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The Common Good

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THE COMMON GOOD

by

Thomas L. Noel, A.B.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

CARROLL COLLEGE

1954
This Thesis for the B. A. degree, by
Thomas L. Noel
has been approved for the
Department of
Social Science
by

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Date___________________
Dedicated . . .

With gratitude to my parents, professors and friends, whose Christ-like spirit of self-sacrifice and understanding through the blessings of Our Divine Lord and Mary, His Mother, have made the writing of this paper possible. I realize that no task however menial is possible without the aid of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Mother Mary, Seat of Wisdom.
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THE MEANING OF THE COMMON GOOD

A definition

We have seen that the purpose of the state is to promote the common good. It is not my intention to discuss the end of the state but rather to set forth a clearer and more complete explanation of the end of the state, the common good.

"The position of the common good is clearly delimited on all sides. As the community of the state does not arise from the mechanical sum of individuals, so the common good is not made up of the sum of individual goods and benefits, ... the common good is an independent good of special significance, namely the perfection of the essential form of the state community." 1

The common good is not the greatest happiness of the greatest number nor is it the good of the collectivity alone while the good of the individual goes unattended. Rather the good which we designate as the common good is the well-being of society at large. It is the good for all in general and for each in particular.

For example, by the common good of a community, like our own Helena, Montana, we mean that for the residents of the community there is a good legal system by which their rights are protected, a good police system,

whereby laws are enforced, a good educational system that satisfies needs for education, adequate church institutions to satisfy needs for religious worship, good streets, good roads, adequate water supply, adequate provision for telephone communication, adequate facilities for recreation, and so forth. The citizens of Helena are in a position to say the common good is sufficiently provided and safeguarded.

Now it is obvious that it is not government alone that supplies all these means of general and personal satisfaction, for many of the means such as the telephone system and some educational facilities are supplied by private industries or private groups. But it is the function of government to foster what is supplied and to supply itself what private initiative does not supply or cannot supply so well.

It is the duty of the state to see that its citizens have those conditions by which they may live a reasonable life. Provision should be made insofar as it is humanly possible to promote the conditions under which the community as a whole and each individual can live a reasonable life.

The general welfare of society is something beneficial and something determined by the community. This can be said in another way. Everything acts in accordance with its nature. The social group acts in accordance with its nature, but since its nature is social, all it can do is set up social conditions. The common
good means social conditions set up by a social group, the community. It is the responsibility of the whole community that the specific function of a community group be organized for that purpose; namely, the state which acts through its government. It is the direct purpose of ruling authority to see that such conditions exist.

"The first duty therefore of the rulers of the state should be to make sure that the laws and institutions, the general character and administration of the commonwealth, shall be such as to produce of themselves public well-being and private prosperity." 2

The common good then is adequate provision for the well-being of all members of society. So that the community as a whole can say that the common provisions made for us are good, and so each individual can say that the common provisions made for me are good. And if any individual is not happy within a community he can say to himself, "I am unhappy, but my unhappiness does not arise from anything the community neglected to do.

Thus the usual definition given for the common good is all those social conditions, material and immaterial, which make it as easy as possible for a man to live a reasonable life.

To quote Suarez' definition: "It is a state of affairs, a status, in which men live in an order of peace

and justice with sufficiency of goods that are related to the conservation and the development of the material life with that probity of morals which is necessary for the preservation of external peace and felicity of the body politic and the continuous conservation of human nature." 3

The object of the common good then is human well-being, the good of the individual and the good of the community.

This well-being of society is an organic order concerning physical and non-physical conditions.

The physical conditions are the goods for common use such as public utility which provides for roads, bridges, water and light supply, and the institutions connected with legal systems, educational institutions, public health services, the army for external and the police for internal security and so forth. Further, there must be the maintenance and preservation of family life for here is the basic foundation of society.

All these institutions are means for the general well-being of the citizens within the community. These are utilities or values for well-established order and peace in society.

