

COMING CLOSE TO US

There are grave defects in the system. The owners of land and capital receive in general just about what their property or their services are worth to society. But this does not work out fairly in many respects. Land is essential to life and extremely limited. It automatically increases rapidly in value with growth of population. The payment for it is not for services but merely for ownership. We reach a stage where a very large share of the total income is going to people who produce nothing. They merely hang on to land and receive an unearned income from the toil of those who work.

PROF. NEIL CAROTHERS, in Sunday *Herald-Tribune*, March 3.

ORATION OF CHIEF SEATTLE

These paragraphs are the close of the remarkable valedictory oration delivered by the Indian, Chief Seattle, in 1854. He was speaking at the conference between Gov. Isaac I. Stevens and the Puget Sound Indians on the shores of Puget Sound where the city of Seattle now stands. The purpose of the conference was the ratifying of a treaty between the United States and Chief Seattle's tribe with reference to placing the tribe on restricted reservations. Like Black Hawk and other great Indian chieftains, Chief Seattle felt that the expropriation of the land was a wrong that would in time descend as a fatal evil upon his great white brother. This is the swan song of a race.—J. L. M.

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It matters little where we pass the remnant of our days. They will not be many. The Indians' night promises to be dark. Not a single star of hope hovers above his horizon. Sad-voiced winds moan in the distance. Grim fate seems to be on the Red Man's trail, and wherever he goes he will hear the approaching footsteps of his fell destroyer and prepare stolidly to meet his doom, as does the wounded doe that hears the approaching footsteps of the hunter.

A few more moons. A few more winters—and not one of the descendants of the mighty hosts that once moved over this broad land or lived in happy homes, protected by the great spirit, will remain to mourn over the graves of a people—once more powerful and hopeful than yours. But why should I mourn the untimely fate of my people? Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. It is the order of nature and regret is useless. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come for even the White Man whose God walked and talked with him as friend with friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see.

We will ponder your proposition and when we decide we will let you know. But should we accept it, I have and now make this condition that we will not be denied the privilege without molestation of visiting at any time the tombs of our ancestors, friends and children. Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. Even the rocks which seem to be dumb and dead as they swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives of my people, and the very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than to yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors and our bare feet are conscious of its sympathetic touch.

And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. In all the earth there is no place dedicated to solitude. At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled them and still love this beautiful land. The White Man will never be alone.

Let him be just and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not powerless. Dead, did I say? There is no death, only a change of worlds.

DEFINITIONS OF LIBERTY

I AGREE heartily with that part of your editorial, "The Liberty League," which welcomes intelligent criticism of the New Deal. But to expect such criticism from the American Liberty League is, I fear, to expect figs to grow from thistles. I do not mean to pass judgment upon the motives of the league's sponsors, but I question their understanding of the meaning of liberty.

This skepticism arises from the fact that they all are essentially politically minded. The roots of liberty go deeper than politics; deeper than a mere political document like the Constitution of the United States, which the league purposes to defend and uphold. Mere political liberty, history should have taught us, is a mockery. Genuine liberty has its roots in ethics and economics.

The twofold purpose of the league is announced as the teaching of (1) the necessity of respect for the rights of persons and property, and (2) the duty of government to protect private enterprise. A highly laudable purpose! But, as you astutely remark, it "can mean much or little, depending upon how it is applied." Moreover, in order to teach the necessity of respect for rights of persons and property, teachers must first know something of the basis of those rights.

Such knowledge would save them from an almost universal confusion, exhibited by yourself when you warned against the difficulty of adjudicating conflicts between personal rights and property rights. There is, and can be, no conflict between rights of persons and of property; the conflict is between erroneous conceptions of those rights. Property rights grow out of personal rights—out of a man's right to himself, and to the fruits of his own labor, both manual and mental. Violation of either right is violation of the other.

There are two kinds of property and two kinds of property rights—social and private. It requires no unusual analytic powers to distinguish between the two. Certain values are obviously the product of individuals or private groups and, by their very nature, private property. Others, such as land values and most technological inventions, are the product of the whole complex of communal effort making for economic and social and cultural development, in which the individual contribution is indistinguishable; these values, by their very nature, are the property of society as a whole.

Failure to make this simple, but profound, distinction has prohibited genuine liberty and abridged even the specious liberty our political institutions permitted us. This failure produced a system of land-tenure and taxation which violates both social and private property rights; social rights, by permitting the private appropriation of socially created values; private rights, by use of the taxing power to confiscate private property for public purposes in lieu of the socially created values.

Our foolish and futile efforts to avoid the inevitable results of this denial of elementary rights have resulted in the progressive abridgment of liberty through passage of laws setting up all manner of governmental interference with legitimate private enterprise. One example of the futility of all these laws is the anti-trust legislation to prevent excessive concentration of wealth (they were further nullified by "protective tariffs" which also effectively fostered monopoly). To cite all the follies growing out of the failure to distinguish social and private property would take volumes; but another is the vicious struggle between the ignorant armies of capital and labor, and between right and left. The right has no respect for social property rights, nor the left for private property rights, nor either for liberty.

The conservatives who now are bewailing the abridgment of liberty under the New Deal are just as much to blame for it as Mr. Roosevelt and his befuddled reformers: the New Deal is just the continuation of an old process to which they until now consented. If the New Deal is full of anomalies and injustices and demagoguery; if it is taxing the