



Most communities and nations continue to use taxation as a weapon to crush the middle classes and to put men out of business . . . It seems that the ideas of Karl Marx have come to be more readily accepted everywhere than those of such great Americans as Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Henry George, etc. Why? Marx in the Communist Manifesto advocated the graduated income tax as an important step towards achieving the goals of socialism. Just take a glance at the popularity of such a tax among our political leaders on all levels of government.

It is time for all of us to re-examine the teachings of Henry George who, in his classic on economics, *Progress and Poverty*, reveals his respect for the dignity of the individual and the sacred rights of person and property.

VERLIN GORDON  
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Stephen R. Cord made some excellent points about the immediacy of results desired by the college activists (Feb. HGN), and the large number of causes which plague our current social scene. He suggests that George was wrong, to put it mildly, about the "privately appropriated land rent being the root of all evil."

I am a newcomer to the ranks of Georgists, and the bloom is not yet off the rose, so perhaps I can speak with more personal conviction after my "conversion experience." In addition, while teaching several basic classes, I have always included the idea that current situations are not easy to correlate with Mr. George's solution since we have devised an infinite number of small modifications

in our social system in order to offset the problems generated by that basic problem.

Instead of building a nice straight economic house we have an awesome monster which cantilevers out all over the place. Somehow it stands, but it looks messy. We may not have the economic depressions that George foresaw, or some of the other symptoms, but we have traded our economic losses for the emotional ones of unhappiness, group militancy, class hatred, loss of personal freedoms and a slowly tightening police state. Maybe these are what Mr. Cord refers to as "assorted forms of irrationality and veniality."

Along with the militants, Professor Cord and other writers, it seems clear that Georgists cannot afford to abandon the need for short term "symptomatic" relief. We certainly must keep the patient alive and its life support system functional, but we must also root out that central cancer which continues to send out its stream of cells to re-infect the body. This is the message which must be brought home to our youth and to others as well. Perhaps the best vehicle for this truth is the message of freedom. Certainly our youth identify with this. We must send forth the message that it is the lack of true freedom in our "free" system that makes our problem. Young people think they are "liberal" because they do not understand the term, and the greybeards only reinforce the misunderstanding by making great noises about inconsequential things like hair, beads and skirts while ignoring the real values. Youth may be overzealous, but age has not done much to solve the problems either.

CLAY BERLING  
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Perhaps I am impertinent in taking issue with Steven Cord's remarks in the February HGN. Although I sec-

ond his observation that "we needn't exaggerate our case" I do not advocate yielding or giving up on an important issue.

Does Professor Cord really believe the facts indicate that we have had no recent depressions? Does he consider the plight of those who still cannot find employment in spite of a war economy? Can he believe we never had it so good when our news media and government investigations disclose what are now matters of common knowledge—large masses still starving—community riots for "pieces of the action"—ever increasing redistribution of wealth to the poverty stricken by means of public welfare—the disenchantment of our youth with their "affluent" society? And how about the disintegration of family and social standards?

When he lists "other causes of poverty" does he distinguish between the basic root cause and those derived therefrom? Does he disagree with Henry George's conclusion that eliminating the private appropriation of rent will facilitate the elimination of the others? If he does I take issue with him in that regard also. This is all spelled out in the published works of Henry George. It is possible to disagree as to what he meant in some instances, but that is all.

If the writer is suggesting that George's views should be modified to meet current needs I have no intention of deterring him, irrespective of my disagreement. But if it is to be changed call it Professor Cord's or anyone else's philosophy, not Henry George's.

EMANUEL CHOPER  
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The redoubtable Mr. Bauer thumbs his Bartlett's Familiar Quotations with the best, and for refutations of his major quotes I recommend the same

source to anyone who knows the alphabet.

He does, however, ask two direct questions—and since at least one of them is addressed to me, I would like to answer them.

The first: Speaking of men in a bread line, Mr. Bauer asks, "Is this the way to support them?" No, Mr. Bauer, not in Utopia. Not in a country with a just economy. But in a country whose economic system does not provide opportunity for them to earn their own bread, yes, it is the way. Of course charity is cold, humiliating, often demoralizing—but it beats starvation. To me, and, fortunately, to humane people everywhere, each individual life is uniquely valuable. People are not just expendable parts of a system, and not only "our kind of people" have a right to live.

I wonder: if, as conservatives imply, our economic system is perfect, deducting accretions of the years since 1932, and if there is no reason for poverty, why are we trying to introduce Georgism? Just to lower the taxes of the already affluent? If, as the ancient "ethic" holds, a man who needs help proves thereby that he does not deserve it, why did Henry George bother? I know that these questions would be answered only by more irrelevancies, so consider them rhetorical.

