

A Word With You

THE abolition of all taxes save that upon land values, and full free trade—these are the goals of the philosophy of Henry George. These are the Georgist contributions toward building the good society. Other implications go along with it—such as the free market, free private enterprise, abolition of monopolies and special privileges of all sorts, Jeffersonian government, and the free movement of peoples. Liberty and justice are the key words.

But the basic steps remain the two mentioned above—the single tax and free trade. Indeed, the single tax implies free trade, as *all* taxes are to be abolished. This basic reform would make the realization of the other goals easier. Without it, how can those goals be achieved?

There is often a reluctance on the part of people who believe this to speak of the "single tax." Some feel that it is a misnomer. Others argue that the rent of land would not be enough for today's big governmental budgets and that the single tax simply looks like crackpotism.

Let us not yield the field so easily. In the first place, the rent of land is probably much greater than anyone imagines. In the second place, as the single tax (pardon) were applied, all production would rise—rent, too. In the third place, governmental budgets would fall as economic conditions im-

proved. What right have these budgets got to be so big in the first place?

What arguments can be mustered by proponents of more than one tax? Will anybody in his right mind say that the way taxes are now levied is reasonable, beneficial, wise? Can anyone justify the way all levels of government are wildly groping for more and more revenue, regardless of the bad effects on the economy, honesty and morale?

And as for the expenditures! Do we have to supinely tolerate every new bulge in the budget, every new bureau created, every wasteful spending spree, every mad race with Russia? Is our only question supposed to be, how to raise the revenue for all this? We've got to learn to live within our own income personally. Why should we not demand that the government live within its own proper income—that is, the rent of land? What alternative is there outside of the road to ruin?

It is true that in the practical application of our aims, we cannot always demand and get the full measure. "Take what you can get, but press for the whole reform."

Let us never abandon our complete ideal. It is reasonable and just and can hold its own against the present system—which is the real crackpotism. Let us not be ashamed of the single tax.

—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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