The non-physical conditions include provisions for the preservation of man's life, which is an end in itself; for his intellectual and moral development, provisions for truth and honesty in social relations. Last,

3 Suarez: De Legibus, III, C. ii, N. 7
but of greatest importance is the fastening of conditions under which man may believe in the existence of God and fulfill his obligations of religious worship. For if there were no God man would have no purpose in promoting the general welfare of the community or his own self-development. Man would have no grounds for living reasonably, there would be no final judge of his actions.

I think therefore it is not easy to make a clear distinction between physical and non-physical goods because physical institutions are required to make provisions for values that are immaterial.

If non-physical conditions as mentioned were lacking in the community there could be no unity, a condition necessary for the well-being of society.

The Common Good, A Relative Value

The common good remains in the sphere of secular life. It is not the ultimate end of the human person. It is at this point we see the close relationship of politics and religion. It is also at this point we must make clear distinctions rather than fall into the error that the state is but a mere department of the Church. This distinction is clearly brought out in viewing the ends of these two subjects; politics and religion. The religious end is the welfare of the human person ... ultimate happiness, union with man's Creator. The political end is human happiness in this life. The common good is but a means to man's ultimate happiness. Man's
end is beyond this world. His last end, the salvation of his soul, is transcendent, and that institution which further his last end is therefore beyond the end of the State. "The state and the common good in the sphere of nature belong to the order of creation and thus are in themselves values, insofar as they participate in the end of all creatures, the glory of God; all political power is derived from God and gets its majesty from God. Therefore religion with its divinely instituted form, the Church, is beyond the state, and the common good of the religious community is different from the common good of the state, just as both communities are independent and sovereign in their respective orders." 4

It is in this way we see that the state is independent of the Church and the Church independent of the state. The state is concerned with man's temporal happiness, the Church with man's spiritual happiness. Though both are separate and distinct we understand that the common good, the purpose of the state for man's temporal happiness, is not on the pinnacle of the Christian hierarchy of values; the common good is not an absolute value. It remains in the temporal sphere and is thus a relative value.

However this does not mean that the state must disregard man's spiritual end. Insofar as Divine worship is necessary for man's perfection and religion is necessary for the well-being of the citizens, the state must

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consider man's spiritual development and foster the conditions necessary for his spiritual development.

The Causes and the Effects of the Common Good

"The common good is that order of society in which every member enjoys the possibility of realizing his true self by participating in the effects of the cooperation of all." 5

Since the very nature of the common good implies the actual participation by the members of society for the attainment of their well-being; the common good denotes order. The order of the common good involves equality of conditions for all in the attainment of their ends. Although of course the benefits derived by individuals may differ. The healthy man gets more out of the common good than the less healthy, the more intelligent more than the less richly endowed. It is in this way the common good is an order, an order of proportionality.

As the common good is an order, and order is defined as a society of persons united by some common rule of obligation, we realize for such an order to be, there must be a cause.

We can see that the state, which is an organic society and must promote the common good, has no hands and brains but depends on its members, to bring about its end. Thus the efficient cause of the common good is

the endeavor of individual man motivated by his needs, desires and interest. Thus the common good can only be realized if its efficient cause, individual men, cooperate.

Since the efficient cause of the common good is the hands and brains of the individuals, the common good will be best promoted if social authority directs men's activities so that in serving their own interests they serve the common interest as well.

It is then the work of government to establish such institutions as will serve this purpose.

These institutions, which we have discussed earlier as conditions necessary for the common good, are the instrumental causes inasmuch as these are the instruments the members of the community use to achieve their temporal ends -- the common good.

The result of these causes, the common good, consists in proportionate equality for all members of the community in their participation in those common spiritual and material conditions. Thus man could not realize the common good unless there be an equality for all members and a participation by all members. Since there cannot be absolute equality, the most we may expect is proportionate equality. For absolute equality would violate individual rights. It is inconceivable to have all citizens within the community on an absolute basis, or that individual citizens contribute the same amount to the community. The benefits of the community must
be distributed according to the individual merit of each individual. But no individual, no matter how little his contribution to the community, can be deprived of the necessary things for living a reasonable life.

