

human ways of thinking about work and evaluating it. The interaction between the worker and the tools and means of production has given rise to the development of various forms of capitalism—parallel with various forms of collectivism—into which other socio-economic elements have entered as a consequence of new concrete circumstances, of the activity of workers' associations and public authorities, and of the emergence of large transnational enterprises. Nevertheless, the danger of treating work as a special kind of "merchandise" or as an impersonal "force" needed for production (the expression "workforce" is in fact in common use) always exists, especially when the whole way of looking at the question of economics is marked by the premises of materialistic economism. . . .

In all cases of this sort [a "one-sidedly materialistic civilization"—ed.], in every social situation of this type, there is a confusion or even a reversal of the order laid down from the beginning by the words of the Book of Genesis: Man is treated as an instrument of production, whereas he—he alone, independent of the work he does—ought to be treated as the effective subject of work

and its true maker and creator. Precisely this reversal of order, whatever the program or name under which it occurs, should rightly be called "capitalism"—in the sense more fully explained below. Everybody knows that capitalism has a definite historical meaning as a system, an economic and social system, opposed to "socialism" or "communism." But in light of the analysis of the fundamental reality of the whole economic process—first and foremost of the production structure that work is—it should be recognized that the error of early capitalism can be repeated wherever man is in a way treated on the same level as the whole complex of the material means of production, as an instrument and not in accordance with the true dignity of his work—that is to say, where he is not treated as subject and maker, and for this very reason as the true purpose of the whole process of production. . . .

The structure of the present-day situation is deeply marked by many conflicts caused by man, and the technological means produced by human work play a primary role in it. We should also consider here the prospect of worldwide catastrophe in the case of a nuclear war,

Commentary

'The Pope ought to study sociology'

Hans Küng, theologian disciplined by the Vatican who dissents on such questions as abortion, contraception, infallibility, celibacy, and ordination of women, made the following public comment on the encyclical: "I still have not read it at all; I consider it unimportant. It was written for Poles" When pressed, he recommends an article by his fellow Catholic schismatic Franz Alt in the West German weekly *Der Spiegel*. Alt angrily asks why the Pope does not indict industrial society for its pollution of the environment, alienation of human beings, and unemployment. According to Alt, the principle of mankind's exercising dominion over the earth is transformed through industrialization into "making earth into a garbage heap."

The economic adviser to Italian Socialist Party chief Bettino Craxi, Francesco Forte, one of the most energetic spokesmen in Italy for the Global 2000 depopulation policy, states that the encyclical lacks relevance to the modern world because it is based on

"the old conceptions of capitalism and socialism." Professor Federico Mancini, Craxi's adviser on judicial matters and a longtime Fulbright Commission spokesman on Italian politics, is beside himself because the encyclical "denies the social conflict" and the role of confrontation in fostering social and governmental progress. Had the Pope acquainted himself with the great bourgeois sociologists, according to Mancini, he would be better attuned to the reality of our era.

The Italian news magazine *Espresso*, owned by Count Ciriaco De Mita and controlled by the Socialist Party, deplores the encyclical for failing to "attain the level of understanding of Rolf Dahrendorf, the famous sociologist and director of the London School of Economics. . . ."

Most curious was the reaction of the British press, which has been talking for a long time about an "ecumenical understanding" between the Catholic and Anglican Churches. Ten days after the publication of *Laborem Exercens*, not a single commentary had yet appeared in the British press. An indirect response was published in the London *Financial Times* on Sept. 17 under the headline "The Actual Cause of High Interest Rates," expostulating that a favoring of capital at labor's expense is the only possibility for improving the economic situation—extending all due respect to the Marxist class-struggle theory.