

By ROBERT CLANCY

"All men have an equal right to the use of land, and all men have a right to the full product of their labor. To secure these rights, all taxes on labor, industry and trade shall be abolished and the rent of the land shall be collected in lieu thereof."

When will such a declaration be adopted by our own nation—or any nation? The principle is simple and clear and true enough. Yet it seems terribly difficult to get across. Present it to the leaders, and, if they don't get apoplexy, they will tell you, "It may be a good idea, but you must first get the people to accept it." Present it to the people, and if their minds are not clogged with false doctrines, they will say, "It sounds fine, but it is an impractical dream because no leader will take it up." So there you are.

Meanwhile, the people and the leaders are getting excited over what are taken for the burning issues of the day. Shall we restrict labor unions further or give them more leeway? What governmental housing program shall we adopt? To what extent shall we re-arm for the next war? You can see that there is no place for a proposition that will eliminate the necessity for union legislation, government housing and war. Such a philosophy seems to cut at a different angle from the issues that are contested in the arena of action. Even communists, entangled in an unwieldy mess of irrational dogma, find more in the current scene to get excited about.

Is the simple, sturdy philosophy of freedom so out of joint with the times that it must be dismissed as a dream? Does realism demand that such a philosophy be enshrouded and honored from afar?

Or is the reality of our times itself a bad dream that must dissolve against the light of approaching truth?

If the principle of freedom be true, then come it must. When the fevered insubstantial "realities" of today spend themselves into nothingness, then must the people and the leaders and the nations face the light with the knowledge that "This is reality."

"Whether it comes with the carol of larks or the roll of the war-drums," said Henry George, "it is coming—it will come. The standard . . . may be torn by prejudice and blackened by calumny; it may now move forward, and again be forced back. But once loosed, it can never again be furled!"