However, with all this foregoing discussion on the common good it is not enough to know what the common good is ... it is essential, that each individual cooperate in its achievement.

Each member of the community individually and all members collectively must work for their general well-being. It is the duty of each member in particular and all members of the community in general to promote it. For without such cooperation the necessary conditions for a reasonable life are not obtainable. Surely, since each individual is bound to perfect himself, and he cannot perfect himself without the common good of society, he has the duty to contribute his reasonable share to the well-being of society.
II
THEORIES OF THE COMMON GOOD

Economic Liberalism, the Individualist

In discussing the common good it is important to realize that there are various concepts of the common good. This does not mean that all are acceptable. For this reason we will summarize the false theories concerning general welfare of the citizens within a community.

The individualist interpretation, illustrated by Adam Smith, economic liberalist, is the following: the state is not a new reality but an artificial grouping of individuals, who have agreed to live in certain social relations, exclusively to promote their individual purposes and ends as individuals, not as members of a political society. Thus what is called the common good is only a name for the total of the private particular goods of all individuals. The individuals are the only reality. The common good is only attained when each individual pursues his own self-interest. The common good is identified with the individual good only. The individual is fundamentally autonomous and self-sufficient. The individualist does not believe in any form of society that demands any kind of sacrifice of his interests as an individual.

We can see that this theory makes provision for nothing "common" above and beyond the individual. It is rugged individualism. Each member of society is using his powers and abilities to secure his personal interests.
The competition of individuals does not make for social happiness and harmony, because as individuals we have no claim to an action if it will harm us or some other member of the community.

The Utilitarian

From the utilitarian point of view the common good consists in the greatest happiness of the greatest number. A theory such as this prohibits some individuals from sharing in the benefits of the common good. Again if the good is to be common and the good is to be the well-being of society at large; the good of all in general and of each in particular -- then everyone must participate in it. The viewpoint of the utilitarian is concerned only with the interests of certain groups within the community. This is individualism only on a larger scale. It consults for the well-being of a favored majority. The minority does not count.

The Totalitarian State

In the opposing view, that of totalitarianism, the concept of the common good is consistent with its theory of the state. The individual and his objective ends are completely submerged in society or in the state and its ends.

"The individuals are mere marionettes in the service of impersonal powers of economic productive relations or of a mystical and irrational spirit of the nation revealed in a deified leader for the ends and purposes that are utterly foreign to the individual." 6

6 Rommen: op. cit., p. 316
Since the state is supreme, it is the individuals last end. All activities of the individual must be directed to support the state. Thus the individual is absorbed in the state, within this state he is suppressed in the social whole. The individual good is identified with that of the state. Again this theory cannot be accepted. It not only denies the terms of the common good but the dignity of man. Any theory of state which places man as a mere tool is inadmissible. The dignity of man is a concrete reality.

Political Philosophy Acceptable to Catholics

Against these doctrines political philosophy acceptable to Catholics contends that the common good is an objective good essentially different from the sum of the goods of individuals. The state is an objective reality. If the state is a reality, a specific mode of being, then it must have a specific end and purpose. The common good is the end and purpose of the state. The common good exists for the general well-being of society, laying all conditions necessary for man to live a reasonable life. Any theory of the common good that would destroy fundamental rights or infringe on them would be disorder, a mutilated common good. Therefore if a group of members should suffer injustice then the whole community suffers too, because the common good is not realized. The common good signifies the good of society as a whole. The good of all depends on the par-
ticipation and cooperation of each. All must promote the common good and all will benefit from the common good.

**Present Theory**

Theories today which are concerned with the common good are usually called "public welfare" or "general welfare" theories. The expression "common good" is safely used in the United States today.

First of all there are in our modern world three main social theories; two of which do not embody the whole truth on the nature of the common good -- therefore in practice either theory is false.

