Annual Statement Presents Catholic Position on Management and Labor

By REV. RAYMOND A. McGOWAN
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National Catholic Welfare Conference

Labor Day is a special kind of holiday. It is a day set aside to call the attention of people generally and of working people in particular to the fact that they possess a God-given dignity and are charged with obligations of brotherhood to one another and of service to their fellow men. The roots of this dignity lie in our common creation by God the Father and in our common redemption by Christ, Who was a carpenter's foster Son and Himself a worker during His hidden life. Labor Day cannot overlook these roots. Labor Day should be profoundly religious.

This year and increasingly as the years pass the distinctively religious, rather than the merely secular, character of Labor Day is taking hold. Thousands of members of the labor movement will start the day in industrial cities of the United States by joining with their Bishops and priests in offering the Sacrifice of the Mass for the advancement of the cause of social justice and social charity. The laity and the clergy together will give thanks to Almighty God for a labor movement which is second to none in any country and will beseech Him to watch over it in the future so that everything it does may be for the best interests not only of its own members but of the nation as a whole.

THE CHURCH in the United States is happy to participate in the annual observance of Labor Day. The American trade union movement which is honored in a particular way on the occasion of Labor Day, will, let us hope and pray, continue to be faithful to the principles of justice and charity upon which it was founded.

Loyal to the teachings of the social encyclicals of the Popes, the Catholic social action movement in the United States continues to encourage the labor movement to organize all of the working people of the country so that they may achieve full economic citizenship and be able, through the medium of unions of their own choice, to make their own proper contribution to the construction of a sound social order.

There are serious weaknesses and faults in some American unions—just as there are in certain organizations of employers, farmers, and professional people. But these abuses can be and should be corrected by the members themselves, the vast majority of whom are honest men and women who need only to be made more conscious of their personal responsibility for the collective decisions of their unions.

It is for this reason, among others, that the Church insists upon the moral obligation of working men and women to attend the meetings of their union regularly and to interest themselves actively and unselfishly in its day-to-day affairs. It is also for this reason, among others, that the Church is carrying on such a widespread program of labor education under her own auspices.

HER PURPOSE is not to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of the unions, but to impart to the workingman a well-rounded training in Christian social principles and, over and above this, to encourage him to become a loyal and active member of his appropriate union, able and willing to assume his rightful share of responsibility for union policies and programs and the promotion of the general welfare and economy as a whole.

This same sort of Christian social education is equally necessary for the members of employers' associations, farmers' organizations and professional bodies, all of which, together with the labor movement, are required by the virtue of social justice to cooperate harmoniously among themselves for the general economic welfare of the nation as a whole. We are brothers under the one God and Father of all, morally obligated to cooperate with one another, through our appropriate organizations, for the good of all and each.

FROM THIS POINT of view it can be said that Labor Day, which was originally established in honor of the workingman, is really a universal holiday in honor of all those who are sincerely trying to promote the cause of social justice and social charity. It is appropriate, therefore, that Labor Day observances—religious observances particularly — are being participated in more and more by employers, members of the professions and citizens in general. This is a good sign of social progress, a symbol of the growing recognition of our common responsibility to cooperate, under God, in establishing the rule of social justice in American economic life.

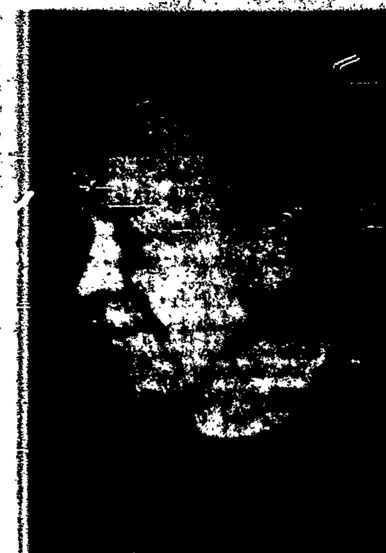
Obviously, it is not enough to have only a theoretical recognition of the interdependence of unions, employers' associations, farmers' organizations, and professional groups and furthermore of their common responsibility to cooperate with one another for the general good of the economy. Our good intentions will die on the vine unless we are willing to organize permanent industrial, agricultural, and professional groups through which this growing spirit of cooperation may be made more effective in whole industries, in the nation and, indeed, in the world as a whole.

