

## Breaking the Barriers

Dr. Henry George III spoke at the Henry George School in New York on March 3. Being an expert speaker he did not use notes. The school's secretary, Mabel Carlson, who writes the prettiest and speediest shorthand we have ever seen, turned in the following report on the talk. We decided the telegraphic style was brisk and interesting, though not intended as a verbatim transcription. This covers only a fragment of his fine talk. Henry George III will speak again in this vicinity on April 26 at the "Remembrance Program" in Newark.

I HAVE two axes to grind. My feeling about taking of life (capital punishment) and my feeling about the taking of rent. I don't need to get off the platform here to talk about the single tax, but I want to tell you how I feel about our social barriers, my concept of man's relation to man, and from that to man's relation to the state and the state to man.

All through the ages leaders have pro-pounded economic theories. The Boston Tea Party—"No taxation without representation"—established our Constitution and wrote our Declaration of Independence and the thirteen colonies came to be sovereign states. They hated each other but they hated England more and drove the invaders out. They were not cooperating. New Jersey taxed New York and New York tried to keep woodcutters from Connecticut from coming in and selling their wood. That went on but still we became a country.

I went to Washington, D. C., to find the laws which inhibit trade between states. I went to the Department of Commerce, Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture. They couldn't tell me anything, but advised me to call the American Trucking Company, because they run into restrictive tariffs every day. I couldn't get hold of the man I wanted to see in Washington, so I returned to Wilmington and talked to him on the telephone. He told me of a load of wire for TVA. Because the truck was six feet too long it was stopped at Tennessee although 10,000 people were without light and refrigeration. The truck waited at the border for sixty hours.

A man wanted to send a consignment from California into Kentucky. The trailer was 80 feet long and weighed 85,000 pounds. It was hauled to the border. They said the truck was 45,000 pounds too heavy. The man had to hire another truck and divide the load.

The cost to the trucking company is thousands of dollars each year which is passed on to the public. We are getting back to the condition we were in when we fought England for our freedom.

I am a member of a lot of things. I belonged to the National Civil Service Reform League—an enlightening experience. I was going to reform Delaware. A man says to himself, I will take the examination and pass, and get a job in the post office; so I will be secure for life as long as I behave myself. Then we have the war veterans coming back and wanting jobs, so they go to Washington, Albany or New York and get ten credits on civil service examinations. A smart man gets 85 points, but a veteran who gets only 76, with his 10 extra points has 86 points and gets the job. We should go out into prison reform and civil service reform, and see what they are trying to do—realize the

enormous pressure being brought by pressure groups. Each of us has an axe to grind and when we combine we are irresistible.

Mr. Clancy told you I was in the throes of giving birth to my first child, a novel entitled *Blood and Coal* to be published soon. I have been in labor for several years. The story I have written deals with the coal fields. My sympathies are with the miners. I got a miner to show me a strip mine, which is considered the safest; yet men are crushed to death. There are 65,000 casualties a year. Only two out of 7,000 mines are actually qualified under the Federal code. In Virginia there are 112 game wardens but only 29 mine inspectors.

The coal miners strike while we are freezing to death. John L. Lewis is the only man who has the courage to speak his piece, but without him the miners would have had their faces ground off. The miners and operators are the victims. The mine owners are responsible. The Girard Estate\*, absentee landlord, is to blame, not the operators, but the miners don't know it so they strike against the operators. I am a Georgist and I haven't made a dent. When I was a small boy I was afraid all the wrongs in the world would be solved because the Single Tax was the solution and it was simple, clear and beautiful, and if the world accepted it, there wouldn't be anything for me to do. Now I have Henry George IV at home, ten years old, and I think there will be a lot for him to do.

I felt if I got into politics and preached "the gospel" I could convert people to the faith. The Democratic party, being a minority in Delaware, were looking for somebody. I stepped out and offered to run with the planks of my platform reassessment of land value and shifting taxation from improvements to land values. They didn't think much of that. We have a group of politicians who run things behind closed doors. They let me run. I thought I might win, but I did need party help. They said if you win, we want to be able to tell you who you are to appoint. Wilmington is no different from any other city. I said, submit a list of names and if they are worthy, I will appoint them.

I was defeated, and wrote a column "Government for the People." I wrote 18 articles on "Should We Fear Labor"; 12 on "Can We Save Capitalism?" I was trying to explain the danger in a union. When the next election came up, the party didn't want me, but I ran again and beat the Democratic candidate in the primaries by 18 votes. I was accused of stuffing the box and I know it was done. I was the Democratic candidate but the party didn't want me. Organized labor met me and said, you can't win without our support. If you are elected, will it be agreeable to you to select various people for offices? I said, No, I will put in people I think are good. On election day those voters were absent.

When asked if I would run again I said—No, it is more important that I keep my personal integrity, not to be confused with Republicans or Democrats or Georgists. I say cherish what will advance human rights. When you have people who believe in something because they believe in the inherent good of the individual the cause will become a crusade and you will have something that will move mountains and break down barriers.

\* Owns all anthracite mines in Eastern Pennsylvania.