Of these two theories one emphasizes the social aspect of the common good while the other emphasizes the individual aspect. The third theory is a combination of the previous theories and is an acceptable theory. The first theory or social theory as expressed by Wilfred Parsons, S.J. --

"The first theory expresses the obligation of the citizen to the state. Now there can be no doubt that such an obligation exists. Each individual person has an obligation to the common good, because it is in the common good and out of it, that every other individual person in the state rightfully seeks that perfection of his personality which is his right by natural law. No individual person can find this perfection unless all the others contribute to it by their common action." 7

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There is much truth in this theory but it is not the whole truth. This theory emphasizes the common good in its purely social aspect. That is to say it is concerned with the group as a whole to the neglect of individual perfection. It is the welfare of the universal group which is sought. It denies the right of the individual's perfection as an end in itself. The individual's contribution to the common good is the only element stressed.

The second theory is equally false in the other extreme. It maintains that the unlimited liberty of the individual has the right to seek his own welfare as best he can without help or hindrance from the state. This is rugged individualism with us still. The sole end of the state is the individual material welfare. From such a theory no adequate common good results. The individual has no obligation to act but in view of his own interests. Whatever public welfare which might exist is accidental or brought about by powerful minorities.

However, there arises from these theories a third theory which combines the elements of truth in both. This theory of public welfare is based on the nature of the state. Again, this concept is expressed with approval by Wilfrid Parsons, S.J.:

"Man's actions have both an individual and a social aspect, not purely individual, not wholly social. The state exists that man may find in it the perfection of his nature, spiritual and material at the same time. The state as a whole, then, owes
each individual all that is necessary for his perfection. Here is equality: the right of all individuals impartially to receive the benefits of society. Here is liberty: the right of all individuals to be governed in their own interest. Here is also the basis of the state's duty through its government of providing for the welfare of its citizens. This is a social duty incumbent on every citizen to contribute to it each in his own way." 8

We understand then that as the individual citizen has the right to participate in the goods that arise from the state, by this fact he has the obligation to contribute with all members of the community for his individual welfare and the welfare of all members in society. The common good then is not purely social nor is it totally individual but it is the general welfare of all, in general and for each in particular. Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *On the Condition of Labor* expressed the same idea when he wrote:

"Civil society exists for the common good, and hence is concerned with the interests of all in general, albeit with individual interests in their due place and degree." The common good then places the ruling authority under obligation to promote the welfare of its citizens, as a whole, as members of families, and as members of social classes and even as individuals.

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8 *ibid.*, p. 95
The individualists and collectivists say there is no substantial difference between the common good and the individual good. The common good does not differ from the individual good. The common good does not differ from the individual good in the view of the individualist because to him the common good is the total of individual goods in society; the collectivist holds a false theory because for him the individual good is adequately safeguarded in the prosperity of the state. Thus the individual is doing fine if his family income is $500.00 a year provided the state as a whole is regarded as prosperous.

There is a correlation between the common good and the individual good, but they also differ in kind. The common good is the state of society. The individual good is the fulfillment of the individual's self. Thus we see the specific difference is a difference of perfections, a perfection of society's existence and the perfection of the individual's existence. But obviously the individual needs the common good for his perfection.

Common good transcends the individual good inasmuch as the individual good is secondary to general well-being of all members of society. It is in this way we see that the state may demand, and if necessary force an individual to go to war and possibly die in battle. Such
action by the ruling authority of a state is necessary at times to protect the rights, liberty, and happiness of the members of the community. However, we must acknowledge that in ultimate purpose the individual good transcends the common good because it is a realization of ends that can only be achieved by the individual person; but not without the help of the other members within the society. Thus we say that the state exists for the individual and not the individual for the state.

"The object of the common good is human culture, that of the individual good, the human person, the two being substantially different but intrinsically correlative." 9

Within a state there are several societies each with its own proper end. The purpose of marriage is the propagation of the human species; the purpose of the family is the eternal salvation of its members and their well-being. Within the community there are numerous societies. And yet all these are a distinct part of the community. They all are necessary conditions for man to live a reasonable life. It is in this way that public welfare is pluralistic in character.

