

War Cause Not Economic

By Doris E. Hulse

Lancaster M. Greene in the December HENRY GEORGE NEWS disagrees with my letter of the preceding month. I maintained that the cause of war is anarchy. I gather from his letter that he thinks the cause of war is economic.

Let us examine with Emery Reves in "The Anatomy of Peace" the phenomenon of recurrent wars throughout human history. Families, clans, tribes fought each other until larger communities and city-states had a government. Then families, clans, tribes no longer carried on organized warfare against each other, but the city-states fought each other. Nineveh, Babylon, Troy, Cnossus, Athens, Sparta, Rome, and Carthage battled each other. After the fall of Rome, barons governed separate communities. Barons fought each other. Smaller communities did not fight each other if they had one government over them. Then the people turned to the kings and allowed them to rule. The barons no longer governed equal sovereign communities. Those barons who were under one king's government no longer fought each other, although they continued to envy and dislike each other. And finally the creation of the modern nation-states, at the end of the 18th century, has brought about a series of gigantic conflicts between whole conscripted nations, culminating in the first and second World Wars.

Emery Reves, therefore, concludes that the cause of war is anarchy. The religious, economic, and other differences alleged by historians to have brought about these conflicts are irrelevant, as they continued to exist long after the wars had ceased. Cities and provinces continue to compete with each other economically. Religious convictions are just as different today as they were during the religious wars. The only thing that changed at the time the wars

stopped was the transfer of sovereignty to a higher social unit.

Civil wars do not disprove Emery Reves' contention that anarchy is the cause of war. A world view reveals that civil wars are extremely rare. There are nine federations in the world. United States is the only federation that has had a civil war.

If anarchy is the cause of war, land value taxation by every one of the national governments would not give us freedom from war. Georgists must first give political reality to the community, which is now the world, before they can advocate that the community collect the economic rent for the earth and its resources.

Washington, D. C.

[The Editors invite discussion of the cause of war. They recommend "The State" by Franz Oppenheimer (.50) and "Our Enemy the State" by Albert Jay Nock, \$2.25, Schalkenbach Foundation, N. Y.]