Where Socialism Conflicts With The Philosophy Of Henry George

To the Editor of The Sun—Sir: The old dictionaries class as Socialists all who desire better social conditions. In that sense we are all Socialists. In Great Britain and Europe this definition still holds and so we have George Bernard Shaw and Ramsay MacDonald saying that they learned socialism from Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" and honoring him for it.

But in America most Socialists bitterly hate Henry George, because in the "Condition of Labor" he clearly pointed out their superficiality in blaming capital for evils due to land monopoly which prevents men from employing themselves, as they do everywhere when allowed free access to the great storehouse of nature.

While many Socialists are more intelligent, the majority believe that laws and decrees can forcibly reduce working hours, increase wages and abolish child labor. Until we abolish the root cause of the poverty which drives mothers to condemn their children to work in disease-breeding factories, such measures are futile and worse. The attempt to enforce them multiplies bureaucracy, interferes with personal liberty, is corrupting and inevitable abuses follow.

Planned production and regimented industry are only possible under slavery—competition under freedom is as necessary for the health of society as the free circulation of the blood is for the health of our bodies.

WILL ATKINSON.

Bolar, Va., June 28, 1934.