"The common good is pluralistic, since man requires social completion for the fulfillment of various ends, and these ends give rise to different forms of social cooperation and thus to different kinds of good." 10

9 Messner, op. cit., p. 138
10 ibid., p. 138
We see then that within the community there are greater and lesser communities each with its own individual end and each making its contribution to the common good. Such societies within the general community are the family, local government, occupational communities, the economic bodies of the nation, each with its specific common good. We see the pluralistic character of the common good in that it entails a hierarchy of communities, each with its own end and all consonant with the common good. The hierarchy of communities need the state for the establishment of law and for making provision for their common needs. The pluralism of the common good is seen in the correlation of the ends of the smaller communities with the great community, the State.
THE NECESSITY OF COOPERATION

In order that the general well-being of the community flourish, it is necessary that each individual member contribute to the common good. This is illustrated in economic life. "For where this harmonious proportion is kept, man's various economic activities combine and unite into one single organism and become members of a common body, lending each other mutual help and service. Working life reveals itself, thus, as an organic union of its members around their work and their means of work. It reveals itself as a union for the common good." 11

This cooperation then is the working together of individuals and groups as consumers or producers, all united for their common interests.

Perhaps in our present society, individualism and economic liberalism have brought about the result that not all receive benefits of the common good. It is the function of government to restore whatever balance is necessary for the efficient functioning of the state.

"The state therefore has the clear duty of using its government for the relief of those who are victims of a bad economic order, and also where possible, to prevent the recurrence of these disasters." 12

12 Parsons, op. cit. p. 97
However, this does not mean that government should descend to activities that can be performed by lesser groups. These functions should be performed by professional groups separately or collectively with other groups. However within the community exists such problems as the helpless poor, under-privileged children, industrial disabilities, poor housing, etc., and at the present time the individuals within the community cannot correct these ills of society themselves. As these conditions are a result of our industrial society this society has the first obligation to find the cure. But until this can be accomplished, public welfare must remain the permanent duty of the state, through its government. In no other way can the general well-being of all members of the community be accomplished.

The Christian concept of the state is an organic one. The state is compared to a vast system of interrelated groups whose ends depend on the cooperation of all. An analogy will help to clarify this idea. The well-being of any living organism depends on the harmonious functioning of the members of the organism. Thus the whole organism is existing to the best degree when the members are functioning in perfect harmony with one another -- the parts contribute to the benefit of the whole. And as long as the whole is enjoying perfect functioning it in turn contributes to a better life among the members. According to Christian concepts, the state is a society composed of a number of institutions whose members are pursuing an end
within these institutions. Again, the members of these institutions cooperate for the good of the whole, for the common good. The individual is encouraged to work with others for his own good and the common good. Such a concept is more in keeping with the dignity of man. For man cannot obtain his perfection by himself, there are many functions he cannot do of himself and therefore needs the cooperation of his fellowmen.

The true test for democracy is freedom for all citizens by insuring the rights of the individuals through a stronger cooperative spirit, instead of one inspired by narrow self-interest. The more the cooperative spirit is fostered, the more equal obedience is rendered to increase and promote the common good for all. On the other hand the less the cooperative spirit among members of the community prevails, the more will narrow self-interest grow. Undoubtedly, then, the best way to protect and promote the common good is through a spirit of cooperation, else it ceases to be the general welfare of the community, and commences to be the good of certain individuals enjoying all benefits of the community at the expense of the other members.
THE BASIC REASON FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Aristotle and Saint Thomas have said that man by his nature is a social animal. As a social animal there is a drive within man to seek the companionship of others for a creation of society that will enable him to fulfill his purpose in life. Man is also created being made by an Almighty God and therefore is a dependent being. Again Saint Thomas has affirmed that man must live in a community of members for of himself he is unable to provide all things which are necessary for his perfection. Man is dependent on his fellow man. The greatest indication of this social nature of man is his ability to speak. This faculty consolidates all the various levels of man's nature and gives to them a direction to society.

