

Let George Do It

THERE has never been a time in the world's history that land monopoly has not led to poverty, economic chaos and war, with concomitant suffering and destruction. So there has never been a day when philosophers, politicians, economists and reformers have not earnestly sought a means to overcome the repetitious visitations of these social horrors. A fascinating variety of panaceas has been proposed through the years, many of the recommended cures being worse than the disease they were designed to remedy.

A germ of consolation, and perhaps hope, may nevertheless be found in the very fact that there exists this consistent effort to eliminate the afflictions which have beset mankind almost since he first trod the earth. After all, in any drive toward scientific achievement, who can say that a series of failures does not lead to ultimate success? If a particular experiment proves to be disappointing and worthless, at least one knows what will not work—and to that extent a kind of progress has been made. Thus, as more and more economic and social theories are shown to be ineffective, more and more obstacles are removed from the path to economic and social truth.

A former President once stoutly proclaimed, "There is nothing to fear but fear itself!" It was a stirring political battle-cry, but of dubious logical validity. There is much to fear. Who but a fool does not fear the pangs of want, the ignominy of repression, the nuclear bombs of war? Certainly these fears are prevalent, and because of them frantic efforts are daily made to stave off the frightening prospect that faces everyone. If fear can urgently

prompt people to find a way out of the house of horrors in which they now dwell, then it is a wholesome emotion, for fear is not cowardice. On the contrary, the bravest of men know fear, but to them it is an incentive to challenge and destroy the forces which endanger them.

This is a time to be afraid, but not to cower. It is a time to face up to the basic cause of chaos and upheaval, to isolate it so that it may be clearly recognized, and to endeavor zealously to effect the adoption of the only practicable method of wiping out this dire cause. To those familiar with the principles of Henry George, the cause of man's great problem and the solution for it are both known. Private land monopoly is the cause and land value taxation is the remedy; it is profoundly simple, yet not an oversimplification, because the simplicity involved lies in reducing the problem to its fundamental root and essence.

Moreover, an era of economic and social anxiety is a peculiarly appropriate time to offer hope and encouragement to the world. Worried human beings will listen; Georgists should ask no more. Today one need not search for receptive ears, for there is widespread eagerness on the part of people everywhere to be shown an honest appraisal of where economic discrepancies actually may be found, and to learn by what means these discrepancies can be disposed of. Now is the time for redoubled efforts to educate and to show the way. To all those who anxiously ask how poverty can be eradicated, how depressions can be eliminated, how war can be prevented, the obvious answer (accompanied, to be sure, by specific reasons and clear explanations) can only be "Let George Do It."

Martin Simon