

G. R. Geiger Discusses Positions of Modern Georgists In Social Frontier Article; Sees Two Approaches

NEW YORK—Dr. George Raymond Geiger, author of "The Philosophy of Henry George" and "The Theory of the Land Question," presents an excellent statement of the basic position of modern Georgists as they face the problems of the American commonwealth in an article, "The Land Question and Henry George," in the March issue of The Social Frontier, leading educational journal.

Dr. Geiger makes clear the primacy of land—all of man's natural environment—as the basis of economic life and as a dominant influence upon social development. He shows how George's proposal for social appropriation of rent by taxation would strike at the seat of exploitation and establishes that "the power of monopoly and exploitation possessed by the vast expressions of capital investment is secondary to and depends upon the more basic control of man's natural resources."

Hits Socialists

Dr. Geiger criticizes socialists for their preoccupation over possible unearned capital incomes and their neglect of their admission that "land control is the parent and constant supporter of capital control," declaring, "there is no significant monopoly that cannot in some way be traced back to the land monopoly, and it is no wild fantasy to feel that the breaking of land monopoly would mean the shaking of all monopoly."

He notes that modern Georgists have two approaches toward the realization of their program. One is by tax reform, long a field of Georgist activity. The second is by presentation of the Georgist program as a compromise between "individualism" and "socialism," a compromise offering a program for social reconstruction to avert a leftist or rightist dictatorship or to salvage the system after a dictatorship's breakdown.

Enlightened Opinion

Dr. Geiger says:

"Since this 'compromise' between 'individualism' and 'socialism' seems so crucial, the efforts of one group of Georgists are centered on forming an enlightened public opinion which can recognize and effect such a compromise position.

"The more pessimistic of this group, convinced that some type of right or left

wing 'revolution' is inevitable, are attempting to develop, say, a hundred thousand or more intelligent and persuaded followers of Henry George, who can be relied upon as a nucleus to salvage the economic system after it has been overturned by political catastrophe.

Historical Process

"Already they feel that they might be able to point to Mexico, and even to Spain and Russia . . . as examples of this historical process, i.e., the gradual abandonment of various forms of collectivism, with concentration upon the socialization of land."

With both of these national objectives, the specific methods of appeal have been chiefly in the educational field, he points out, noting that the early political emphasis of the movement "is now definitely secondary to the educational one." He continues:

Movement's Center

"The educational center of the movement is the Henry George School of Social Science, with national headquarters in New York City. Although founded only five years ago, the school has achieved a spectacular success and, through its classes and extension and correspondence work, numbers perhaps five thousand students on its rolls. It operates approximately 150 classes in 50 cities in this country, in addition to branches in Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and other foreign countries. It has been approved by the Board of Regents of the State of New York, and, in addition to its direct educational work, publishes a monthly journal, The Freeman. Georgists look upon the school as the brightest promise for any future success in the movement."

Hartmann Editor

The Social Frontier, a journal of educational criticism and reconstruction, is a medium of expression of The John Dewey Society for the Study of Education and Culture, and is edited by Professor George W. Hartmann of Teachers College, Columbia University. Copies of the issue may be obtained for 25 cents from the Business Office of The Social Frontier, c/o of Columbia University Press, 2,960 Broadway, New York City. The subscription price is \$3.