Toward a Union of Families

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primarily with the problem of un­
employment which in its threatening
and permanent menace "risks to
starve thousands of men, the immen­
se multitude of unfortunates. . ."

"This problem of periodic unem­
ployment," says Mr. Bayart "is the
crucial problem of capitalism, and
more exactly of an economic sys­
tem founded on the dynamic develop­
ment of technical progress, which by
the movement it imparts to the eco­
nomic activity, necessarily initiates,
in its forward progress, the varia­
tions, fluctuations and depressions,
cyclical or not." Here is the sum­
mary of the Papal conception in this
speech of June 3rd as presented by
Mr. Bavait :

"The rejection of the "mecha­
nism of social organizations in contra­
diction with the order established by
God," i.e. the integral planning of
the soviet system;
The rejection of a pure and simple
return to a liberalism condemned by
the Church and exceeded by the
facts, which, to re-establish a normal
economy, would depend only on the
mechanism of the laws of the market;
The warning against the deforma­
tion of social security by a socialistic
conception which would place « trust
in an all-providing state (un état­providence) charged with providing
for each of its subjects, and in every
circumstance of life, the right to ad­
vance claims which basically cannot
be satisfied »;
The warning against certain con­
ceptions of full employment realized
by too artificial formalism;
The primordial necessity, in order
to realize this policy of full em­
ployment and the first of social securities:
that of work, to organize, at the very
source of the economy, and in avoid­
ing the excesses of a production with­
out bounds, a sane and normal pro­
duction, "wisely measured according
to the needs and to the dignity of
men" and arranged around the organ­
ic unit basis of society, which is the
Family;

The maintenance, at the basis of
the economy, of the private enter­
prise, with all the concessions cor­
responding to its social character, but
in maintaining nevertheless its pri­
vate character and in leaving to ma­
agement the personal responsibility
and the control of economic decisions
and in safeguarding as much as pos­
sible against the double danger of
anonymous capitalism and socializa­
tion, the soundest portion of the eco­
nomy — individual and family explo­
itations;
The positive declaration, repeated
once again, of the primordial neces­
ity of professional organization."

This is the new direction that the
Holy Father points out to world eco­
nomy. He asks now that "theorists
and men of action . . . concentrate
their attention upon, making it the
focal point of their study . . . on the
imminent and permanent threat of
unemployment, the most important
and urgent problem, that which
weighs like a nightmare precisely on
these old industrial countries . . ."

Toward a Union of Families

Last April 23rd and 24th, the
Department of Industrial Relations
of the Faculty of Social Sciences of
Laval welcomed in the vast Ballroom
of the Chateau Frontenac, nearly five
hundred delegates who came from
all corners of the Province and from
many walks of life: employers,
workers, personnel managers, fore­
men, officers of employers’ and
workers’ associations, representatives
of parity committees, moral advisors,
government labour officials, repre­
sentatives of social groups, etc.

For two days, the delegates stu­
died, with the proper attention and
under the enlightened direction of well-informed lecturers and committees formed of practical experts, the theoretical aspect of social security in relation to the workman's family, as well as its principal methods of application.

The first two meetings were reserved for the study of the principles of security and particularly of full employment as a fundamental element of the security of the workman's family. Much interest and continued attention were also shown to the examination of the practical measures planned or already being realized in our country.

The guest speaker at the closing banquet of the Convention, the Reverend Father Gonzalve Poulin, O.F. M., Director of Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Director of the School of Social Work of Laval, wished to extend the examination of the problem beyond that of the economic security of the workman's family. After having analyzed the two factors which throw the family off its balance, improvised urbanization and the change in the social function of private property, the speaker outlined the possible ways to a solution in a better organization of the industrial, social and family spheres. As far as the conditions of family stability are concerned, the speaker reduced them to the following three: making the place of work more human, the promotion of social security measures and the organization of the family in the social-political scheme. This last condition presented in a new perspective deserved particular notice and the following extract from this masterly speech should be drawn to the attention of our readers:

"It is perhaps in the social-political sphere that it is most difficult for the workman's family to take root. Because the organization of capital and labour only influences political life in the direction of economic interests, this results in a democracy of individualistic character, and of which the laws apparently social, such as security measures, are made for the individual, rather than for the family group. If the family, by organization, became a social force, it would have its political and social rights recognized, would stress the communal character of society and would make easier the peaceful integration of the workman's family in the national community.

This would result in a stronger social tie between the various groups in a nation, and, in those responsible for the State, a greater consideration for the family reality. It is not so long ago that the family formed the centre of the political, economic and social life!

A union of families would ensure a better education of its citizens by a more normal play of social community of interests and the spread of such institutions of family mutual aid as mutual societies, cooperatives, family services etc. The public morality and social customs would receive an enlightened control. The workman's family, joined with the families of other social classes, would not have the impression of being banned from modern society. It would bring its active participation to the common good of the City in an atmosphere of confidence indispensable to its development and promotion.

If the union of families, in addition to such social functions, assumed a rôle of political representation towards the public authorities; if by means of a Superior Council of Family Welfare, it would advise the State in its social legislation, limiting the executive functions of the latter which interferes more and more in the private life of its citizens, to the detriment of its suppletory and regulating responsibilities; if it had a family code accepted and thus

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corrected the too-individualistic character of modern law, perhaps we would see a movement of decentralization gain all the spheres of industrial and social life. The organic function played by the family of yesterday in rural civilization would again be revived, but under forms adapted to industrial civilization.

The initiative of organizing family forces belongs evidently to the family itself; we believe that the States, however, in the common interest, should stimulate the birth and development of this organization by assuring it a representative place in its public commissions and organizations.

In conclusion, the eminent speaker appropriately remarked that "any economic-social restoration of the workman's family is doomed to failure unless it is accompanied by a renewal of Christian life. "If the work of restoration", write the Bishops of the Province of Quebec,"is accomplished in the light of the eternal verities of justice and charity, the parties in presence will ask God and religion the clear view of their respective functions in society and their necessary cooperation to the common good as well as the supernatural force to do their duty. Instead of trying to maintain positions acquired or attempt to merely upset established order, they would try sincerely to keep that which is legitimate and to replace that which does not merit keeping. And thus, religion, by its teachings on man, his family, his leisure and his work, by the grace indispensable to any work of merit, will be the basis of a Christian restoration of the life of the worker."

This Convention, as the delegates themselves acknowledge, was a magnificent occasion for exchange of viewpoints and for useful contacts. But in addition, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the publication of the Encyclical “Rerum Novarum”, the Department of Industrial Relations felt it should touch more closely the problems of the worker, to examine the underlying causes in order to discover, in the light of the social doctrine of the Church, the possible solutions. It did not wish to avoid its responsibilities, even if it meant limiting itself to only a few essential points. By so doing, it feels it has made an attempt to promote in its sphere the peace and social justice to which all aspire ardently.

N.B.—The works presented on the occasion of the Sixth Industrial Relations Convention will be bound in a report which will be put on sale shortly at the Department of Industrial Relations, 2. rue de l'Université, Québec.

Hate never builds anything; it can only blast. Every beautiful thing has been loved into being.

Joseph Fort Newton

If we are to preserve civilization, we must remain civilized.

Louis St. Laurent