

# A Word With You

My dear friend:

So you've decided to be a reformer. That's very encouraging, particularly in these times, when they say that young people are apathetic and don't care about social problems.

It's not necessary to be a "career" reformer. I know lots of people who work at something else for their livelihood and still devote considerable time to reform, with good effect.

Whether you pursue it as a vocation or avocation, however, there are some things you should know about this reform business. What I say arises primarily out of my experiences as a "single taxer," but it applies as well to other fundamental reforms.

First of all—if it *is* true that you want fundamental reform—"t aint easy." Remember that people, like everything else in the universe, are moved by the law of inertia. Once set on their course, it takes a powerful counter-force to alter it. Henry George knew this when he wrote, "The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance." Many would-be reformers give up when they find that these are not just sentimental words. Present an unanswerable case for your reform, and people will still find a thousand and one reasons for not accepting it, just so they won't have to change their minds.

But if you stay with it, if you slowly but surely point out the way step by step, the rewards will come. "It

will find friends," George promised.

Be prepared, though, for the rarity of "those who will toil for it," the greater rarity of those who will "suffer for it," and the still greater rarity of those who will "if need be, die for it." There may be others, but I know of only two people whose lives were materially shortened by unstinting dedication to the single-tax philosophy—Henry George himself, and Oscar Geiger.

Understand, too, that all the rules that apply to every other business also apply to the reform business. It is tempting to imagine that one can conquer the world just with enthusiasm and a shoestring, but such is not the case. It's a start, but only a start. In the business world, the shoestring and the enthusiasm need the follow-up of concentrated effort. By and by you have a little pushcart, then a little hole in the wall, then a large store. If you are alert to every possibility, you may eventually open another store, and even a chain of stores.

But a person who has made such a success is apt, when he discovers a reform, to demand that all those rules be abolished, and that you should go swinging at the world like a howling dervish.

Beware of these pitfalls, among others, and assuredly you will find that the game is worth the candle.

Sincerely yours,

—Robert Clancy

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Vol. 26, No. 7

June, 1963

The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

Publication committee: William S. O'Connor, Arnold A. Weinstein and Lancaster M. Greene, chairman. Editor: Alice Elizabeth Davis. Subscriptions \$2 a year; single copies 20c. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.