

A Word With You

OUR society today is in need of a new "breakthrough." Accustomed habits of thinking and doing in our social, political and economic life have brought us to a dead end, and we know not which way to turn.

America no longer looks confidently to the future as she once did. Instead of pioneers blazing new trails, we have people thinking only of social security and fringe benefits. Instead of proudly facing the world, we shrink from every new crisis.

There is still much idealism in this country and in the world. But misguided idealism won't do. Much enthusiasm and energy in many countries is wasted on such causes as nationalism and xenophobia.

The "upper classes," traditional leaders of society, are for the most part leading us nowhere at all. If they are not thinking up new diversions for themselves, they are supporting futile (but tax-exempt) charities and research projects. The newer wealthy upstarts are too busy chasing the buck to think of anything else.

Every so often we get angry at something or somebody and want to rattle the sabre. But at some point in recent history, war simply stopped being a way out (not that it ever was). The change wasn't after the atom bomb was dropped, as we did have Korea since then. It may have been at the time of the Suez crisis. At any rate, "world opinion," perhaps

for the first time in history, no longer hankers for war as the way to settle things.

Our intellectuals have let us down. If they have not capitulated to the lower standards prevailing, they are off in a corner, specializing in their specialty. But the way forward will have to be a retreat from today's fragmentation and over-specialization. The kind of "breakthrough" needed is not the kind we hear so much about in medicine when a new "wonder drug" is discovered. We may find ourselves closer to the solution of such frightful killers as cancer when we look at the total environment.

And this looking at the whole picture is what is needed in general. We have come to the point where every avenue of our lives connects with every other avenue. We've been bumbling along, patching and improvising our laws, our taxes, our whole economy. A new and higher synthesis is needed—one that can look at all mankind, its needs and aspirations—one that can look over the walls of our blind alleys and see the green pastures beyond.

Moments like this have happened before in history. For a long time society goes its accustomed way, then—apparently all at once—stalemates, log-jams and disasters occur. Well, we've gotten this far in history; let's see if we can get through the crisis of the present.

—Robert Clancy

Vol. 27, No. 3

March, 1964

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 rental value to land, therefore the 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.

Publication committee: William S. O'Connor, Arnold A. Weinstein and Lancaster M. Greene, chairman. Editor: Alice Elizabeth Davis. Subscriptions \$1 a year; single copies 10c. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.