

Georgists in the Fight for Freedom

THE IMMEDIATE TASK before us is to win the war, the war which is to decide whether the world is to be slave or free. We are just getting started at the task. We came perilously close to being too late in starting. Many of us did not realize the danger.

The very virtues of our democratic system—its hatred of force, its abhorrence of war, its habit of conciliation, its use of the material resources of the earth for the enrichment of human life rather than for weapons of destruction—these things blinded some of us to the peril, lulled them into a false sense of security.

Besides those who were apathetic, indifferent to the preparedness program, some were downright antagonistic, boasting of "splendid isolation" and prating of "war mongers." There was opposition to repeal of the Neutrality Act; opposition to the Lend-Lease Act; opposition to enlarging the Army. We were told by them that we were invulnerable, that no country would dare attack us.

Now we know how mistaken that attitude was. We know that President Roosevelt displayed true leadership in his fight to awaken the American people to their peril, to arouse them to the necessity of arming for the defense not only of their liberties but even of their very lives.

Today a united nation stands squarely behind its Commander-in-Chief. Had that been the case a year ago, Pearl Harbor would have been a different story; were it not the case today, our plight would be desperate indeed.

Georgists, like all good Americans, hate war, but they would hate losing their freedom more. If go to war they must to avoid that greatest of all catastrophes, go to war they will.

Nowhere did Somerset Maugham's classic pronouncement on war and freedom strike a more responsive chord than among Georgists. "If a nation values anything more than freedom," he wrote, "it will lose its freedom; and the irony of it is that if it is comfort or money that it values more, it will lose that too."

Georgists recognize the truth of Mr. Maugham's further observation: "And when a nation has to fight for its freedom, it can only hope to win if it possesses certain qualities: honesty, courage, loyalty,

vision and self-sacrifice. If it does not possess them, it has only itself to blame if it loses its freedom."

Georgists will not be found wanting in those qualities nor in their readiness to fight in defense of freedom. Many are already in the armed forces. Others are joining daily. There is no defeatism in Georgism.

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