

Land and Freedom

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Current Comment

TO refrain from voting for what we believe in is a procedure of doubtful wisdom at any time. But deliberately to vote for what we are opposed to is a more amazing thing. We are thinking now of Single Taxers who are supporting La Follette. This is the curious spectacle to which we invite our readers' attention:

1st. Free trade Single Taxers supporting a high protectionist. La Follette has voted for nearly every high tariff measure that has been imposed in the last twenty years. He was a member of the Ways and Means Committee that reported the McKinley Bill and helped to make it a law.

2nd. Single Taxers whose doctrine is that of individualism and the natural law, supporting a socialist. For La Follette, while refusing to call himself a socialist, is a rigid regulationist, and the difference is negligible. Moreover he is leading the socialist party and thus cannot escape the responsibility.

3rd. Single Taxers who hate war, and know the causes from which it springs, and who opposed the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars, supporting a man who has voted for every war save the last one.

4th. Single Taxers who especially hate wars of aggression supporting a man who justified the war with the Filipinos who had loyally assisted us in the war with Spain, and justifying that war on the ground of the rich natural resources of the Philippines and the opportunities for trade that this war for conquest opened to us!

THIS is the extraordinary spectacle that is presented to us. Go back to the records. Hear this smug, and as we believe unscrupulous politician, who now assumes to lead the radical forces of the country. When the debate was raging on the question of what we should do with the islands, listen to this man whom some of our leading Single Taxers think worthy of their support. Contrast his attitude with that of brave Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, always a stalwart party man. "It will not aid the discussion," said La Follette, almost sneeringly, "to indulge in eloquent speech on the priceless heritage of liberty * * * The only question is what shall we do with them" (the islands.) Conquest for profit did not scandalize the Senator; he proceeded to justify subjugation in the very manner of his friend, the Kaiser: "The market which the Philippines will afford the United States,

while amounting to many millions annually, is unimportant in contemplation of the value which will result from the Philippines as a point from which American products can command trade in the orient. From that point of vantage, with our harbors at Honolulu and in the Samoan group, for coaling, watering and repairing, we shall be ready to conquer our rightful share of that great market now opening for the world's commerce." And again: "For whatever ensues, under Republican construction of our plain treaty rights, we can legally and morally reserve unto ourselves perpetual commercial advantages of priceless value to our foreign trade for all time to come." How similar this language to that of every Junker chancellery of Europe.

TRIED by any test this man is unworthy of the support of any Single Taxer. He comes before the voters with no economic principles save those most abhorrent to the believer in the Georgian philosophy. His pet theory is the regulation of the citizen, which makes him, however coyly he may seek to disown it, a fit candidate for the socialist party. His open-mouthed admiration for the German government and the German system was always in evidence. He could hardly find words to express it. He could talk of the dominating powers of autocracy—and this always meant Wilson and his policies—but before the autocracy of the German system he fairly grovelled with phrases of adulation. Speaking of the devotion of the German people and the sacrifices they made to win the war, he cried: "What does it mean? It means, Sir, that they have a government over there that takes care of the German people from birth until they are able to enter the armies of the Kaiser." That is his ideal—a government that "takes care" of its people—by which he means that regulates their affairs, their industries, their going and coming, and in this he is essentially, in the economic theories he holds, a high tariff Socialist, which is everything the Georgian is not. And here we dismiss him, with the reflection that where the Commonwealth Land Party is on the ballot the Single Taxer who votes for La Follette and refuses to vote for William J. Wallace, is doing something worse than throwing away his vote—he is giving aid and comfort to the enemies of real democracy and the Georgian doctrine of economic freedom. He is voting against the principles he believes in and is helping, by just so much as his individual vote counts, to postpone their triumph.