

What Will History's Verdict Be On Franklin D. Roosevelt?

THIS is so admirable a summary of the achievements and policies of President Roosevelt that we print it in full. It is from our valued cotemporary, *Progress*, of Melbourne, Australia.

The eyes of the world are concentrated upon the United States of America. There is seen a concerted attempt to meet locally the universal depression which threatens in its course the very existence of the great Republic. A current story, if true, shows the serious climax already reached there. Said one of Mr. Roosevelt's friends to him regarding his Recovery Plan: "If this thing wins you will be the greatest President in history." He replied: "If it loses I shall be the last President in history." He also has said: "Unless there is a drastic change we cannot go through another winter." One newspaper writes: "If Roosevelt's programme fails we have not yet seen anything in the way of depression and collapse."

Fear of the future is so great that it has arrested political partisanship. The historic Republican Party is dumb; erstwhile free-spoken Democratic leaders say, "Yes, Mr. Roosevelt," while the President, his Brain Trust and the National Recovery Administration, known as N.R.A., are looked up to and obeyed by the multitude as an orchestra follows the baton of the conductor.

The appalling seriousness of the whole situation lies in this practically general passive acquiescence, for, if after all this display of confidence and obedience on the part of the great majority, and surrender of opponents, N.R.A. culminates in a disastrous breakdown, then must follow a reaction. Turmoil and chaos will shake the U.S.A. to its foundations, the effect of which will reverberate throughout the world.

That the programme must fail to restore prosperity seems inevitable for it is only a rehash of superficial experiments tried more or less elsewhere without success. For instance, regarding the N.R.A. policy of putting unemployed upon public works. Mr. Runciman, speaking on behalf of the British Government last July, said: "We have terminated our scheme for dealing with unemployment by way of capital expenditure works. We shall not reopen those schemes. We are abandoning this policy once for all. We have in recent years devoted about £100,000,000 sterling to schemes of this kind. For every £1,000,000 sterling expended we have employed 2,000 men directly and about 2,000 indirectly. It is expensive, and it is not an experiment we intend to repeat."

Another N. R. A. scheme, that some should work less hours, to enable others to obtain work, evades the labor problem which hinges on the question of justice: on the mal-distribution of wealth, and not on the distribution of labor hours. Schemes to raise prices and provide employment are now in operation, cancelling each other, such as rooting up cotton—which means less employment in cotton spinning and contingent industries, less transport activity, etc. Allotting \$200,000,000 to hog growers for curtailing their output, and sacrificing 5,000,000 hogs to raise prices means so much less employment in the food industry. The reclamation of 2,000,000 acres of land while other land is being put out of cultivation, and while \$150,000,000 is paid as rental to farmers for leaving portions of their corn lands idle; also reducing oil production by about 350,000 barrels daily, must mean more unemployment in the long run. Such vast expenditures cannot go on indefinitely, but these lunatic activities are in the meantime accepted as the highest wisdom. Up till now in the programme the land and taxation questions, preeminent over all others and the underlying cause of the trouble, have been ignored with the exception of \$25,000,000 being allotted for the purpose of setting a certain number of families of the unemployed upon the land—another outworn idea.

One wonders whether Mr. Roosevelt with his intellectual capacity knows the real remedy for the depression, and whether he hopes that after the trying out of the present schemes the people will divert their thoughts into the right channel? Whether he has in the back of his mind, "You have faith in the present nonsense. Nothing will satisfy you till you have experimented with it. Go ahead! Having learned how NOT to do it, you may then listen to reason and try the right course."

On protective tariffs we know Mr. Roosevelt's mind. In his candidature for the Presidency he said:

"In the past the proposition has been laid down with great boldness that high tariffs interfere only slightly, if at all, with our export or our import trade; that they are necessary to the success of agriculture and afford essential farm relief; that they do not interfere with the payments of debts to us; that they are absolutely necessary to the economic formula for the abolition of poverty. The experience of the last four years has unhappily demonstrated the error of every single one of these propositions; that every one of them has been one of the effective causes of the present depression, and finally that no substantial progress or recovery from the depression, either here or abroad, can be had without forthright recognition of these errors."

