and through the society.

Diocesan and Deanery Groups, which Christus Rex hopes progressively to promote and towards the growth of which diocesan representatives will
contribute wherever possible, will bring co-diocesan priests together in regular meetings to investigate local problems in the light of Catholic principles and to seek effective remedies and plan for common action.

Congresses of Social Study for priests will invite all Irish priests, both diocesan and religious, together for one week each year, to hear lectures and join in discussions dealing with contemporary social questions and seeking to interpret and to apply the Papal directives to modern conditions and to actual problems, local and national. Previous study and reading will be planned so that priests may bring to bear on the deliberations an informed grasp of the questions at issue. Practical experience of priest social workers will ground discussions on the plane of actuality. The deliberations will aim at evolving practical measures towards the solution of our social problems. With the collaboration of the Press, public attention will be focussed on the deliberations so that through them Catholic social teaching may be widely diffused and true canons of social reform reliably promulgated.

Christus Rex Journal. The Christus Rex Journal of Sociology, published quarterly will provide authoritative exposition of Catholic social principles, will work out their application to contemporary situations and provide inspiration and sure guidance to social-reform workers, clerical and lay.

The Christus Rex Journal is devoted exclusively to matters of Catholic sociological interest. It will endeavour to formulate the Catholic attitude and elaborate the Catholic response to the problems, political, social and economic, which confront the Church everywhere in the post-war world. Its articles will cover the whole range of Catholic social teaching and will aim at soundly interpreting the directives of the Social Encyclicals, and working out their applications to the actual problems of modern society. It will strive thus to provide reliable direction for social workers both clerical and lay. It will devote special attention to Irish conditions and problems, but its outlook will be by no means insular. In matter and in manner it is designed to appeal to Catholic social workers throughout English-speaking lands. It has something of unique interest and value to offer to all Catholic social workers, to priests, both religious and diocesan and to lay Catholic Actionists, to Catholic Trades Unionists and Trades Union leaders, to employers and workers, to welfare officers, economists, journalists, politicians, in Ireland and in English-speaking countries."

APPENDIX III

SUMMARY OF ALFRED O’RAHILLY’S VIEWS ON MONEY

"The Evolution of Money"

(1) To avoid the inconveniences of barter, chattel-money was introduced. That is, one special commodity, generally acceptable, was agreed upon for purposes of exchange, e.g. pieces of metal stamped and certified by the political authority. So long as family groups or town-areas were largely self-contained for most necessities, monetary transactions were of minor importance. With the development of transport and the growth of specialisation in production, men became much more interdependent; the volume and circulation of money became a matter of life and death for the community. Dependence on the vagaries of any one commodity for the interchange of goods and services became more and more difficult, and is now generally abandoned.

Modern Money

(2) Money to-day is simply a claim on the community, which one individual can transfer to another. Though it may be recorded on paper or metal, it is essentially a moral claim, something non-physical, something non-made. Given the complexity and specialisation of contemporary life, money is nowadays an indispensable means for evoking and transferring goods and services. It is the duty of the State to provide this money, or to see that it is provided, and to regulate its distribution. In view of the socially necessary function performed nowadays by money, an individual has no moral right to hoard it for he is thereby disturbing the economic life of the community.

1 Alfred O’Rahilly, Money, Cork, 1941, iii-xxviii.

[The matter in this Appendix is taken directly from Money, by Alfred O’Rahilly, where it forms the "Summary" given on pages iii-xxviii inclusive. The footnotes which follow also form part of this summary by Dr. O’Rahilly. Only those footnotes, which are directly concerned with explaining the text of the "Summary," are given here.]

2 This does not mean that any definite individual is morally or legally the debtor of the money-holder. It means that, given the modern specialisation on services and "wages", money is an indispensable instrument for economic and social life, so that inevitably there are always people willing and anxious to accept money-claims in return for goods and services, they
Loan-Banks

(3) The primary function of a bank is to lend to borrowers money which has been subscribed by the bank-owners or collected from the public. This is exemplified by pawnbrokers, investment-trusts, savings-banks, and credit-unions; but it is a very minor function of the institutions we know as trading or commercial banks. The worker and small farmer are often in temporary need of money to tide over difficulties or to purchase supplies. Formerly, municipalities and charitable associations ran such loan-banks; there is need of their revival and also of cooperative credit-unions. Savings-banks also provide funds, though their emphasis is on encouraging thrift in the lenders; these funds should be increased by propaganda and should be available e.g. for municipal housing.

Giro-Banks

(4) The second function of banking is the transfer of claims from one owner to another by book-entry, which is much more convenient than delivery of money by hand. This is exemplified by the treasurer of a society or of a public institution and also by our commercial banks; a cheque is merely an instruction to the banker to alter his books-entries, crediting the drawer and debiting the drawer. But unlike the former giro-banks of Venice, Amsterdam and Hamburg, the present-day commercial banks do not have, behind their book-entries, a hundred per cent store of money issued by the State; they themselves issue or create about ninety percent of the money recorded in their books.

