

A Word With You

IT has been ruefully noted by more than one intelligent observer of the social scene that America has no positive philosophy of life, no goal it is willing to strive for, as the Communists have. Instead, America seems to react negatively to situations as they arise.

Labor unions resist labor-saving inventions and are now in a dither about automation. The conservative opposition offers no constructive alternative, but continually grumbles about union demands and government controls.

The government itself has worked its way into a purposeless turgidity. Local, state and federal governments have reached a fiscal impasse. There is no philosophy of taxation, but merely a desperate and greedy snatching at everything that moves.

America's reactions to communism, too, are negative. All over the world, communism takes the initiative and American policy is to counteract and combat it, nothing better.

The American people, by and large, just want to get along, to bask in whatever material possessions can be scraped together in an unsteady world. What is the future of a nation that has reached this soporific state?

America would find a positive and worthy philosophy if it would discover its own Henry George, who promulgated a timely yet timeless philosophy. It is uncanny how George hit upon the matters that are the most crucial in

the world today—but that is because his mind penetrated to fundamentals.

The tax situation is certainly one of the most urgent of today's problems. Current tax practices are becoming more and more outrageous. The "boom-and-bust" cycle remains as the specter that dominates the government's pusillanimous and patchwork planning. The Georgist philosophy looks at the problem squarely and strikes at the heart of it.

The land question is acute in most countries of the world—and where it is most acute, there is the most trouble brewing. The land question is the lever by which Communists lift entire countries. The Georgist philosophy gives a definitive solution to the land question, applicable to all countries.

These and the other central questions of today—the problems of international trade barriers, the question whether civilization is going to destroy itself or advance to new heights, the bogey-man of overpopulation—these are the things that George ferreted out from the welter of local and temporal problems of his day. He integrated his solutions into a wholesome and inspiring philosophy of life.

Here is an American philosophy that has the strength and the wit to rout communism. Here is a positive philosophy worth espousing, worth striving for, worth living for—if need be, worth dying for.

—Robert Clancy

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives value to land, therefore the income from land values (rent of land) belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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