On the land question he is evidently a student of Henry George, for he frequently quoted him when Presidential candidate, and we read in American papers he has written of Henry George as the "Master mind." Mr. Roosevelt then surely should know the true remedy, the abolition of the colossal collection of the People's Land Rent by private individuals, and that it should be turned into the public treasury, with the coincident total abolition of the vast network of taxation blighting the country's industry.

What a blessing would it be, ere it be too late, were Mr. Roosevelt to tell forth the truth and become a modern Moses, showing the way to the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey. Thereby would he become not only the greatest President of the United States, but one of the greatest men in world history.

Or will he, presuming he has the knowledge, like others in high position who know the way of Justice and Freedom—we have them in Australia—fail to dedicate himself to his high task, and as President leave behind him an unhonored name, and his country weltering in misery?

What is the verdict awaiting Franklin D. Roosevelt?

Equality of Opportunity

OUR leaders of thought and action in the community are disappointingly slow in presenting a logical cause for the distressing social condition that the people of all countries have been groaning under for the past three years, or any safeguard against a recurrence when the present storm has passed. Surely, no subject that engages men's attention could establish a stronger claim for intelligent action than this. Much money and effort have been devoted to research in recent years, the purpose for the most part being to increase the profits of capital. Can it be said that it has a superior claim to that of human welfare and security against such conditions as now prevail? It is evident that we need not hope for our legislators to do anything to point a way through. From the head of the national government down to the humblest councilor, they are busied in looking up new sources of revenue and, incidentally, new burdens for the people whose interests they are supposed to represent.

As a matter of reducing the city's idle throng a plan has been evolved of moving families to the hinterland of the province, where the land speculation does not yet seem to have been attracted. Still another plan is to arrange for the unemployed to have temporary plots of land in the city where the landlord spider has spun his little web and is waiting for his hungry human fly to come in. Those who have had their sympathies drawn to the dire results of the game that is being played and have had to come to the aid of their suffering neighbors, might

be expected to give heed to the chain of circumstances. For a time that we may call normal, the law of supply and demand functions fairly well. Then added capital, encouraging invention, develops a surplus supply in the factory, the elevator and the storehouse. An excess demand soon follows, but it is in the workman's cellar and pantry. The first is stalled for the want of a paying market. The second, represented by labor, starves in idleness because it lacks the one essential of production. What is this essential? The answer is found in the flight to idle land in the north and the city plots. A bare subsistence for a very few may be found there, but—let him who would see open his eyes. If giving access to the natural element to labor can be made to benefit in a very small degree, what might be hoped for from a wholesome restoration to the dispossessed and idle millions of their birthright lost by that most iniquitous steal of the ages, private land ownership? The evils traceable to this wrong are not removed by any little schemes to enable a few families to provide themselves with potatoes and cabbage. The families who are being exiled up near the North pole out of the immediate reach of the land speculator have an equal right with their fellow Canadians to the most valuable sites in the largest city. The easy plan of recognizing this natural right by collecting all annual land values into the public treasury and expending them for the general good would render taxation of every kind unnecessary. Labor as well as legitimately used capital would thus be set free and with an equality of opportunity the lion and the lamb might lie down together, and in this goodly land blighting depression would disappear.

E. S. GILBERT in Hamilton (Ontario) *Spectator*.

A Plea For Political Action by the Initiative

LETTER TO THE HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS

THIS assembly is not divided on the solution of our economic ills. There has not been nor will there be any revision of the economics of "Progress and Poverty." We need no patching like many movements for recovery. The question with us is to find the best way to get the attention of others on the solution.

Is there a way to make our work more effective? Can we create opposition and get the attention of the multitude? That will bring it into discussion, make it negative as well as positive, for and against, as in our sports and other contests?

