

## THE AFFAIR NOCK-BRYANT-BERNSTEIN

EDITORS LAND AND FREEDOM:

A recent review of "Unfinished Victory" in your paper, by Mr. M. J. Bernstein, might well have shown the Georgeist points made by Mr. Arthur Bryant, the author.

A statement by T. E. Lawrence (from "Lawrence in Arabia") precedes the first chapter pointing out the struggles of the young men who sought ideals in the World War. When they won, the old men then came out and reconstructed the world as they knew it. Lawrence says that he and the other young men stammered that they had fought to make a better world on earth. The old men thanked them and had no further use for their ideals.

The thesis of Mr. Bryant is that wars have economic causes, and that those who seek to improve the world by other than economic means or solutions will be as disappointed as Lawrence.

This is Henry George's thesis. You cannot solve the cause of war—poverty—except through what George called the one panacea, Freedom, and you can't get that without the public collection of ground rent.

Bryant does a creditable job of showing that the longer a war, the less likely are ideas of justice and freedom to flourish afterward. This is complementary to George's analysis of Malthus, whose solution for the problem of poverty was the four horsemen, war, disease, pestilence and famine.

Some questions given by Mr. Bernstein in his review were given to prove Mr. Bryant anti-Semitic, but on rereading "Unfinished Victory," it appeared to me that Mr. Bernstein had extracted quotations out of context which indicated they were not anti-Semitic.

Perhaps I am naive on this subject, but I fail to see Mr. Bernstein's case.

Mr. Albert Jay Nock is disparaged in the review by Mr. Benstein, because he indorses the general thesis which he said "cannot be questioned," that wars are economic and that wars fail to solve the cause, poverty.

Mr. Nock needs no defense, and may well be distressed that I should discuss the attack on him. It seems fitting that a few words may be said about his contribution, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, of an article on "Democracy vs. Socialism," a book reprinted by the Henry George School. This article, entitled "In Defense of the Individual," induced over 500 individuals to buy this book through the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. This was a contribution to "widening the circle" of those who study George.

Everyone who would contribute to the Henry George Movement, may do so in his own way; it won't be mine and it won't be that of someone else. On the occasion of the Henry George Centenary Mr. Nock published a biography, "Henry George," which gave the movement considerable publicity.

Those who disagree with the methods of a fellow Georgeist may well try to educate him, but the assumption of George is that man is infinitely improvable, educable, not some men, but man. "They are even as we are," said he. Therefore, while we may well criticize a product objectively, we may assume the best of motives in everyone. Concentration on a man's logic keeps the issues clear and is educational. Let us strive for the constructive, the educational in all our efforts to overcome the only emergency, Ignorance.

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