THE PROGRESS already made can be exaggerated. The spirit of cooperation, although growing, is not always evidenced throughout American life. Some employers are still bitterly opposed to unionism. Others, forced against their wishes to accept a union in their company, are belligerent and unwilling to extend the area of collective bargaining beyond the bare minimum required by the most rigid interpretation of the letter of the law. Still others are sincerely in favor of collective bargaining at the company level but presently opposed to any kind of labor-management cooperation on the broader issues affecting entire industries or the economy as a whole.

Some unions, on the other hand, are equally shortsighted in their approach to the overall problems of the American economy. Others are necessarily belligerent or excessively jealous of their prerogatives and unwilling to cooperate harmoniously even with a sympathetic employer.

IN GENERAL, however, it would be fair to say that progress has been made in recent years in the field of collective bargaining as well as in the field of social legislation. There are still serious gaps in federal and, more particularly, in state legislation — deficiencies which ought to be corrected as rapidly as possible. There are also certain federal and state labor laws which ought to be repealed or at least drastically amended out of justice to the workers and in the interest of better labor-management relations.

Nothwithstanding these and other serious problems, such as the lack of adequate labor organization among white collar and agricultural workers, and the lack of adequate legislation for agricultural workers and minority groups, we are entitled to be moderately optimistic about the future.



REV. R. A. McGOWAN

It would be a serious mistake, however, for Americans to become self-satisfied. We have made considerable progress but we still have a long way to go. Collective bargaining, such as it is, is a good beginning, and its benefits ought to be extended much more widely throughout the United States.

Nevertheless, even if collective bargaining were extended to cover the widest possible range of subjects throughout all of American industry and even if it were encouraged and supported by good legislation as it should be, it would not be the full answer to our economic problems. It would even then, as it is in its more limited form at the present time, merely a step in the right direction, or a point of departure, from which we can gradually move forward into a federated system of permanent industrial, agricultural, and professional agencies of cooperation for the common good.

THESE JOINT agencies of cooperation would be freely established by the elected representatives of the organized groups concerned and would operate not only for the furtherance of their own interests but for the discharge of their duty as parts of an organic social body whose dominant interest is the common good.

Unions, employers' associations, farmers' organizations, and professional groups are absolutely indispensable now. They are also the building blocks, as it were, of a new social order. They would not be destroyed under a cooperating system of joint associations nor would they lose their legitimate autonomy and freedom of action. They would merely be integrated into an organized and federated body through which they could effectively cooperate with one another for the promotion of the common good.

In the absence of a permanent system of organized cooperation, the separate organizations of labor, management, agriculture, and the professions are handicapped in their efforts to promote a fuller application of the rules of social justice in their own industries, trades, and services, and in the general economy.

The cooperation of private organizations and government is the more important at the present time because the United States has become the most important and most influential country in the world. What is done here will inevitably influence events in all the other countries of the world.

THE UNITED STATES, fortunately, is equipped in many ways to meet this problem of how private organizations and government can work together. Unlike many other nations, we are not so driven by poverty as to induce us in desperation to rush headlong into sudden and perhaps disastrous solutions.

We have no tradition of a strong Socialist or Communist movement [illegible]

There is in the United States no privileged aristocracy, no background of feudal serfdom, no inflexible system of classes. We have an optimistic and democratic outlook on life. Moreover, there is in the United States a friendship between labor and religion which is especially helpful in setting forth clearly and objectively the rights and duties of all concerned.

IN A COMMANDING position of world leadership, the United States should now set an example by developing a Social Order so that organizations and government will cooperatively promote the general welfare and at the same time protect individuals in the exercise of their personal rights. The troubled international situation compels us to make some kind of decision and, since there is no sign of the end of a semi-war economy, what is done in this generation will put a stamp on America and the rest of the world for decades to come.