Without finding fault with any one in the movement, I see a great need of collective action. We have a plan to abolish poverty and there should be a plan to get the people to see the plan. We have mastered economics. Now we must find the best plan to give it application.

We now seem to be inclosed from the rest of the world that we are trying to reach. We have schools and colleges, press and radios, but these channels or roads are so occupied that our voice is like a Voice in the Wilderness of Chaos. But there is a road for us and the people that we can use and no one can exclude us from it. We will not have to depend on others for a Right of Way. This road is the initiative in four of our States. The Initiatives in either of these States are good vehicles to convey our thought and at the same time put it in operation.

This plan for political action by the initiative is a plan to get our work out of "slow" into "high speed." It is the "Line of the Least Resistance." We can frame our own measure and ask people to sign the legal petition. This will get the signers' interest and make our own publicity and create the opposition that will give us the help we need to break the silence that our movement is shrouded in today. It is the way to put the Single Tax on the bill of fare.

We will fail as Custodians of the Knowledge that we have from "Progress and Poverty" if we do not use our organized effort to have a measure on the ballot in one of these States. The Single Tax seed

will grow now if planted in this way, for the people are seeking a change.

Some of you see the need of this collective action and I suggest a committee can give it the consideration it deserves. The Henry George Foundation can act as the promoting organization for a measure in any State that has the initiative. This will give indorsement and lead to a political action that will get us working together as an army. This work, like running a railroad or any other service that requires collective action, needs a head to function.

The N.R.A. we know will fail. It leaves the land owners at the feast while those that provide the feast are made to divide what this economic parasite does not devour. However, as this experiment will end in another blind alley, the people should more readily then vote "Yes" for the Single Tax if they have the opportunity. This conference is the logical body to take action at this opportune time. It will be a good investment for Single Tax Dollars.

St. Louis, Mo.

E. H. BOECK.

Radio Speech of Harry Weinberger for Welfare Committee

THROUGHOUT my career my interests have always been in economic justice, never in charity. But until the problems of economic justice are solved, someone must come to the relief of those families in acute need.

Everything I am, or almost everything I am, I owe to the City of New York. Born in the City of New York, and educated in its free public schools and high schools, I desire to give back to my city in its present great crises a little of the things that it gave to me.

There are in the City of New York at the present time, two hundred and fifty thousand families on the public relief roll, and at least thirty thousand families are in desperate need. Jobs and food and shelter are being taken care of by the City, the State and the Nation, and will continue to be taken care of by the City, the State and the Nation, but if every unemployed individual was given a job tomorrow, there would still be families who need the aid of the experienced social workers because of maladjustment, sickness, hopelessness, physical and mental breakdown in the families. Four million dollars are needed for this purpose. Some families are in a shell-shocked condition as much as any soldier was shell-shocked during the great war, on the battle-fields.

To me the most pitiful sight in the world is a man ready, able and willing to work, and unable to find work. The only thing that can be more pitiful is a family almost at the point of destitution, seeking help and unable to find it.

In my bringing up in the City of New York I have known poverty, I have known what it was to have the streets of New York City as my only playgrounds. I felt the lack of parks, of playgrounds, of swimming places. I have never lost my memories of my boyhood days in New York City. I have travelled to many cities of the world, but wherever I have gone, my heart always comes back to New York City as my home town. I have seen the beauty of Budapest, built on two hills, the loveliness of Vienna, on the Blue Danube, London on the sleepy Thames with almost every spot in the town old with historical memories, Mexico City on the mountain tops, Paris with its glamour, and parks, and wide boulevards, its marvelous art galleries, but always I come back to my New York City, situated at the cross-roads of the world, silhouetted against the sky, nestling between two rivers facing Europe—magnificent in its skylines—within its bounds the finest art, the finest theatres; with industry and trade, the last word in great progress, but in its border, like all other cities, also great poverty—great need.

Wherever I have gone in my travels I have always visited the art galleries and the theatres of every city. I have studied the great paintings and the sculpture of all nations. I have always been enthralled