

MANIFESTO OF THE GEORGIST LIBERAL PARTY

To the people of the Republic and to Georgist bodies in foreign countries:

The National Circle of the Georgist Liberal Party, at an extraordinary meeting held in its premises at Buenos Aires on the fourth of May, 1926, resolved to modify the character of its activities by abandoning political action so that the society might concentrate itself henceforth upon the teaching and expounding the ideas which have animated the Party since the date of its formation, 4th april, 1921. Our Party continues, thus transformed into a new body called the *Georgist Liberal Society*.

The principle determining motives of this resolution are twofold:

The first is that our ideas have in a marked degree penetrated the intelligence of the most cultured men among those who give special attention to public affairs, to such a point indeed that governments of various political complexions address themselves to carrying out, and indeed do carry out, reforms inspired by the Georgist ideas, to whose teaching we are dedicated. The most notable effect in this direction is the thorough evolution already abundantly manifest in the leaders of the Socialist Party which, commenced by the adoption of the typical propositions of the old liberalism such as freetrade, a rational monetary system and free competition, has gone on not only to apprehend many of the errors of Marxism, arriving gradually at a recognition of the true purpose of the division of the world into separate States and the maintenance of an armed force, and has at last arrived at the adoption of the principles of the new liberalism, namely the concentration of taxation into a tax on the value of land, apart from improvements, and the necessity of distinguishing, between *capital* and *privilege* (formerly confused and rolled up in the improper appellation of »bourgeoisie« or of »capitalism«), and finally registered in a recent and authorised manifesto its decision to maintain private capital while combatting gigantic privileged plutocracies (arbitrarily created by the law) which in the eyes of the uninformed public continue to be confounded with true productive capital.

Seeing that this great recreative process means in fact adhesion to the essentials of the Georgist liberal doctrine, we no longer see any object in maintaining an organization for fighting elections when there is a much larger and longer organized Party coming to the defence of our own principles, and which reshaped by virtue of a just observation and appreciation of the numerous social experiments carried out in many countries since the great war and of a better theoretical enlightenment of its leaders with regard to the social problem (to which we are happy to have contributed) has proved itself gifted with a praiseworthy capacity for learning and unlearning, making its party deserving of much confidence as an efficient factor of social betterment. The perception that the land question is the main and indeed the only (and the whole of) the social question has already taken root also among many other sincerely progressive and cultured elements.

The second important motive which determines our resolution is the systematic silence used against our ideas by the metropolitan press having the widest circulation and, with scarce and not very noticeable exceptions, by all the press of the country. In this war of silence we have met a practically insuperable obstacle to electoral progress; although indeed it is certain that the press or any other force is impotent to strangle the progress of true and for reaching ideas, such as those of George, it is none the less certain that without being broadcast in periodicals of wide circulation they cannot rapidly reach the mass of the common people who lack sufficient means and critical faculties to obtain political information and knowledge other, than that which is purveyed to them daily by the newspapers. And as it is the masses who form the great volume of the electorate, the evolutionary process of their enlightenment thus proceeds more slowly than the importance of our work deserves. For the present therefore will be more efficacious to concentrate our resources on doctrinal propaganda without dissipating them on electoral contest showing little result.

The conspiracy of silence of the great (pseudo-independent) papers undoubtedly serves the purpose of maintaining the continuance of the monstrous privilege of the landlords on which is founded the economic slavery of the workers, and it is easily explained by the fact that most of the proprietors of the great daily papers belong to the landlord class . . .

We have pleasure on the other hand in proclaiming, for the honour of Argentine democracy and for the special information of Georgist Societies in foreign countries, that so far as the national authorities are concerned we have always met with all the guarantees of free action and respect for our ideas which correspond with the aims of a truly republican government.

We think also that, in view of the distrust felt by the common people with regard to even the most noble political action (a distrust caused by the undoubted corruption which took place formerly and continues at present, although there is daily improvement), our exhortations, which will be unceasing, in order to incite and revive belief in sane and indispensable political action on the part of the people under the protection of our excellent Constitution and Electoral Law, will be better listened to and understood if we propagate them from a position which excludes the suspicion of serving mere electoral ends.

We continue firm then in our conviction that the emancipation of the workers cannot be accomplished except by the intelligent political action of the workers themselves, as we have always taught. The Russian experience has practically and conclusively demonstrated the breakdown of communism, collectivism and co-operative systems under present conditions, as also the occupation of the Italian factories by the workers organizations has shown plainly the necessity of directive ability, and it is very likely that the present great English strike will put an end to the superstition that individualistic economy can be abolished by strikes or the present position of the workers improved or indeed preserved. We reaffirm our correction in the Liberal principle which the disciples of Henry George have rejuvenated and completed; we fight and shall resist every attempt to enslave the individual by any kind of dictatorship whether it be feudal theocratic, military or communist; we reject paternalism in government, since all that we require of the State is the firm maintenance of order, justice and the republican guarantees of individual liberty and rightful property. We maintain responsibility for all that the Liberal Georgist Party has subscribed to since the day when it launched its initial manifesto of basic principles in which we find nothing to amend for on the contrary the events and lessons of the years that have since passed have served to ratify each one of those principles. They continue to be the basis of our programme.

With the object of prosecuting the diffusion of Georgist doctrines, coinciding with the widest concepts of sound liberalism, (which various lessons, suffered by many who used to despise it, have happily rehabilitated) we invite all conscientious and well meaning men, independently of whatever other political action they may hold it fitting to participate in individually, to join our ranks in order to carry on the cause which found in our country a man, Bernardino Rivadavia a precursor of genius the most noble, profound, scientific, and eloquent of evangelists in the works of Henry George.

For the executive Committee

C. Villalobos Dominguez, President.

Wilfredo Sola, General Secretary.

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