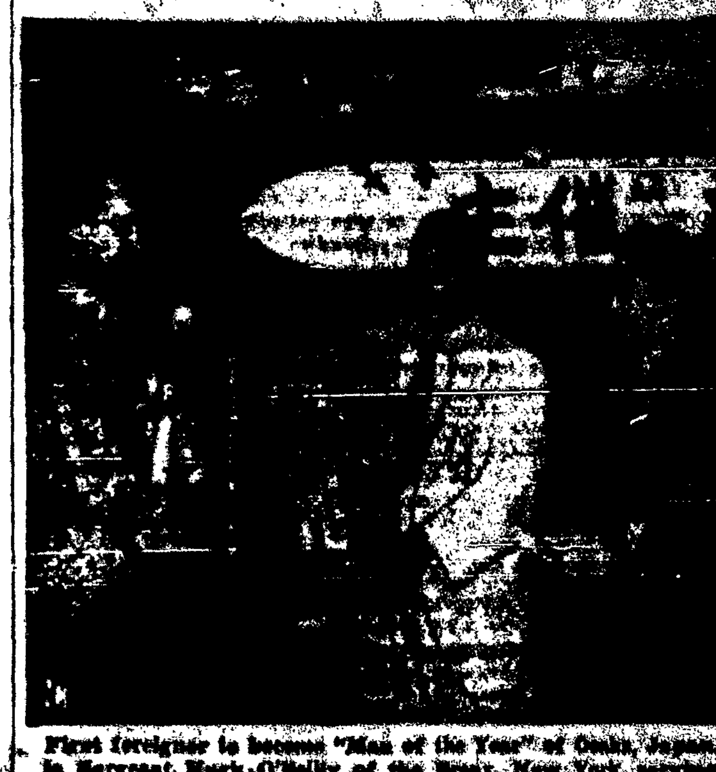
A gradual but steady growth into a system of agencies of cooperation [illegible]

[illegible]

THIS IS A critical period in the history of the world, but it is also a time of great opportunity—opportunity to establish a good social system in the United States [illegible]

[illegible] all of us that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

OSAKA MAN OF YEAR



First foreigner to become "Man of the Year" of Osaka, Japan, is Sergeant Hugh O'Reilly of the Bronx, New York, serving with the 27th "Wolfhound" Infantry regiment. Sergeant O'Reilly, a Catholic, was awarded the title by the Osaka Daily News for interesting his "Wolfhounds" buddies in the plight of Osaka's orphans. To date the "Wolfhounds" have raised $67,000 for the Holy Family Orphanage to build modern housing for the orphans, construct a playground, an X-ray clinic and a summer camp. Sergeant O'Reilly is shown here receiving a ceremonial doll from President Juichi Ishii of the Daily News Press. He also received 10,000 yen—about $30. (NC Photos)

Ex-Real Estate Operator, 55, Ordained Priest

Fall River, Mass. — (NC) — A former Fall River real estate operator, who in 1934 [illegible] priesthood [illegible] Solemn Mass here at the age of 55.

THE REV. JOHN J. CASEY [illegible] Loretto, Pa. [illegible] Diocese of Columbus.

In 1930 the future priest was graduated from [illegible] High School in Columbus. After two years at [illegible] College in his native [illegible] entered St. [illegible] College [illegible] pleted his course in philosophy and received his degree in 1934.

Upon graduating from college Father [illegible] at home with his mother — the late Mary Ellen [illegible] Casey — and sister. [illegible] for their livelihood. He enjoyed a most successful career in the realty business.

Answer

He who seeks only for applause from without has all his happiness in another's keeping.

Writer Stresses Religious Experience

[illegible] — (NC) — [illegible]

Catholic Labor Day Statement Declares Free Nations Need 'Good Social System'

(Continued from Page 1)

tives and unwilling to cooperate harmoniously even with a sympathetic employer."

"In general, however, it would be fair to say that progress has been made in recent years in the field of collective bargaining as well as in the field of social legislation," the statement comments.

"There are still serious gaps in Federal and, more particularly, in State legislation—deficiencies which ought to be corrected as rapidly as possible. There are also certain Federal and State laws which ought to be repealed, or at least drastically amended out of justice to the workers and in the interest of better labor-management relations."

THE STATEMENT warns Americans against becoming self-satisfied. It says: "We have made considerable progress, but we still have a long way to go." It urges an extension of the collective bargaining system and says that even if this was extended to cover the widest possible range of subjects in American industry, it would then be but a step in the right direction "from which we can move forward into a federated system of permanent industrial, agricultural and professional agencies of cooperation for the common good."