The explanation of the social nature of man is best presented in terms of human needs. "Since man is perfected by action and since his happiness depends on the hierarchical satisfaction of his appetencies and the development of his personality, it may be said that man needs society for his physical, mental, moral, spiritual, and social development." 13 Now then physical wants of food, clothing, shelter, etc., can only be obtained with the assistance of others in society. Intellectual needs demand the companionship of the society.

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of others. Moral development demands patterns to be imitated and training to be directed by others. The physical, mental, moral, and social aspects of human nature demand a human society. Few sections of a nation are self-sufficient. Therefore, man must depend on other members of the community for those conditions by which he will live a reasonable life.

Man by his nature is a social animal. Rising from this nature of man is the concept of the common good.

"Men desire not merely to live, but to live well. It is this natural inclination which gives rise to the state, for the perfect temporal development of the human personality demands the cooperation of men in a common undertaking to provide for the common good of all and of each. Interdependence in the satisfaction of the material needs and of the cultural aspiration of men is responsible for the emergence of a common good."

As he is a social being, it is of necessity that he be a political being. For the purpose of our existence demands that we live in a body politic. A man is more the man when he takes part in that society which has for its purpose the well-being of the community.

Therefore the state is necessary for the protection of our rights. And as the state exists for man and must protect the rights of society and make available those conditions by which man lives a reasonable life its purpose is clear ... to promote the general well-being of society.

VI

SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE COMMON GOOD

As the state exists and functions for human beings, it is the duty of the state to safeguard the individual's rights, liberty, his pursuit of happiness, and his moral welfare. Thus the state must safeguard those rights and institutions which are necessary for man to live a reasonable life. This function then is concerned with actions and relationships with other persons and institutions. This is the function of justice. According to Saint Thomas:

"Justice is a habit whereby a man renders to each one his due by a constant and perpetual will." 15

Justice then is giving each man his due -- that to which he has a right. Justice is divided into several "kinds", commutative, distributive, retributive, legal, and social.

Retributive justice is concerned with punishment of crime. Insofar as it protects the rights of individuals and protects their life, liberty and property and the goods of the community, it becomes a phase of distributive justice.

Distributive justice is concerned ultimately with ruling authority to distribute the burdens and benefits of the community equitably. As its function it distributes the common goods of the community among its members in proportion to need.

15 Ryan and Boland, Catholic Principles of Politics (Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1952) p. 140
As each person is a member of the community there is due him a share in the benefits of the community, and the higher his position the greater should be his share.

It is then the duty of the rulers of the community to distribute both public benefits and public burdens equitably. Obviously then, it follows that insofar as the distribution of wealth is concerned some citizens cannot be favored while other citizens are neglected. In taxing its citizens for the support of the state the rulers of the state may not demand greater sacrifices from some citizens than from others. Taxation must be on an equal scale. Further the state must take care of those individuals who cannot provide for themselves until such time as private groups or organizations can properly care for them.

However, this does not mean that the virtue of distributive justice falls totally upon the ruling authority of the community. It must be practiced by all in authority over common goods. Industrial corporations can do much in bringing about a more equitable distribution of wealth. The individual with superfluous wealth is obligated to distribute it among those who lack the necessities for a decent life.

Commutative justice regulates affairs between man and man with equality, -- another name for this is strict justice. "Commutative justice concerns the relation of individuals to individuals; it is a person to person relationship in contradistinction to the social relations of the in-
individual to the state or other institutions." 16 It is this virtue of justice which is concerned with the equality of debit and credit and the equality and freedom of the partners in contracts. Commutative justice then is a person to person relationship. It is concerned then with individuals and not the society in general.

In addition to commutative and distributive justice, and retributive justice, there remains legal justice and social justice.

