



Most communities and nations continue to use taxation as a weapon to crush the middle classes and to put men out of business . . . It seems that the ideas of Karl Marx have come to be more readily accepted everywhere than those of such great Americans as Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Henry George, etc. Why? Marx in the Communist Manifesto advocated the graduated income tax as an important step towards achieving the goals of socialism. Just take a glance at the popularity of such a tax among our political leaders on all levels of government.

It is time for all of us to re-examine the teachings of Henry George who, in his classic on economics, *Progress and Poverty*, reveals his respect for the dignity of the individual and the sacred rights of person and property.

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Stephen R. Cord made some excellent points about the immediacy of results desired by the college activists (Feb. HGN), and the large number of causes which plague our current social scene. He suggests that George was wrong, to put it mildly, about the "privately appropriated land rent being the root of all evil."

I am a newcomer to the ranks of Georgists, and the bloom is not yet off the rose, so perhaps I can speak with more personal conviction after my "conversion experience." In addition, while teaching several basic classes, I have always included the idea that current situations are not easy to correlate with Mr. George's solution since we have devised an infinite number of small modifications

in our social system in order to offset the problems generated by that basic problem.

Instead of building a nice straight economic house we have an awesome monster which cantilevers out all over the place. Somehow it stands, but it looks messy. We may not have the economic depressions that George foresaw, or some of the other symptoms, but we have traded our economic losses for the emotional ones of unhappiness, group militancy, class hatred, loss of personal freedoms and a slowly tightening police state. Maybe these are what Mr. Cord refers to as "assorted forms of irrationality and veniality."

Along with the militants, Professor Cord and other writers, it seems clear that Georgists cannot afford to abandon the need for short term "symptomatic" relief. We certainly must keep the patient alive and its life support system functional, but we must also root out that central cancer which continues to send out its stream of cells to re-infect the body. This is the message which must be brought home to our youth and to others as well. Perhaps the best vehicle for this truth is the message of freedom. Certainly our youth identify with this. We must send forth the message that it is the lack of true freedom in our "free" system that makes our problem. Young people think they are "liberal" because they do not understand the term, and the greybeards only reinforce the misunderstanding by making great noises about inconsequential things like hair, beads and skirts while ignoring the real values. Youth may be overzealous, but age has not done much to solve the problems either.

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Perhaps I am impertinent in taking issue with Steven Cord's remarks in the February HGN. Although I sec-

ond his observation that "we needn't exaggerate our case" I do not advocate yielding or giving up on an important issue.

Does Professor Cord really believe the facts indicate that we have had no recent depressions? Does he consider the plight of those who still cannot find employment in spite of a war economy? Can he believe we never had it so good when our news media and government investigations disclose what are now matters of common knowledge—large masses still starving—community riots for "pieces of the action"—ever increasing redistribution of wealth to the poverty stricken by means of public welfare—the disenchantment of our youth with their "affluent" society? And how about the disintegration of family and social standards?

When he lists "other causes of poverty" does he distinguish between the basic root cause and those derived therefrom? Does he disagree with Henry George's conclusion that eliminating the private appropriation of rent will facilitate the elimination of the others? If he does I take issue with him in that regard also. This is all spelled out in the published works of Henry George. It is possible to disagree as to what he meant in some instances, but that is all.

If the writer is suggesting that George's views should be modified to meet current needs I have no intention of deterring him, irrespective of my disagreement. But if it is to be changed call it Professor Cord's or anyone else's philosophy, not Henry George's.

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The redoubtable Mr. Bauer thumbs his Bartlett's Familiar Quotations with the best, and for refutations of his major quotes I recommend the same

source to anyone who knows the alphabet.

He does, however, ask two direct questions—and since at least one of them is addressed to me, I would like to answer them.

The first: Speaking of men in a bread line, Mr. Bauer asks, "Is this the way to support them?" No, Mr. Bauer, not in Utopia. Not in a country with a just economy. But in a country whose economic system does not provide opportunity for them to earn their own bread, yes, it is the way. Of course charity is cold, humiliating, often demoralizing—but it beats starvation. To me, and, fortunately, to humane people everywhere, each individual life is uniquely valuable. People are not just expendable parts of a system, and not only "our kind of people" have a right to live.

I wonder: if, as conservatives imply, our economic system is perfect, deducting accretions of the years since 1932, and if there is no reason for poverty, why are we trying to introduce Georgism? Just to lower the taxes of the already affluent? If, as the ancient "ethic" holds, a man who needs help proves thereby that he does not deserve it, why did Henry George bother? I know that these questions would be answered only by more irrelevancies, so consider them rhetorical.

The second question: "How was it when England was merrie, and the revenue came not from improvements, but wholly from the land?" It is amusing and amazing that a person of Mr. Bauer's leanings should choose the reign of poor, unstable King Henry VI as his model of "merriment," and the understandably biased words of his appointed chancellor as a source. More objective historians tell us that it was the era when law and order broke down in England. Nobles spurned the law and settled disputes by force, and bands of marauders roamed