

justice and charity, neither of which appears possible without recognition of God, the creator of all that is. Yet, by what magnificent decision did He, who renewed our human nature after Adam's fall, include man as a participant, a co-creator. This aspect is one where the human will — not prescinding from the intellect — enters into the decision making and enables man to strive to subdue the earth and all its marvelous natural lights.

SJR's editors have over the years sought to serve the truth. It is well known that the truth serves only its slaves. We have avoided entering the lists for only one "pet" cause and then riding that "cause" to death. Truth's roots are many and one cannot pick one root and beat it continually. Indeed, justice relates to all human activity. Thus, *SJR* has covered the many facets of the great social question, in season and out of season, in order to both present known truths and to uncover those truths which we still are seeking. We also have tried to avoid that archeological tendency, again so prevalent, of canonizing the past while sidestepping the joys and miseries of the present. We cannot resurrect the past for it is done, gone, dead. For example, who really should worry and fret about 19th century injustices to the point of ignoring the dangers of Communism, with which we are face to face in the present. But, we learn or should learn from the past. While we live only in the future. Therefore, *Social Justice Review*, while not canonizing the future looks rather hopefully toward it realizing that the only future we can really guarantee is eternity. Let us therefore write of the present. Our aim is to discover and uncover the roots of Truth in society as well as the roots of the

malignant growths which would destroy individuals and social groupings, beginning with the family. It has been well said that by ingenuity one can make a text say many things but it is more scientific to find out what it does say just as it is both intellectual and scientific to lay bare reality as it really is found. Our task at *SJR* has been to lay bare, as Christians, reality, the real existential world, as it is with all its putrefaction and glories, its evil and goods, its sin and graces. We have sought and are seeking to penetrate our temporal work with the spirit of the Gospel as understood by the mind of the Church. In short, we are engaged in social thinking with the purpose of fostering social action. That is our story.

Thus *SJR* aims at making the earth, its products, its order useful for all men, an attainable goal, difficult but humane, a human goal that is unachievable by man alone. We are ever aware of Christ's reminder; "Without me you can do nothing." And: if you would be perfect as is my Father in heaven be active on the side of truth in justice and charity. This will bring peace that earth alone cannot give. Every man must make the choice. Those stalwarts before us made the choice continuously since 1908: We at Social Justice Review today have made the decision and are striving inspite of serious difficulties toward a beautiful future, one filled with confidence, joy, and hope.

Social Justice Review, including all its co-workers, I'm sure, joyfully plan to continue making both the best secular knowledge and Christ-instituted magisterium teaching, as well as development based on both, available to you. □

SOCIAL JUSTICE REVIEW AND THE TRADITION OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT

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Toward the end of Monsignor John A. Ryan's autobiography, *Social Doctrine in Action*, he mentions that during the 1920s there were very few American Catholics besides himself working to advance the Church's social teaching and the cause of social justice. One of the few he names, however, is Frederick P. Kenkel, long-time director of the Central Bureau and a stalwart in the fight for social justice. This mention of Frederick Kenkel leads one naturally to think of a later Central Bureau director, now untimely deceased, and to reflect that their efforts, particularly as enshrined in their

principal publication, *Social Justice Review*, is one of the oldest institutionalized efforts on behalf of social justice in this country. Harvey Johnson continued the work of all his predecessors faithfully, and as a result of that, was faithful also to authentic Catholic teaching and tradition on the social question.

This last point needs some elaboration today, for we are becoming accustomed to the practice whereby any Catholic with access to the media can qualify as a "Catholic spokesman" on any subject of his choice. Thus we are treated to a plethora of "Catholic" views on

all subjects from abortion to genetic engineering, with little or no effort by many of these commentators to keep within the bounds of Catholic doctrine. And the same may be said of the social teachings. With the breakdown of Catholic identity and discipline that has characterized the period since the Second Vatican Council, many American Catholics seem to have eagerly embraced one of the secular ideologies popular among our non-Catholic fellow citizens. Thus we have Catholics promoting Marxism. Have they never heard of Pius XI's encyclical against communism, *Divini Redemptoris*? We see other Catholics advocating the theory that the State is the sole and direct solver of all our problems. Have they never heard of the same Pontiff's principle of subsidiarity? And lastly we have an apparently growing number of Catholics who believe that a free market is the magic solution to our economic and financial ills. Have they forgotten that same Pope's encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*? But, fortunately, not all Catholics in America have succumbed to these charms of secularism. The strong institutional framework and traditions of the Central Bureau, nourished so long by Frederick Kenkel, has been piloted during these troubled times by Harvey Johnson. He has rejected the illusions of easy accommodation with the secularist ideologies of Marxism, statism or the unregulated market. Reflected in the pages of *Social Justice Review* one finds year after year the thoughtful distinctions of Catholic teaching applied again and again. Yet not simply in a repetition of the same words or a rehashing of problems no longer relevant. No, for the new intellectual demands put upon social theorists by new conditions — a worldwide economy with many multinational corporations, a large foreign debt, a recurrence of unemployment and recession, unstable interest rates — have been the preoccupations of the varied groups of writers encouraged and coordinated by Harvey Johnson. He was not afraid to see these new problems examined from a thoroughly Catholic standpoint, despite the undoubted temptation to lapse into one of the easy secularist positions available. For under Harvey Johnson *Social Justice Review* never forgot that the Church's condemnation of atheistic communism was final and categorical. But it also remembered that Pius XI's dismissal of free competition as the ruling principle of economic affairs was equally final and equally categorical.

With such a foundation there is considerable and well-founded hope that the tradition of Frederick Kenkel and Harvey Johnson, which is the tradition of Leo XIII, Pius XI and John Paul II, will be continued by their successors; that the work of the Central Bureau

will always exemplify that fidelity to Christ and His Vicar that is apparently difficult for many to exercise, especially when it involves turning their back on the facile theorizings of the world and grasping the wood of the Cross. How else can we explain the presence of Catholics in the ranks of the free-marketers, the statists and even the Marxists? But such a defection has not, and under God, never will occur at the *Social Justice Review*. Harvey Johnson's work on earth will continue to be fruitful, as (who can doubt it?) he intercedes for all who carry on that work from his place in God's loving care. □



Catholics especially should strive to understand in what ways the Church, the message, is changing and where it is not, and, indeed, cannot change.

HJJ (1967)