

A Word With You

By ROBERT CLANCY

There is no end in sight to our present economic muddle—even with an election year rolling around. All that we can gather from authoritative sources is that there will be another price-soaring, new wage-demands, more belt-tightening, thinner distribution of our thin production. A starving world stretches out its helpless hands to America—a world where production seems to have almost utterly collapsed.

Blame for all this is the one thing that is freely distributed. Labor is too "selfish" in demanding higher wages. Farmers and producers are "holding back." Management is absorbing too much in "profits." And the answers are hurled back. Laborers and farmers are only seeking a decent living wage. Producers and management are only seeking a fair return for their investment. (And of course landowners and rent collectors coyly include themselves among those who are seeking only a fair investment return.)

Let us freely admit it. All sides—producers and non-producers alike—are obeying a primary law of human nature, and are seeking to satisfy their wants with the least effort. But must it always take the form of a tug-of-war? Is there no hope of achieving a freely competing, freely cooperating society, producing only to take care of its needs?

All are agreed that our current troubles hinge on the production and distribution of wealth. Let us remember that this is precisely the field of economic science. After two centuries of the cultivation of this science, have no lessons been learned. Or have we become like the schoolboy who boasted that he had forgotten how to do simple addition and subtraction because he had learned it in the first grade and now he was in an advanced grade?

The lesson can never be repeated too often because it is forgotten so often. All wealth is produced by labor from land. If labor does not receive the return (whether as wages or price) to which it is accustomed, or to which it considers itself entitled, it will cease producing,—until it must perforce resume, in order to live. Difficulty of access to productive land—because of high rents or land prices—is a barrier to productivity and lessens the return to labor.

(Continued in column three)

VIEWS OF THE NEWS

By SYDNEY MAYERS

Sadly lacking among the documents on exhibit in The Freedom Train, now journeying through America, is a copy of Henry George's "The Central Truth." In it, perhaps the most moving chapter of *Progress and Poverty*, he wrote: "We honor Liberty in name and form. We set up her statues and sound her praises. But we have not fully trusted her. And with our growth so grow her demands. She will have no half service."

The Secretary of State depletes and denounces the methods used to teach history in American schools, describing them as routine, dull and inadequate. We quite agree with Mr. Marshall, but respectfully urge him to include in his attack the unnecessarily dismal "science" our collegiate pundits unlaughingly call "economics."

Among the items troubling the UN Administrative and Budgetary Committee was whether a reduced allowance of \$32,000 for "hospitality" cocktails should be passed. We recommend approval, gentlemen—the "United" Nations could do with a bit more conviviality.

At the behest of Citizens Food Chairman Luckman, the United States Brewers Foundation announces that the use of corn in beer making will be cut by 25 per cent. Now if Hollywood movie-makers will cut the use of "corn" in films by about 100 per cent, we will all have something to cheer about.

Incidentally, with the curtailment of the use of grain in beer-making, brewers announce that they have a substitute ready:—tapioca! Does anybody know a formula for a tasty ersatz pretzel?

Scotland's beautiful highland hills have become so barren, that resulting poverty has led to an alarming rate of emigration. But the canny Scots, with clear purpose and doughty energy, are rushing a program of intensive reforestation and low-cost electrification. (That will raise the margin of production, see? And that's where wages are born!)

Much excitement was occasioned recently by a strike of padlock employees that halted the running at New York's Jamaica Track. That's nothing; the last horse we bet on went on strike for more oats or something—right in the middle of the race.

The demolition of the famous Schwab Mansion on Riverside Drive has thus far mysteriously failed to disclose its cornerstone, where historic souvenirs are hopefully sought. We hope they find it—maybe it will contain one of those ancient dollars that was worth 100 cents.

"The old system of international free trade in money has become unworkable," states the London Chamber of Commerce, urging a new system whereby an exporting nation would acquire credits, clearable only by its imports, so that "a selling country must be a willing buyer or, in the long run, be giving away its exports." It seems the seeds planted long ago by Henry George are at last bearing fruit.

To help conserve wheat, members of bakers' associations have agreed, among other concessions, to bake cakes hereafter in two layers instead of three. Riddle:—Which weighs less, a pound of two-layer cake or a pound of three-layer cake?

A "land reform" program in Communist China decrees the expropriation for "redistribution" of all private landholdings, including (1) "landlords' animals, agricultural implements, houses, grain, and other properties of rich peasants." The government blandly reserves to itself ammunition, money, valuables, forests, hydraulic engineering works, mines, wastelands, lakes, famous sites, historic spots, libraries, works of art, "and so forth"—not to mention whatever else is "left over."

Judiciously adding no comment, Newsweek magazine quotes a brief excerpt from The London Daily Express, as an example of bureaucracy in action. Here it is: "If only the motorists would state their claims on the RMSI form—and nothing more—we could save time and trouble in turning them down."

Among Our Contributors

JOHN S. CODMAN of Boston is chairman of the board of governors of the Henry George School in that city, also director of the Free Market Institute, and treasurer and director of the Fabreka Products Co. He is the author of "Unemployment and Our Revenue Problem," "The Three Basic Rights," "Why Not Try Liberty" and other works—also co-author with Francis G. Goodale of "A Tax Reduction Plan for Metropolitan Boston" which was awarded honorable mention and a prize in "The Boston Contest" of 1944 conducted by the Boston University.

J. RUPERT MASON of San Francisco who is one of our most alert and roving Georgists has recently made appearances at the Decentralist conference in Iowa and at the Chicago Henry George School. With respect to the court citations appended to his article, which we suggested omitting because we thought nobody would take the trouble to look them up anyway, he said, "please don't. I am trying to help Georgists understand what the Courts write." In closing, he added, "No one can tell me Georgism is dying."

HENRY L. TIDEMAN, dean of Chicago's Henry George School, has a wide reputation for hospitality. His door on Bradley Avenue is always open to Georgists cut adrift in the Lakes region, and to this door people of all nationalities find their way forever after remembering the cordial ease and friendliness of their reception. After Mr. Tideman's recent visit to New York, Dean Della Volpe remarked that no one else had given them so much help on the manual. One short session and the skilled Chicago Dean won a coterie of eager listeners. His explanation at the Chicago Conference regarding common property is still a classic and is being quoted even by people who were not present.

Whatever else is wrong with economic society today, this certainly is wrong. It is at the very basis of the production picture, and so long as it continues, so long must the muddle continue.

If only this truth could be thrust under the noses of our leaders! But, alas, it is under their noses. Is it possible that they don't see it? We can only assume so, and constantly hammer away at it.

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