

LIBERTY AND EX-PRESIDENT HOOVER

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Ex-President Herbert Hoover, writing in one of the popular magazines, attempts to defend what he is pleased to term liberty and to denounce national regimentation.

The article has more psychological interest than economic significance, for it demonstrates, with amazing force, how one may distort the common, every-day meaning of words—making a tragic mockery of them—so that they become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal, as the good Saint Paul would say.

If I believed in a multiplicity of laws—which I most assuredly do not—I would say that Hoover should be indicated for misrepresentation of our language, or for libel against sacred tradition or for fraudulent conversion of innocent words, for while the ex-President uses the platitudes of liberty, his brand of "liberty" is no different from the "liberty" that one may expect to find under a national regimentation regime, or the Fascism of Mussolini, or the Statism of Russia.

One of the platitudes of liberty should be memorized, for it is what noble souls have preached throughout the ages. It is as follows:

"It (liberty) is far more than independence of a nation. It is not a catalogue of political "rights." Liberty is a thing of the spirit—to be free to worship, to think, to hold opinions, and to speak without fear—free to challenge wrong and oppression with surety of justice. Liberty conceives that the mind and spirit of men can be free only if the individual is free to choose his own calling, to develop his talents, to win and keep a home sacred from intrusion, to rear children in ordered security. It holds he must be free to earn, to spend, to save, honestly to accumulate property that may give protection to old age and to loved ones."

If one stops to reflect a moment, it will become evident that this kind of liberty has never been put into effect.

(1) To this day, there still remains persecution in one form or another by both religious and anti-religious groups; (2) we are not free to hold opinions, for sedition laws (to mention but one form of restraint) still have teeth in them; (3) men dare not speak on every subject without fear of police, mobs, class prejudice, etc.; (4) men are not always free to challenge wrong and oppression with surety of justice; the reverse is usually true; great wrongs go unrighted while justice is trampled upon; (5) the individual is not free to earn his living; he is lucky if he can get any sort of job.

The above is only the beginning of the indictment, for it would require encyclopedic treatment to cover the whole subject. But the following questions should make it clear that Herbert Hoover has no conception of what liberty really means.

How can any person be free in an "owned" world? When a worker must pay his fellow creature for permission to use the earth, he is almost as much a slave to that owner as if he were actually owned. When the land and natural resources are legally occupied, he is denied the right to work. And those who are fortunate enough to procure employment have most of their earnings taken away from them by landlords (in rent), by employers (in excess profits) and by government (in taxes).

How can there be liberty when the State grants a monopoly of economic rent to landlords? When it grants monopolies to public utilities and other exploiters?

What a mockery Hoover made of the term "liberty!"

Pittsburgh, Pa.

JOHN C. ROSE.

LATER NEWS FROM CALIFORNIA

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Mr. George W. Patterson wires me that the Registrar of voters has notified the Secretary of State of California that we have filed 4,200 additional good names. This carries us over the top with about 2,600 names to spare.

As a consequence of this our right to appear on the ballot at the

next general election after this fall is absolutely secure. However, it may not be necessary to wait the full two years, as a Governor may direct the measure to be taken up at an intermediate special election.

We are now off to a good start.

Palo Alto, Calif.

JACKSON H. RALSTON.

WARNS AGAINST SOCIALIST ASSOCIATION

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

This is a letter on three subjects. First, approval for your sound Georgism and interesting and valuable paper. I read it from beginning to end with pleasure and profit; then forward it to The Berry Schools, Mt. Berry, Ga.

Second, a deep regret for the untimely death of Oscar Geiger several weeks ago. He is a great loss. What will now become of the Henry George School of Social Science? Is there any one to carry it on? Good teachers are born, not made.

Third, criticism for Chas. H. Ingersoll's suggestion that Georgists "hook up" with socialists and income tax advocates.

We know by experience that all the advocates of such ideas are so enamoured of their own pet theories as to be impossible and worse than useless to us. By even seeming to associate ourselves with them we do our cause incalculable harm.

We have the simplest, most convincing and only sound principle for the benefit of all industry and thrift—labor and capital. Why befog it and damage our position by associating it with false doctrine!

Boston, Mass.

E. J. BURKE.

MAYBE CLARENCE DARROW CAN ANSWER

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I have always been an admirer of Clarence Darrow, though not a believer in all his conclusions. And from the fact that I knew he was a Single Taxer, I cannot understand why he did not do something for the cause while on the recent Government Board instead of recommending something socialistic.

He would have made the world sit up and take notice if he had recommended Single Tax as the remedy.

Will some LAND AND FREEDOM writer please explain?

Youngstown, O.

JOHN F. CONROY.

OBJECTS TO THE TERM SINGLE TAX

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

"What LAND AND FREEDOM Stands For," is a persuasive statement of that philosophy. The following account of Lincoln's recognition of its essence is splendid. In this appear these forthright statements: "Let us not disguise it. They who own the land own the people upon it." "And the way to perfect freedom is to take the economic rent of land and abolish all taxes. How often must this be said?"

But, as I went on, page after page, and noted but *four or five* allusions to that idea, the unconscious irony of your question, "How often must this be said?" kept recurring to my mind, until curiosity drove me to count the number of times the "Single Tax" was mentioned. The term appeared *not less than 138 times!*

A distinguished Henry Georgist confesses failure through fifteen years, to convert anybody to the philosophy of Henry George, by preachments, I presume, on the Single Tax.

That this is due, as he seems to think, to insufficient powers of persuasion, I cannot believe, because I can testify that for as long a period—up to the later days of the old *Public*—my record would match his. But I can also testify—with what I hope is a proper modesty—that my own inadequate powers of persuasion, since this happy day when I first refused to be known as a single, or any other kind of a *taxer*—when I began to say: "No, I'm not a Single Taxer, I'm opposed to any and every kind of taxation," I have won many