

FRANK CHODOROV

1888 - 1966

THROUGH use, misuse, and overuse, the term "rugged individualist" has unfortunately assumed a somewhat humorous connotation. Yet in the language of our day, which he used with such powerful effect, there are no words that better describe Frank Chodorov, who passed away last December at the age of seventy-eight. Rugged he surely was—physically, morally and spiritually; and if ever one man encompassed in his character the epitome of individuality, it was he. To call him a rugged individualist is to do him honor, and at the same time to reveal the essence of his nature.

Frank Chodorov was a fighter. He devoted his life, his energy and his talents to fighting for causes, for principles, for ideals which he considered just and right. He knew no other way; and those who construed his forthright vehemence as mere truculence misjudged him greatly. Basically he was warm, friendly and immensely companionable. But he had tremendous vitality, and given a forum (be it even a soapbox) where he might expound the verities he believed in, he was quick to respond to any challenge.

Early in life, just after graduating from college, Chodorov encountered what became his abiding interest: the philosophy of Henry George. By chance he read *Progress and Poverty*, and found it a revelation. As he observed in his autobiography, *Out of Step*, published in 1962, "I read the book several times, and each time I felt myself slipping into a cause." He soon took up the cause with enthusi-

asm, becoming active in the Single Tax party. From that day on (it was in 1917) he spent every moment he could find teaching and preaching George to everyone who would listen—and many who wouldn't! For about five years, ending in 1941, he served as director of the Henry George School, which Oscar Geiger had founded in 1932; and during the same period he edited *The Freeman*, which was then published by the HGS.

In later years Chodorov widened his activities and engaged in other pursuits. He founded and edited *Analysis*; he was an editor of other individualistic journals, and most recently was one of the founders and editors of *Fragments*. But throughout his days he retained his regard for and belief in the principles of Henry George, highly praising George's "... clear-cut definitions of vital terms, his impeccable logic, his use of telling illustrations and, above all, the well-rounded Victorian sentences in which he clothes his ideas..."

Frank Chodorov was a complex man, and yet the theme of his life was quite simple. He eagerly sought truth, and when he thought he had found it he would not compromise. He was not easy to understand, and the writer of these lines is prompted to paraphrase what Pasteur said of himself, and to say of Chodorov that "those who knew him very well loved him very much." One thing is certain: no one whom his personality reached will ever forget him. May he rest in peace.

—Sydney Mayers

To walk staunchly by the best light one has, to be strict and sincere with oneself, not to be of the number of those who say and do not, to be in earnest—this is the discipline by which alone man is enabled to rescue his life from thralldom to the passing moment and to his bodily senses, to ennoble it and to make it eternal.

—Matthew Arnold