

A Word With You

THE recent sparse convention of the Communist party in New York high-lighted the small measure to which this once boisterous organization has shrunk. We're not exactly beating a dead horse, however, as one-third of the world is under something called communism. But in this country, at any rate, communism aint what she used to be. The party's high-command itself admits that it has "lost touch with the people," and they're trying to restore it by "Americanizing" the party.

The chiefest criticism levelled at Communist theory, and Marxism in general, is that the calculations and prophecies of Karl Marx have failed of realization. The working classes have not become more downtrodden, capitalism has not destroyed itself. The dialectical time-table has popped several gaskets.

But Henry George also made dire prophecies about low wages and the decline of civilization. Why aren't Georgists demoralized the way Marxists are because the end of the world hasn't come? Here's why —

Firstly, the Communist analysis is mythology, metaphysics and mish-mash. Its mechanistic evolutionary views are just not true to life. It led down the wrong path when it set the laborers against the capitalists.

The Georgist philosophy, on the other hand, sees labor and capital as partners and monopoly as the enemy. Nothing has happened to prove George wrong in this respect—on the contrary. George also avoids—even opposes—a mechanistic or automatic evolutionary outlook, but declares that man can choose his fate.

Secondly, communism in practice is ugly. Not abundance but scarcity, not freedom but slavery, not a "withering

away of the state" but a brutal police state—these have been the fruits of the Revolution. Recent events in Hungary have shocked into final disillusionment all but the most debauched Communists.

Georgism has not yet been applied on a large scale. Wherever it has been tried, though only partially, it has tended to confirm Georgists in their prognostications. The things that they say will happen do happen to the degree that the application is made.

Thirdly, Communists are impressed by surface appearances. They are awed by big machinery, and capitalism really turns it out. They have implicit faith in government fiat, and our government has done a lot of fiat. Marx is big medicine man, but powerful rival medicine man Keynes him come along and say, let there be money, and there is money, let there be jobs, and there is jobs. Communists believe in this sort of witchery and they are impressed and dismayed.

But Georgists are not fooled. Their analysis carries them beneath the surface and they see economic forces and currents at work, tendencies, stresses and strains, more than meets the casual eye. They know that unless basic causes are tackled, the dire prophecies may yet be realized. They have more confidence in natural law than in bureaucratic directives. And they have something to look forward to, for they know that time will prove them right.

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