

## FOR A BETTER POST-WAR WORLD

BRITAIN'S Labor Party is demanding a government pledge that the principal wartime controls over industry and agriculture be maintained after the war. It asks the nation to recognize that the conflict has already caused a social and economic revolution as vast as the replacement of feudalism by capitalism.

"The anarchy of private competition," the party statement reads, "must give way to ordered planning under national control, and the nation must own and operate the essential instruments of production."

The believer in the democratic way of life—precisely what a Georgist always is—will not deny that a social and economic revolution is under way. But the Labor Party's other conclusions will move him to something less than wild enthusiasm. He will concede the necessity of a measure, indeed a virtually unlimited measure, of government control for the duration of the war, but as a regular diet in times of peace, government control is something he just could not care for. To him that means socialism, and he just is not having any.

The Georgist has no quarrel with the socialists. He recognizes them in the main as very earnest people who are trying, as best they know, to alleviate the vast ills of the world. Indeed, Georgists and socialists have something in common; they start from the same base. The two schools of thought agree that the great problem of the age is poverty; that poverty is caused by exploitation, and that it can be cured only by ending exploitation. They agree further that the approach to the problem is economic, and that socialization is the remedy. But at that point their paths diverge and it is not possible for a man to call himself both a Georgist and a socialist.

The Georgists hold that it would be sufficient to socialize the rent of land. Do away with absolute private ownership in land, they say, which is the parent monopoly of them all, and killing off the other monopolies and ending exploitation would be easy. But to go further, as the socialists propose, and socialize the tools and machinery of production, would mean a planned economy, strict regimentation, ironfisted control of agricultural and industrial production, concentration and centralization of power and authority.

Such things the Georgists abhor. They consider them not only economically unsound and unnecessary but also as involving a tragic waste of the greatest force in the world, mental power. Moreover, they would constitute an outrageous infringement upon our personal liberties and the supreme affront to human dignity. For in the socialist state, as in the nazi or fascist, the individual has no rights that the state is bound to respect. And a man who has no rights is a slave.

Henry George believed that social unity and individual liberty should coexist. He conceived personal liberty in individual matters and social unity in societary affairs as a natural law of human association. Henry George preached and practiced the brotherhood of man. Socialism promotes and thrives on class conflict. Henry George held that a man was entitled to the product of his own labor. Socialism's creed is, "To each according to his needs, from each according to his means."

Henry George proclaimed the natural and inalienable rights of man as postulated in the American Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. Socialism denies the existence of natural rights. Henry George believed that any system based on the doctrine that the state gives us all the rights we have, and may modify or nullify them at its pleasure, would debase a man to the level of the beasts in that it denied him the right to exercise the reasoning faculty which distinguishes him from the beasts.

Georgists realize that the maintenance of personal freedom should be the primary consideration of every human being. It is never a choice between freedom and a full stomach. No socialist state, no dictatorship, has ever given either.

Georgists will sympathize with the ultimate objective of the British Labor Party, a better life for the masses, but they will deplore as no less than tragic the misguided methods by which the party proposes to attain its ends, methods which cannot fail to defeat their very purpose and bring about a condition infinitely worse than the condition sought to be cured.

C. O. STEELE