

George's economics than you have I confidently expect that your answers will clarify these important problems.
Pittsburgh, Pa.

JOHN C. ROSE.

REPLY

In New York City the rent of land amounts to approximately $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the capital value of land.

On a land assessment of about nine billions in 1932 the city collected out 225 millions. Taking 5% as the minimum of capitalization of nine billions of land value indicates that not less than 450 millions of land rent remained in the possession of land owners; and 225 millions, is 450 millions equals 675 millions which is $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ on 9 billions.

Under the Single Tax the rate of interest will be between 3 and 5%, and this will be accompanied by wages several times what they were under our, so called, prosperous conditions.

The net interest that has been earned on houses only (rent excluded) is not over 5% and is no where near that now.

Under the Single Tax there would be no mortgages on land. Mortgages would be against buildings and improvements only. The return on such mortgages held by the Schenley Estate are no doubt against land and improvements and so their return includes both rent and interest.—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.

HAS NEVER BEEN TRIED ANYWHERE.

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

In arguing with an opponent recently he said, "They tried Single Tax in New Zealand and it was a failure."

How would you reply to that? Answer in next issue of LAND AND FREEDOM.

Youngstown, Ohio.

JOHN F. CONROY.

REPLY

The Single Tax was not tried in New Zealand. Several cities and mining communities in New Zealand have placed a tax on land up to a penny in the Pound Sterling on its assessed, or capital, value. There are 480 pence in the pound, so that a penny represents less than 1%. The Single Tax would have collected a minimum of more than twenty times that amount.

The Single Tax aims at the collection of the full rent of land (not less than 5% of its capital value) and the abolition of all other taxes. In New Zealand they tax every conceivable thing that man produces, they tax all human effort, thrift, and talent.

The "Single Tax" has not been tried in New Zealand nor anywhere else.—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.

HAS FAITH IN THE N. R. A.

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

As an old Single Taxer I am disturbed over the attitude of LAND AND FREEDOM toward the Roosevelt administration, especially the National Recovery Act. Evidently you see nothing to commend in the policies pursued at Washington, either in the emergency measures adopted or in those which must be regarded as permanent and founded on sound principles and would have been accepted as such by Henry George himself. In the latter category I refer to the Roosevelt effort to bring great natural resources under public control or ownership, such as Muscle Shoals, now comprehending the entire Tennessee Valley; St. Lawrence river water power; Columbia river water power and that great enterprise known as Boulder Dam. No governor nor president has taken the courageous stand on these four tremendous far-reaching sources of power and wealth as has President Roosevelt. He deserves the gratitude of every follower of Henry George for what he has already initiated in that line and is valiantly striving to force through to a successful end. In essence they exemplify the appropriation of the unearned increment for public purposes, and the creation of a source of wealth from monopoly. Surely all Single Taxers believe in that programme even if it be only a step toward the desired goal.

As for some of the other things to which the Roosevelt administration seems to be committed, such as the cutting down of the supply of grain and live stock, I think we should understand that they are temporary plans to meet a present and urgent economic necessity. They act as a corrective of overproduction and bring about better prices for the farmer who, as you well know, has been suffering for years from unprofitable prices for what he raises. The plan is clearly one to meet an emergency. So are many of the strictures being applied to manufacturing industries through codes. They do not fit into what we are accustomed to understand as a free democracy, I know, but they are methods devised to make clearer the fundamental needs of the times.

Of course you are aware that the Single Tax philosophy cannot be gained in a single stride or in many advances but must come by indirection, as have most of the revolutionary changes come in the long past. Franklin Roosevelt, it should be conceded, is not only the most progressive but the most sympathetic president with the truly democratic aspirations of the people we have ever had in Washington. Why should we not go along with him? Why so rigidly attempt to adhere to the letter which killeth and ignore the spirit that giveth life?

Albany, N. Y.

JAMES MALCOLM.