"These joint agencies of cooperation would be freely established by the elected representatives of the organized groups concerned and would operate not only for the furtherance of their own interests but for the discharge of their duty as parts of an organic social body whose dominant interest is the common good," the statement adds.

The cooperation between private organizations and government is more important now than ever before in view of the world crisis, the statement asserts. "What is done here will inevitably influence events in all the countries of the world," the statement asserts, in recommending a spread of the industry council program idea.

The statement points out that the United States, which has no traditionally strong socialist or communist movement, is well equipped to show the world "how private organizations and government can work together."

"In a commanding position of world leadership, the United States should now set an example by developing a social order so that organizations and government will cooperatively promote the general welfare and at the same time protect individuals in the exercise of their personal rights," the statement asserts. "The troubled international situation compels us to make some kind of decision and, since there is no sign of the end of a semi-war economy, what is done in this generation will put a stamp on America and the rest of the world for decades to come."

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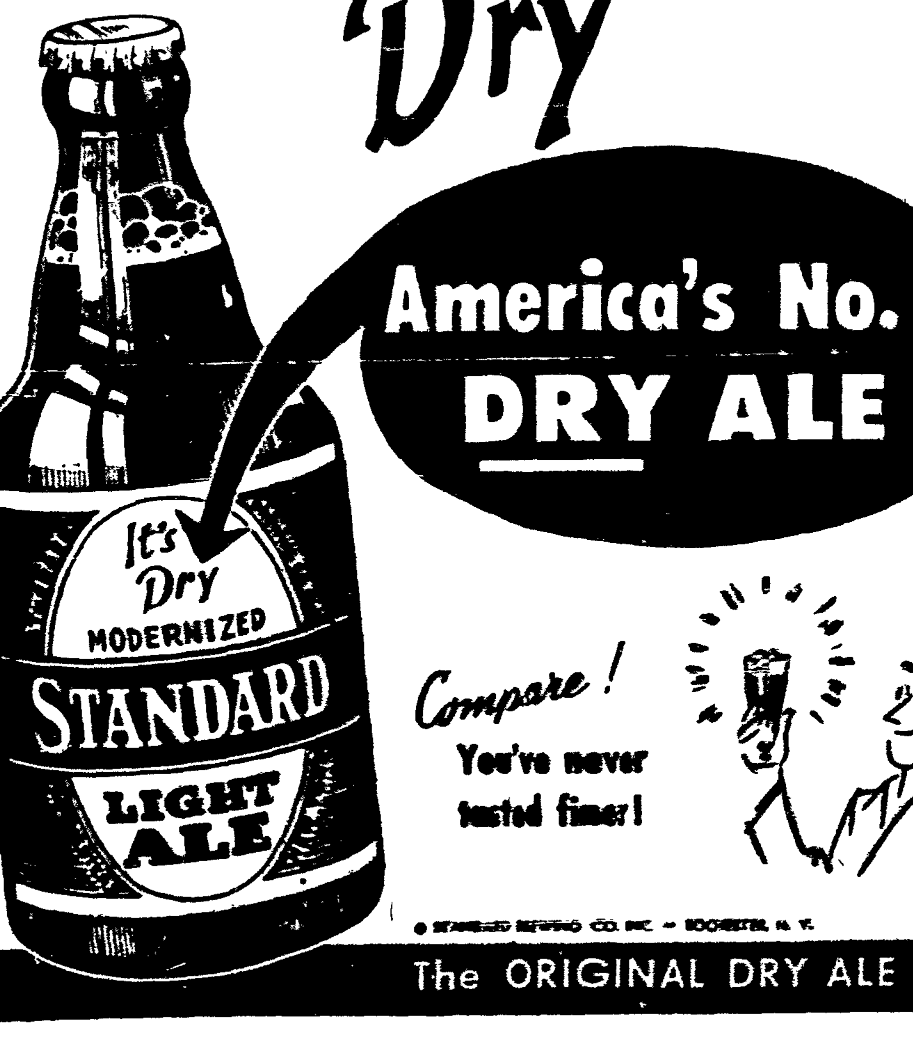

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