The second question: "How was it when England was merrie, and the revenue came not from improvements, but wholly from the land?" It is amusing and amazing that a person of Mr. Bauer's leanings should choose the reign of poor, unstable King Henry VI as his model of "merriment," and the understandably biased words of his appointed chancellor as a source. More objective historians tell us that it was the era when law and order broke down in England. Nobles spurned the law and settled disputes by force, and bands of marauders roamed

the countryside, laying it waste, plundering and terrorizing the peasants. Part of their fear was that this depletion would make it impossible for them to pay their rent to the noble hereditary landholders who were passing on heavy taxes imposed to replenish a treasury emptied by the Hundred Years War. In this period the national debt of England doubled. Far from endorsing free trade in this time Mr. Bauer sees as a Georgist paradise, the ineffectual Commons spent most of its energies trying to drive foreign merchants out of London. When Henry the Sixth was dethroned, this halcyon era gave way to the Wars of the Roses, a period of misery and civil unrest almost unequalled in western history. And by the end of the century, hundreds of the peasants were evicted by their noble landlords to make way for the more lucrative sheep-raising industry. The country lanes, we are told, "swarmed with homeless beggars." That's how it was, Mr. Bauer—a "merrie" time, indeed.

Of course, it is ridiculous to compare medieval England with nuclear America. Why must so many people retreat into a romantic dream of a golden past that never really existed, or peer myopically into a misty, rosy future that may never come? Of course we must work and hope for a better world, and most particularly for a more just economic system. But today's problems, today's realities and responsibilities—including "the cold and hungry"—cannot decently be ignored while we dream.

JULIA R. PIGGIN

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The February Henry George News has aroused my ire. Naturally, one expects to disagree with editorials in The New York Times or the pronouncements of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. The inclusion of divergent opinions and discussion-

provoking articles in our magazine is certainly desirable, but when the official publication of a school purporting to propagate the ideas of Henry George devotes a whole issue (with a few exceptions) to showing that so many have so little understanding of those principles upon which the School was founded, I am outraged by the consequent waste of energy, time and money. Inquirers into our subject are few enough. It is shameful that they be led astray by the half-truths and untruths set forth by self-styled Georgists unable or unwilling to engage in logical thought.

Although Henry George IV claims to have read "*Progress and Poverty*," he can't seem to connect the existence of injustice with student unrest. He joins all too many others in describing the proposals of his great-grandfather simply as "Tax Reform," when the master himself clearly delineated the way in which all taxes might be abolished. And far from believing that "all men are created equal," any thinking person must modify such a statement to read, "All men are created with equal rights," or "All men are entitled to equal opportunity." Obviously there are inherent differences of size, strength, intelligence and various other qualities.

How can the "individual happiness and fulfillment" described by Peter G. Johannsen occur in a society which engages in "organizing the poor?" Perhaps the "individual utopias" arranged by the majority will be more acceptable to the assignees than those planned for us by the State.

As for my friend Mrs. Piggin, I had considered writing a little playlet set in Ancient Egypt, starring Mrs. Piggin as president of a charitable organization devoted to relieving the misery of captive Israelites forced into slave labor on Pharaoh's space program—no, no! I mean *pyramid* program.

This group, Aid to Stricken Slaves, provides food, clothing and medical treatment, as needed, to enable the slaves to continue to haul up the great stones or become grease for their easier passage. It is proudly announced that Pharaoh himself is the largest contributor. The activities of A.S.S. will improve the captives' lot to such an extent that the Exodus will be postponed indefinitely. (In fact, President Nasser now has a large group of resident Jews on which to blame the failures of his totalitarian regime. They are still slaves, of course, though their labors are now directed toward completion of the defenses of the Suez Canal, where they provide handy targets for the guns of Israel.) Good work, A.S.S.!

Mr. Lagnado's former teacher must be gnashing her teeth over his rejection of all he has supposedly been taught. Knowledge of a principle should last more than a year or two. If Georgist remedies cannot be applied to today's problems, why do we bother to study and teach them?

Mr. Cord, after urging that we "be sure of our own doctrines" denies that poverty is a problem which the application of Georgist principles can solve. He should know better than to

try to sell us "urban renewal," "land reform in underdeveloped areas," the notion that "we've never had it so good," and the meaningless "G.N.P." level.

Confusion of cause and effect is evidenced by his listing of race prejudice, war, riot, etc., among the causes of poverty when any logical student of economics can demonstrate that these are results. If we can't believe that community collection of the rental value of land will cure depressions and involuntary poverty, what are we here for? What other cure is there? The Viet Nam War? The space program? Urban planning? The doctrines of Karl Marx? Lord Keynes? Let us all try to return to those principles of liberty advocated by Henry George which, when correctly applied, will save this suffering world.

Mr. Cholmondeley knows what I'm talking about. His article, one of the redeeming features of the dreary February issue, is the best testament I've read in a long time. I hope he will never be discouraged or corrupted to the level to which some of the rest of us have apparently descended.

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## The Income Tax Amendment

(Continued from page 5)

the least opportunity for tyranny or corruption on the part of the officials and the least temptation to lawbreaking and evasion on the part of the taxpayer. It is estimated that about \$50 billion a year is lost in tax revenue that slips out of the government's grasp through leaks in the present structure.

If a proper distinction were made between earned and unearned income the

taxing of *unearned* income would be seen to conform with concepts laid down in the historic Declaration of Independence which emphasizes the inviolate right to property. Natural rights cannot be divorced from property rights. When the returns from labor and capital can be taken by the state we may as well confess that we have traveled the long road toward attainment of individual freedom for naught. If it were recognized that unearned (privilege) income is not rightfully private property there would