It is at this point that the controversy regarding justice arises. The controversy is whether social justice adds anything to the content of legal justice. "Some writers consider it [social justice] a fully distinct virtue, with its own material and formal aspects, inasmuch as it organizes individuals for the common good. Other authors hold that it is merely a special form of legal justice ... but merely the formal aspect of directing actions toward the common good." 17

"Legal justice has been defined as the virtue binding every member of the state to contribute his due share to safeguarding and promoting the common good. It applies to rulers as well as subjects, obligating each to do his part for the general welfare." 18

16ibid., p. 141
18ibid., p. 112
According to Father Egan:

"Legal justice is concerned with the obligations of the individual toward the state. It has a positive and negative aspect. It requires not merely that the individual refrain from violating the just laws of the state but that he contribute, according to his ability, to the general well-being of society." 19

Legal justice then requires that a citizen not only refrain from violating the laws of the state, but that he contribute to the general well-being of society.

How, then is Social Justice defined?

"Social justice deals with reciprocal rights and duties of social groups and their members in relation to the common good. It might be described as the obligation upon individuals to participate, according to their ability and position, in group action, designed to make the institutions of society conform to the common good in the socio-economic sphere." 20

Again, Father Rocaries defines social justice:

"Social justice is the virtue which governs the relations of the members of society, as such, and the relations of society with its members; and which directs social and individual activities to the general good of the whole collective body and to the good of all and each of its members." 21

Therefore, according to Father Rocaries, Social Justice includes not only what the individual does for the

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19 Ryan, Boland, op. cit., p. 143
20 Cronin, op. cit., p. 112
21 Ryan, Boland, op. cit., p. 145
the community, but also what the community does for the individual. According to him social justice appears to be a combination of legal and distributive justice. But according to Father Cronin, Social Justice looks like the obligation of non-juridical groups and individuals to promote the common good. In my humble opinion, agreeing with Father Cronin, Social Justice has existed from the time of man's creation. Social Justice is not legal justice for they differ in their nature. As we have stated, legal justice binds us to a juridical institution to promote the common good. Social justice is the obligation of non-juridical groups. Social justice is the good order in which persons work and contribute their goods and services to one another. Social justice includes the goods and advantages of all; it too is concerned with the prosperity of the community as a whole and the prosperity of each particular individual within the community. Social justice is the good of all in general and of each in particular. Social justice gives a completeness to the common good. 1) It shows that not only legal institutions but all groups and individuals must take the common good into account in all their activities. 2) Social justice was a duty incumbent on all individuals prior to any "formal" obligation placed on them by legal justice. 3) It is a duty incumbent on all, the employers, employees, writers, actors, artists and all groups and public individuals within a community.

In summary we see that distributive justice, governs
the activities of rulers, commutative justice governs the relations between individuals, legal justice governs the relations of individual persons with the community, uniting the members of the community to a juridical institution to promote the common good and social justice which governs the relations and actions of all groups and persons within the community to have the common good in view, even if sometimes there is no legal obligation to do so.

"The virtue of justice is the primary social virtue, since it directly governs the relations of men with each other. Indeed it is actually the moral basis of order". 22

Since justice is the moral basis of order, it is concerned then with the whole human race and not merely the individual community. This follows logically for if we maintain a common good for one state then surely we must maintain a common good for all states. All the elements for the common good of a community appear when viewing the international common good. Dependence of communities on each other, means of traffic and communications that are world-wide, a code of international law to distribute equitably the burdens and benefits of nations, and the attempts of the citizens of the world to maintain peace and order and set up those conditions whereby man may live a reasonable life. Therefore the concept of the common good is not limited to an individual

community but to a society of communities.

"There exists for all the states together a common international good to be promoted and served, just as there exists for citizens and governors within each of these states a common good more near and less extended to be promoted and served." 23

Pope Pius XII

Therefore, as we are members of a community and have obligations to the common good of the community, the state as a moral person has an obligation to an international common good. We see then that social justice is a very definite and important concept. Pope Leo XIII boldly proclaimed the doctrine that "the civil power is more than the mere guardian of law and order, and that it must strive with all zeal to make sure that the laws and institutions, the general character and administration of the common wealth, should be such as of themselves to realize public well-being and private prosperity." 24

This applies not merely to the character and administration of the individual community but the character and administration of all communities.

The concept of the common good is a concept for the reconstruction of the social order for a community of states.


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