

Trade Winds Blow Both Ways

by MARTIN SIMON

IT IS EXTREMELY intriguing to observe how energetically the Eisenhower administration has veered away from the traditional high-tariff policy of the Republican party. True, many adherents of the GOP continue the long-heard cry for "protection," but they are joined in their demands by "conservative" members of the Democratic opposition, notwithstanding *their* party's history of lower trade barriers. What this trend (if such it is) indicates, is anyone's guess. From the standpoint of political economy, such twisting and jockeying can have little ultimate effect, and therefore hold little interest for those concerned not with temporary "policies" or "programs," but with the natural laws which must control the economics of the world.

At the same time, something of value is to be drawn from the data presented by the administration in its endeavor to "sell" freer trade to the people and to the Congress. First, one might note that the primary reason given for the necessity to lower trade barriers is that the United States is currently engaged in a trade war with the Soviet Union. This is an unusual presentation, since wars are generally presumed to stem from emotional, patriotic or political causes. There is something mildly refreshing in having one's government bluntly state that war may actually rest on an economic basis. Even Mr. Krushchev proclaimed quite vociferously: "We hereby declare war on the United States—in the peaceful field of world trade!"

Moreover, to "sell" an idea requires

setting forth just why it is worth "buying," and the Department of Commerce (abetted by the State Department) has come up with many telling arguments supporting less restricted trade among the nations of the earth. For example, we learn from the Commerce Department that the production of goods for export and the sale of imported goods provide livelihood for at least 4,500,000 American workers—seven per cent of all civilian employment. What is to happen to this sizable segment of the American community if we adopt the dubious benefits of "protection"?

One-third of the total of foreign sales made by the United States consist of heavy equipment, such as machinery, trucks, automobiles, airplanes, etc. This merchandise can be bought only with dollars. Where shall the foreign buyer obtain his dollars if we do not buy from him with our money? Let it be remembered that foreign sales last year totaled about \$19,500,000,000, which enormous sum was in turn spent for *our* products. Statistics show that foreigners spend more for American goods and services every year than Americans spend to buy automobiles. Obviously, curtailing exports can have no other effect but to curtail imports, and the reverse is just as true.

Speaking of imports, certain significant aspects should be considered. Three-quarters of our imports comprise raw materials, crude food products and semi-manufactured goods, *which we need*. The dollars spent for imports provide most of the dollars for foreign purchases here. The well-

being of many countries on which we depend for raw materials we require rests on orders from this country; stop the orders and there goes that foreign country! Most important, the American economy is becoming more and more dependent on foreign sources of supply.

But it is needless to stress what students of Henry George know so well. Lowering trade barriers is a small step in the right direction, toward true free trade and a truly free economy. It is good to find favorable arguments emanating from our government.



"DUNCAN THE DRUGGIST"

George H. Duncan of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, author of *People, Land and Taxes*, died on September 21st at the age of 81, after a long record of public service and devotion to his ideals. He attended Amherst College but was called home in his senior year because of the death of his father, at which time he took over the family drug store. Later, however, he was awarded MA degrees from both Amherst and Dartmouth for his contribution in the important fields of taxation and public affairs. Described as the "elder statesman" of the Democratic party, he held virtually every local office open to a resident of Jaffrey at the local, state and federal levels, and represented his township in the General Court for eleven terms—a record equalled by only six other people in the history of New Hampshire.

Nationally known as a single taxer, he was president of the New Hampshire branch of the Henry George Foundation and lectured for that organization as well as for the Grange and Farm Bureau. He was a strong advocate of publicly owned public utilities and was active in the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, thus serving his community both in and out of office.

Among many tributes accorded him by the newspapers we chose an editorial by Richard A. Noyes, editor of the *Weekly Monadnock Ledger*, "Let George Do It," as a reflection of the contribution made by Mr. Duncan to the cause he soberly and steadily espoused.

The funeral service which he himself planned took place in Jaffrey's beautiful community hall, and was attended by 300 persons. Readings which made up the service included, from the Bible, Revelations 21: 1-4 and 22: 1-5; also Leviticus 25: 1-19 and Ecclesiastes 12: 1-7. Several poems and portions of poems were read, including Tennyson's familiar "Crossing the Bar." Tucked in between the poetry and the scriptures was an inspired selection from the concluding chapter of *Progress and Poverty*, beginning "The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance."

Six men took charge of the foregoing program: from Massachusetts, Joseph Richards and Benton MacKaye of Harvard and Shirley, respectively. From New Hampshire, the Reverend Richard A. Day of Peterborough, Heman Chase of Alstead, Lawrance Rathbun of Harrisville, Henry I. Baldwin of Hillsborough and Richard A. Noyes of Jaffrey.

At the noon luncheon of the Jaffrey Lions Club the following day, Heman Chase, active teacher of the philosophy of Henry George, addressed an audience of forty business and professional men on the subject of Mr. Duncan's philosophy, giving first the history of the philosophy, then the mechanics of putting the principles into effect. It was, said Prescott Duncan, son of George H., who presided, "a perfect occasion for a statement of Georgism."