Credit-Banks

(5) The predominant, or at least the characteristic, function of modern banks is the issue and cancellation of money. Nowadays bank-credit is to all intents and purposes money; cheques have come largely to replace notes and coins. Bank-directors continue trying to make us believe that they are merely the trustees of loan-banks, which give their customers the facility of transferring ownership of 'deposited money' by giro or book-entry. The statistics however show clearly that the banks themselves have created nine-tenths of this money. The Law regards the banker as the creditor of the man who has a bank-balance, i.e. as having issued a promise to pay State-money to his customers. But even this is not an accurate up-to-date description of the social and economic reality; the bankers' promises-to-pay function to-day as money, they constitute much the more important part of our monetary supply.

accept money because they know that they in their turn can transfer it for other goods and services. Money, in its present-day content, is thus a claim that is continually being transferred and trafficked.
Social Control

(6) Many eminent economists, especially in America, have proposed that the banks should be deprived of this usurped, or at least appropriated, power of manufacturing and cancelling money; that only loan-banks and giro-banks should be permitted. The plan does not appear to be immediately feasible. What is essential however is a strict measure of social control over this public function of the banks. This should include inspection of the banks, provision for giving the public much more detailed information than is at present supplied, control of the charges (called "interest") made by the banks for their services, fixation of the minimum reserves they must lodge in the State Reserve Bank, a qualitative supervision of their advances (such as prevails in wartime England), regulation of their foreign investments.

The State Reserve Bank

(7) The appropriate organ for effecting this control is a State Reserve Bank. The idea that such a central institution should be even partially owned or controlled by private individuals — especially by self-interested individuals such as bankers — is an out-of-date hang-over from the days of metallic money and loan-banks before it was realised that commercial banks create and destroy money. It does not follow that the Reserve Bank should be completely subservient to the political party in power; it can be subject, as in Sweden, to a parliamentary committee elected by proportional representation; it can be managed as are other public utilities. It is called a Reserve Bank because it holds and controls the cash-reserves of the trading banks. In addition to the powers already indicated, the National Reserve Bank should have the power of making temporary or long-term advances to the Government or to Public Utility Corporations. It is only in this way that a long-term social policy can be implemented and that the State can avoid subjection to financiers.

Savings

(8) The present practice of the commercial banks in paying "interest" for time-deposits (i.e. Deposit accounts) cannot be justified socially, for it is tantamount to inducing people to hold their money idle. As noted under (2), such hoarding is injurious to the community. While Gesell's proposal to penalise money-holders for not using their money not be practicable, there is at least an unanswerable case against paying people for not using their money. Savers must assume the risk and responsibility incidental to business ownership.

Nation

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3 This view of time-deposits is contrary to the usual view; the point is argued in the text pp. 279-309 [The text referred to is Money, by Alfred O'Rahilly, from which this "Summary" is taken] So long as (1) money was
National Currency

(9) A community, with its particular economic structure and its own social ideals, cannot pursue an autonomous social policy unless it has control of its own monetary system. A State which, by an open or disguised adoption of an alien currency, allows another State automatically to transmit to it the results of deflation and inflation, is neglecting its responsibility and its duty to its own citizens.

The Rate of Exchange

(10) In the present development of international finance-capitalism, the State must intervene to protect the rate of exchange against fluctuations caused by speculation and panic. It can do this either (a) by actively participating in the market and stabilising the rate or (b) by fixing from time to time the value of the currency in terms of some external large-scale currency (e.g. sterling).

Exchange-Control

(11) If there is an excessive tendency to export goods on credit, i.e. with the object of importing paper-securities—"sterling assets" we call them in Ireland—the State has the right and the duty to control exchange-operations. That is, to canalise all exchange-dealings through the Reserve Bank so that the exporter is paid in home-currency and the foreign claims (thus acquired by the export) are available for the importation of socially desirable goods. During the present war countries have enforced this control very drastically; its exercise need not be at all so drastic for an organised war against poverty.

'Banking' for the Currency

(12) As regards internal trade, this is mischievous and meaningless. Money is a claim on the community; what the holder is interested in is the fronting of his claim, what he can purchase for it. If he wants to import goods, these are ultimately paid for by exports. Naturally, in order to be able to meet the ups and downs of production and trade—and in the case of a debtor country—to pay interest—an it is necessary for the Reserve Bank to have a reserve of gold or foreign currencies, which of course will be small relatively to the total trade. This has nothing to do with the absurd idea that the internal currency should be 'backed' 100 per cent with foreign money and securities."

a metallic commodity comparable with ingots, jewels or furniture, and (2) economic and social life were not so specialised as to be absolutely dependent on monetary supply and circulation for their functioning, the hoarder might claim to be 'doing what he likes with his own,' to be either indulging a harmless hobby or exercising thrift. Now that money has become 'the life-blood of the community,' the holder is under a social obligation to exercise his money-claims by spending or investing."