

A Word With You

HOW long before the Georgist philosophy becomes generally recognized and accepted? This is a question on the minds of those who have been introduced to it. Some may feel it has no chance at all, but most feel it should by this time be closer to acceptance than it is, and want to know how long it will take. How have other philosophies fared, comparatively?

The classical case is Christianity, which took 300 years to become accepted. In the Middle Ages it took even longer—500 years—for arabic numerals to be adopted by Europeans. But the modern world does at least move faster.

Marx and Engels issued their Communist Manifesto in 1848, and 70 years later the Bolsheviks took over in Russia. Another 30 years, and one-third of the world was Communist-dominated.

The woman suffrage movement started in the U.S. in 1869 and within half a century they had obtained their goal. Freud came out with his strange theories in the 1890's and by the 1920's people all over the world were dropping like flies onto psychoanalytic couches.

Perhaps the most speedy success was that of Lord Keynes. His *General Theory* appeared in 1936, and a decade later governments were guided by it and college economics was permeated with it.

It is now close to 90 years since *Progress and Poverty* was given to the

world—and what's holding up the parade? Sometimes it seems to be around the corner—as in 1964, when some were impressed by Johnson's war on poverty, or by Goldwater's speeches on freedom, and if either took one more step, he'd be a single taxer. But that one step turns out to be across a Grand Canyon.

And there's the rub. The Georgist philosophy, simple as it appears to be, is so fundamental and far-reaching that accepting it means letting go of a universe of fallacies and malpractices that are easier to continue. To take one instance—the notion that money is wealth lies behind our entire practice of foreign aid, urban renewal, gold panic, union demands, international trade and much more. The theories that enable us to tinker with the system without basic changes are readily adopted. Keynesianism certainly does this. Even Communism turns out to be a ruling clique on top and the rest on bottom—it can even be the same clique as before. Georgism wants more than tinkering or cliques—it wants fundamental justice for all men. So our job is much greater.

But as George knew—and as most of us feel—these ideas must eventually be recognized. Even now there is a perceptible advance in our direction on many levels—in education, journalism, in city planning, and internationally. Let's wait till 1979 to see what happens.

—Robert Clancy

Vol. 31, No. 4

April, 1968

The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York, N. Y. 10021, 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 the 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.

The Henry George News does not assume responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles.