

AN I-YOU CHAT

We have had numerous interesting comments in the IU NEWSLETTER on the reasons for the lack of substantial progress for the Georgist movement and for land value taxation. Our ideas have been preached for 90 years, counting from Henry George's Progress and Poverty, and here we are, for the most part, unhonored and unsung, with ourselves doing most of the weeping.

Is it possible that we are wrong and that is why the world has paid us so little heed? But in thinking and rethinking the matter through, we cannot find anything wrong with our premises, reasoning and conclusions. Nor have successful refutations been launched against us.

Are we too peaceful and reasonable? Others have enforced their demands through aggressive and violent means, and have thereby gained more concessions than we have. Yet ours is a peaceful and reasonable philosophy and we cannot get ourselves to abandon means that are consonant with the philosophy.

Our trouble may be that we have a different "Weltanschauung" (world outlook) than most philosophies prevailing today. As we explain our proposals, which seem simple and self-evident to us, we may not realize that they depend on a viewpoint, on premises and an analysis that are not widely accepted.

Ole Wang of Norway writes: "In return for the text of a papal encyclical I gave a Roman Catholic clergyman a copy of The Condition of Labour. He was evidently not interested and said there is no by-passing Armageddon."

This is an example of a world outlook that precludes even initial consideration of the Georgist philosophy. Those who are committed to other outlooks - for instance, socialist and communist - have their ears closed to our message. (Many who shun socialist labels are firmly convinced that government has both the duty and the power to solve all our problems.) Equally deaf to our ideas are many who are of the unalterable opinion that by hard work and perseverance anyone can succeed and the poor have themselves to blame for their poverty.

When we consider the gigantic forces - and the inertia - arrayed against even any preliminary look at our philosophy, our puny efforts to reform the world may seem laughable. Yet - I dare to say it - we are right and they are wrong. The still small voice of truth must be kept alive and be ready for healing the world when all else has failed.

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