

A Word With You

EVERY generation has its own mythology, and ours is no exception. But it's our "thinkers" and "leaders," and not the "common man," who have been seduced by the following notions:

The big problem today is, what are people going to do with all the increased leisure time they're getting?

What leisure time? I suspect that this myth is wholly a deduction. We have new labor-saving devices every year, and so it is logical to infer that therefore people have more free time. But if our learned friends would only get around during rush hours, they would soon realize that the Great American Rat-race does not allow us that much leisure time.

The current "population explosion" poses one of the biggest menaces for the future of mankind.

Whoever promoted this one did a real selling job. Population growth is taken as a disastrous thing in itself. Why isn't it a wonderful thing that so many more precious productive human beings are coming into the world? After all, 2.7 billion people still leave this a very empty planet.

We are living in a complex world and there are no longer any simple answers to today's problems.

Marshall all your facts, use your most incisive logic, present an open-and-shut case on any matter of social policy—and for all that, a certain species of intellectual will whistle the

same tune all the way through: "This is a complex world, etc." The truth is that this is no more than mental laziness parading as practical wisdom.

Laissez faire, natural rights and natural law have all been disproven.

By whom or by what? The fact is that these concepts have been dismissed and discarded—not disproven.

Laissez faire means equal freedom if it means anything. When have we ever enjoyed such bliss?

Say "natural rights" and Mr. Know-it-all will say "18th century." But it is nonetheless true that in the 20th century, as in all centuries, violation of natural rights leads to disastrous consequences.

As for natural law—you will still fall if you step off the roof—and the price of goods will still fall if you increase supply and decrease demand.

All our basic economic problems are under control because of governmental safeguards.

I wonder if our leaders really believe this myth or whether they just hope it will keep us quiet. Inflation, slums, strikes, widespread corruption, oppressive taxation and the constant threat of a recession—all this and more does not add up to a society that has its economic problems under control. Well, the Georgist movement represents one segment of society that will not keep quiet about it.

—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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