

# "Achievement of the Impossible"

by OLE WANG

KARL MARX'S *Communist Manifesto* begins by calling for the "abolition of property in land, and application of all rents of land to public purposes." One might be inclined to say that this is Georgism, except that Henry George does not demand abolition of the right to possess and work land and other natural resources—only the appropriation of rents for the community by land value taxation of their monopoly worth.

Such appropriation of rent, as well as the canceling of other private monopolies, is really a defense of the true right of property. This consists of the recognition of each person's right to the exclusive disposal of what he or she may have produced or received by gift or by fair agreement, without force or fraud, from those who produced it (John Stuart Mill). Unearned income and increment to individuals from natural resources (land) and consequent command of a part of the community's wealth, reduce that part which should rightly go to the producers, and constitutes therefore a denial of the right of property. This can only be remedied by taking rent by taxation for the good of the community.

Securing for the workers the right to the results of their efforts is the ideal incentive to economic activity. In true *liberal* society this is an accepted principle. In the communist economy the leaders are now finding out that they cannot do without it. The first step of an agreement between the two ideologies whose mutual antagonism has for years endangered peace, has thus started, and attempts should be made to follow this up.

Perverted nationalism is another cause of ill-will between people. Actually it is an extension of the first. It was usually land and other natural

riches the "kings, princes and peoples" were after when they opened a war. True nationalism, when it started not so very long ago, made possible the formation of states embracing all persons of the same racial and cultural heritage. This had its beneficial influence only as long as only its ideal aims were pursued.

Marvelous means of communication now at our command have turned the problems which were local and national into global ones, including the question of natural resources and their worth. If the various nations owned these resources, though differing in kinds, in fairly equal proportions to their populations, free trade would, to a great extent "do the trick." But since this is not the case, a world-wide equalization would have to take place if the ideal of international economic justice were to be sought.

If this seems like unreasoning utopianism we should remember that many things have been accomplished when threatened by a terrible alternative. The U.S.A., for instance, which could have been devoured piece-meal by the European powers, came into being in spite of considerable internal opposition. Threats of nuclear weapons, combined with dreams of a "good society" where liberty and justice would reign, could inspire achievement of the impossible, if mankind were unhampered by formal jurisprudence and guided by natural law. Universal land value taxation and free trade could become powerful forces for peace.

**Ole Wang of Tönsberg, Norway, has this year nominated the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Mr. Wang believes they are standing for principles which, if put into practice, would be a decisive step toward peace.**