

A Conspiracy of Silence

by URQUHART ADAMS

IT WAS Count Leo Tolstoy, I think, who said that people do not argue with Henry George, they just don't understand him. With due respect to Count Tolstoy, a very eminent man, I contend that anyone but a moron can understand him well enough if they want to, because his philosophy is simplicity itself. Surely learned men and university graduates cannot be that dumb. They don't want to understand George's simple philosophy because they think their learning gives them an advantage and popularity that will lead to high position and large salaries.

So they will not discuss Henry George and their conspiracy of silence has worked very well. For years they prevented and delayed a proper consideration of George's proposals. But they did not foresee the rise of communism. If sensible proposals for insuring progress and prosperity for all who are willing and able to work are not forthcoming, we may be sure that others will be adopted. And are they ever! Communism has covered a third of the earth in fifty years since the Russian revolution in 1917.

The communist philosophy is simple. The rich people are exploiting us! Kill the rich people and spread their money and property around, then everybody can have enough to live on. Does it work? Internationally, Russia and China were at the bottom of the heap until they adopted communism. Japan defeated Russia in 1905 but she wouldn't dare attempt it now. And

prior to World War II China was invaded and several of her provinces were taken over by the Japanese. They aren't trying anything like that now.

I attribute the increase in power of the communist countries to the fact that they have nationalized land, and by so doing they cut the ground out from under the vested interests. But what we Georgists don't like about their system is that the people are slaves of the state, and we believe in freedom. Our proposal of land value taxation would make it possible for labor and capital to get at the land in order to produce and enjoy the fruits of the labor. But it looks like the smart boys don't want a fair deal for all.

Very well then, they can have communism, and a lot of them will get their heads chopped off. The Chinese Communists have made no truce with the members of the great land holding families. They have butchered thousands of them. People will not be exploited forever. There comes a time when even a worm will turn.

And the conspiracy of silence regarding George's philosophy is cracking at last as more and more interest is centered on common sense discussion of economic laws. Anyone who can think (lots of people cannot) owes it to his country and his fellows to concern himself with economic problems, which, if not solved, will lead inevitably to disaster. And *dreadful* disaster, with lots of blood and gore.

Another Graded Tax League of Pennsylvania letter by Dr. Steven Cord adds still more endorsement to the cause of land value taxation. He notes that persons of widely differing political views have recognized and agreed on the value of a location tax, such as the Governor of Hawaii, certain university professors and newspaper writers.

He also finds support for LVT from two women experts in the field; Mabel Walker, director of the Tax Institute at Princeton, in her book, *Urban Blight and Slums*; and Mary Rawson, author of *Property Taxation and Urban Development*.