

*This Ludlow must be bats.*

## Georgism and Men

By VICTOR CRONK

Some people are hard to suit. Look at Robert C. Ludlow, in the July Freeman, cuffing the poor little bourgeois all around the lot because he supports some religious or other cause, cooperatively with his brethren, but doesn't rally to the collectivist banner. If this were not sufficient affliction, the little fellow is assured that his grave is already dug, and that the blood bath of 1940 is going to push him in.

I wonder who will be left to bury the dead. All the Americans I know of, from Ford and Rockefeller down, or up, are as bourgeois as any harmless white collar worker. Maybe the lunatic fringe will attend to it. And probably they will be too busy helping themselves to bother. So we shall probably have to conclude that we are not dead, after all, and just climb out and pick up where we left off . . . Truly it is a little discouraging to hear even an orthodox Georgist, or one who claims to be such, talk about capitalists and the masses. Henry George was concerned about men, not the masses. And rightly so, for we don't have masses in America. If we didn't learn in our first lesson not to tangle our feet in that way, then we are off to a bad start; and that, apparently, accounts for Mr. Ludlow's stand.

It is the same when he talks about the revolutionary bourgeois. The species is neither English nor American. It originated in France; and just look at France. Our way is not that of revolution, but of appeal to ancient right. The affair of 1776 was not a revolution, except in the sense that we got rid of George III. It was an appeal to the rights of English citizens. These rights were defended, in England, by Burke and Pitt and Camden and no less powerfully than by the Adamases and Otises in America. Henry George, employing the terminology of Jefferson, called them natural rights. Whatever we call them, we were born into them and they are unalien-

able. They are of the essence of our existence. They need no vindication from us. But they do call for defense. Now more than ever.

Anticipating, perhaps, the prospect of the soapless days to follow the blood bath, Mr. Ludlow berates the bourgeois whipping boy for his shower baths and his attempts at cleanliness, and asks why he doesn't cooperate in the economic order. He does cooperate. Capitalism, private capitalism, is a magnificent example of cooperation. It works from the smallest units upward, and it is essentially voluntary. Handicapped though it is by the system of private control of natural resources, it yet does wonders. It hasn't failed. It hasn't yet had half a chance. The kind of cooperation Mr. Ludlow apparently calls for is imposed from above and it is anything but voluntary. This is not to criticize voluntary cooperatives. They have, in truth, done noble work. But no cooperative can overcome the law of rent.

That the whipping boy's mental processes are none too lucid is no doubt true. But they do keep close to certain elemental facts, so they seem to work, one way or another. One is that while man shall not live by bread alone, yet he must have bread. And that the surest way to get bread is to look, not to the county seat or to Washington, but to his two good hands.

"The movement has become respectable," so we are told. Was it ever anything else? Mary Ellen Lease, a fiery radical, once stated at a Georgist meeting back in the nineties that Kansas produced enough hemp to hang all the landlords in America. Henry George, who had just come in and was sitting in a back seat, turned to an associate and said, "That is no way to make converts" . . . If we don't command respect we shall get no hearing. And we can hardly command respect by ceasing to be respectable.

Production for profit was considered by the revolutionary bourgeois, so we are told, to be preferable to production for use. They seem to have assumed that they must make a profit, or at least come out even, or they would starve. That seems to have been true whether men sold flint arrow heads or radio sets. Production in a capitalistic economy is for use. If anyone doubts it, let him ask any merchant whose shelves are loaded with goods that, for one reason or another, he cannot sell. No use, no sales. No sales, no profit. It is just as simple as that. No profit and he locks up, or the sheriff does it for him.

So, the bourgeois who is now using the "will to power" must "tear it out of his heart." But, supposing he has done that, Mr. Ludlow doesn't specify just where this abandoned power is to lodge. Power, among men, doesn't float about aimlessly in space. It comes to rest somewhere, and always in an individual. Logically, it will, in Mr. Ludlow's new world, dwell in someone who has neglected to follow his advice.

Without the profit motive, it will indeed be a changed world. But why not begin with something easier, and eliminate the sex motive?

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on but education. If the philosophy of ethical democracy cannot live by education then it must die. But we know that because it is geared to eternal, inexorable, universal laws it will not die.\*

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