REPLY

We do not doubt that James Malcolm is a sincere Single Taxer. He has been an efficient teacher of our philosophy for many years. But what do we mean by the term anyway? The so-called Single Tax is a proposal to get rid of all taxes and take economic rent for public purposes. The administration has invented a few new taxes and has retained nearly all of those that it found already existing. We refer to the so-called processing taxes, which have been added. And are we so doubtful of our doctrine that we should feel called upon to emphasize the importance of going slowly as if we feared the consequences of a great reform that we insist will accomplish so wonderful a change?

If anything, the letter of Mr. Malcolm shows the necessity of going much faster and demanding the *immediate* restoration of the land to the people. We are in danger of losing our grip on the fundamental philosophy of Henry George. And an indestructible part of that philosophy is its democracy which cannot be reconciled with

- a. Codes regulating wages and prices.
- b. Threats of economic death (that is starvation) for those guilty of the violation of these codes.
- c. Destruction of crops to equalize prices. (Whether this be temporary or permanent.
- d. Government regulation of private industry.
- e. Subsidies for those withdrawing land from use.
- f. Purchase of marginal land.
- g. Destruction of little pigs.
- h. Transfer of governmental powers from the legislative to the executive branch of government, thus preparing the way for the abandonment of our democracy for a thinly disguised dictatorship.

And then we are asked to believe that Henry George would have sanctioned this monstrous programme! Henry George believed in the natural order. His teaching entailed a philosophy of social reconstruction in which by establishing man's true relation to the earth we might rebuild a free society. Nearly everything that Roosevelt and his administration have done would have been anathema to him.

The temptation to say nice things of the occupant of the White House and his amiable intentions should not blind us to the changing character of our institutions which is being insidiously brought about. If we want socialism, restriction, regulation let us turn to Franklin Roosevelt; it is the saddest kind of a joke to ask us to accept him at the hands of a party bearing the name of democracy and Thomas Jefferson.

We did not dream that it would ever be necessary to argue this way with a Henry George man. We trust our correspondent will not be

angry with us when we say that to accept these strange Roosevelt nostrums is to repudiate nearly every tenet in the George philosophy.
—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.

TENANT FARMERS IN TEXAS

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The 1910 Census gave Texas 219,575 tenant farmers!

The 1920 Census gave Texas 232,309 tenant farmers!!

The 1930 Census gave Texas 301,660 tenant farmers!!!

What the next census will show I am afraid to think. And how easily all this might be changed by amending tax laws to make the speculator pay as much for holding land idle as others pay for using—just as hotels do with out-all-night customers. This would eliminate the speculator and give every man a chance to get under his own vine and fig tree—which must have been what the Lord intended when He made land so plentiful.

For fifty years we have been trying to find a more appropriate name for our movement than Single Tax, but aside from the C. L. P. group, nothing yet has been found that fits the requirements. Our movement naturally divides into two branches—the heavy artillery so ably represented by Mr. Graham Peace in England, and the light infantry which still holds to the "Single Tax." Both branches are necessary in any great movement, and this division shows progress. But the name Single Tax has been found to be a drawback because it suggests tax reform instead of land reform—our main object. Since it seems impossible to get rid of the name entirely,—being "blown in the bottle" as it were,—let me suggest that whenever the name is used an interrogation mark be placed after it to indicate a misnomer, thus: "The Single Tax (?)." The use of this little interrogation point will do much to awaken the curiosity of the unconverted and give us a chance to blow our horn.

Houston, Tex.

P. W. SCHWANDER

AN INTERESTING ANALOGY

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

A remembrance of the Congress: Some seemed stumped by the proposition that the land value tax may so cheapen land that the rental value will shrink and amount to little, thereby leaving the community without sufficient revenue. Let him who doubts take thought that when the wife (or whoever it is that keeps the flower garden) wishes to enjoy an abundance of blossoms from her sweetpea or aster bed, or whatever flowers she cultivates, she keeps cutting the blossoms as fast as they come into full bloom, and the plants favor her with a long continuous wealth of flowers to grace her home. Should she let them go to seed her plants are soon worn out and barren of blooms.

