

A Word With You

IN *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice walked out of the house to get to the garden, and saw a maze of paths. But no matter which path she took, she always found herself back at the house. After all, it took a special effort to get along in such unfamiliar surroundings.

It is something like that as between our maze of economic problems and the analysis made by Henry George. We may follow just about any current economic situation and we'll soon find ourselves bumping into George.

The recession and its attendant unemployment lands us squarely in George's territory, for his basic work was to track down the answers to these recurrent problems. The perpetual series of strikes and squabbles over wages also land us at Henry George's door. He saw that the fundamental need was to raise the general level of wages so that each would get his full earnings. Then there is the chronic—and currently acute—problem of public revenue and public services. While more and more governmental benefits and involvements are being laid out, there is greater and greater confusion as to how to pay for all this. Back we are at Henry George House! For George's chief implementation was a radical tax reform. The spreading blight of slums in our cities is also right up George's alley. Land value taxation is a potent weapon in the war against slums.

It is quite remarkable how we keep running into George every time we follow the path of an economic problem. Although he worked out his ideas at a particular time and place, although he addressed himself to one basic problem—progress and poverty—yet he somehow touched a vital artery that runs throughout society, he hit upon fundamental underlying trends that still assert themselves today.

In the world at large, too, though the paths stretch far and wide, we keep meeting Henry George. Surely the land question is the bottom question in the ferment going on in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the global struggle over communism, and in the world problem of poverty, resources and population. Monopolization of land by a few, and the impoverishment of the landless masses—this is the central economic trouble with the world.

There was some excuse for Alice: she had just gone through the looking-glass and it was a strange world that she found. But this is our own world; why are we so confused by it and why do we always get lost in the maze?

And above all—after the paths of economic problems lead so compellingly and so persistently straight to the door of Henry George—how is it that our leaders just as persistently turn away and get lost in the maze again?

—Robert Clancy

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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.

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