Alma, Wis.

THEODORE BUEHLER, JR.

THINKS HE MAY BE HERETICAL

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

At the risk of being regarded as heretical by my Single Tax friends I am writing the following for such comment and criticism as it may provoke.

I have come to believe in the possibilities of reaching the Single Tax by way of the income tax. At times I have felt that this would prove the easiest approach.

1. A tax on incomes with earned incomes exempt would be the Single Tax. In the final analysis land and labor are the factors of production and rent and wages the categories of distribution. Unearned income and rent are the same.

2. Among people generally an income tax is at least fairly popular.

3. The same may be said of the exemption of earned incomes.

4. The ethical question is involved in the words, earned and unearned. In this form it is easily grasped by the masses. In the end we shall win through the ethics rather than the science of our philosophy.

5. It may bring to us political co-operation on the part of those who believe that unearned incomes include more than land rent.

6. It will force to the front the distinction between earned and unearned incomes. More than that, it will make it decidedly to the pecuniary interest of the entrepreneur to show how little of his income is unearned with pecuniary interest and ethics both urging him on, the entrepreneur may turn out to be a clear thinker. We have never yet had personal interest urging a considerable group of able men to star for the Single Tax.

7. It would work beautifully in the case of 99 year leases of land in the center of our great cities. These usually contain a clause providing that the tenant shall pay the taxes on the land. A tax on incomes would not come under this clause.

8. The real problem is one of distribution, not of production. To the scientific mind the just distribution of wealth grows out of the way in which wealth must be produced; but to the ordinary mind the introduction of production into the argument brings only confusion. The ordinary mind will grasp the fact that there is a distinction between earned wealth and unearned wealth; but will fall down realizing that it is the distinction between wages and land rent. It is good teaching to attack the problem through the distribution of wealth rather than through the production of wealth.

Chicago, Ill.

H. B. LOOMIS.

JUST MIXED

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The writer, some time ago, was assigned to interview a prominent attorney, son of a former United States Senator, and himself a director in one of the largest financial institutions in the country, on the political situation.

He began by saying that the cause of our political troubles was due to universal suffrage, and illustrated it by adding, "While I always vote the Republican ticket as the party best able to govern, my drive who has been in my employ for thirty years and whom I support, voted the Socialist ticket, thereby cancelling my vote, not realizing that men in business and finances know much better what is good for the masses than they know themselves.

"I well remember the first time Henry George came over here from England to lecture on Socialism. I always believed that he was sent here by the English Socialist Party to conduct a propaganda in the country. I went to Cooper Union," the attorney continued, "to hear Mr. George. While I did not agree with him he made an excellent speech. His English was superb and clear so that no one could misunderstand what he meant. A real orator! He made the usual attack on capital and private property, holding that all property should be taken by the Government and divided among the people.

"After his lecture a number of those who believed as he did held a conference and suggested to Mr. George that the best way to reach the people would be to print a newspaper. Mr. George replied: 'I have no money to start a paper with.' His advisers then agreed that they would raise the necessary money and later a paper was published in the interest of Socialism.

"Almost from the beginning the paper was a financial success and Mr. George began to make money. Then he was unwilling to divide with those who had little.

"Realizing what a false position he was placed in, he abandoned preaching Socialism and having a hobby for something he began to preach the Single Tax, placing all taxes on land.

"I suppose that when Mr. George got hold of some land," said the attorney, "he would want to collect taxes from something else."

It is amazing how one of the best minds knows so much about many things that are not so.

N. Y. City.

OLD NEWSPAPER REPORTER.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

In order to appreciate the humor of this, it may be well to say that there is but one accurate statement in all this bunch of inaccuracies. That is the one fact that Mr. George did start a paper. But he never