

Oscar B. Johannsen in the October HGN suggests that "to depend on free enterprise and the free market" would be "a better solution" than if the post office were to become a private government corporation. Contrary to what has been published, postal unions would favor a private government corporation if there was a labor-management law which included union recognition, binding arbitration and/or the right to strike. Without these guarantees, postal workers would be left to the mercy of political wolves.

Though we have valid reasons in not wanting to become part of private enterprise, Henry George has made some very appropriate observations on this matter in *Social Problems*:

(1) "I do not think the postal department of the government, with its extensive ramifications and its numerous employees, begins to be as important a factor in our politics, or, exerts so corrupting an influence, as would a private corporation carrying on this business, and which would be constantly tempted or forced into politics to procure favorable or prevent unfavorable legislation."

(2) "The post office department is managed with greater efficiency than any other department of the National Government, because it comes close to the people. To say the very least, it is managed as efficiently as any private company could manage such a business, and I think, on the whole, as economically."

In this age of oligopolies, I am wondering how Mr. Johannsen could suggest that the post office department be run "under the principles of free enterprise?" If it was impractical in George's time when free enterprise was the thing, how can the post office be run in this manner when free enterprise is practically non-existing?

KARL ROSENKRANZ
Van Nuys, California

I want to dispute Mr. Johannsen's article on transferring the post office to private industry. This is nothing more than a give-away program. I acknowledge that there could be some improvement in the service, but if the postal service were turned over to private industry the service would be no better. We would be paying more for postage rates and would only enrich the few at the expense of the public. Under government supervision when there are grievances submitted by the rank and file of the postal employees, they appeal to Congress for the betterment of their conditions, as strikes are forbidden. Would those who advocate turning this institution into private hands also approve of the employees' right to strike if there are grievances as they have in private companies?

I cannot understand why those who profess to be Georgists decry monopoly of land by speculators yet approve of turning the post office, which belongs to the public, into private industry, thereby creating another monopoly. As a matter of fact Henry George advocated public control of such monopolies as railroads, telegraph, etc.

EMANUEL MANDEL
New York City

Many points of issue arise in your letter columns (Nov. HGN). J. J. Pot's equation of "non-wealth money" with obligation is correct but he should not have extended the argument to introduce the government as a policer of obligation. The market place is the only adequate guardian of integrity and history records the failure of government coercion to sustain a viable morality.

Government coercion *can* sustain monopoly and one may extend this argument to say that monopoly cannot exist without government coercion. The privileges listed by Josephine Hansen are stepchildren of this heavy father (Aug. HGN).

HENRY GEORGE NEWS

Emanuel Choper's argument involves loyalty to Henry George and the single tax. The single tax was among the least of George's accomplishments. However, his analysis of societal problems was superb and virtually impels *some kind of solution to the exposed cause*. George's artistic solution was the single tax and equally artistic was his advocacy of it, but the advocacy did not begin nor end with him. The importance of George was his ability to make easy to understand the apparent complexity of economics. His popularization of basic principles of economics renders particularly appropriate his name at the masthead of the School, for the purpose of the School is to make widespread an understanding of these basics.

My final argument is directed at Steven Cord.

Statistics, hopefully, cannot be faulted on mathematical grounds but is a dubious endeavor in almost every other aspect. It is an art and the practitioner is an artist—not a scientist.

Should an answer emerge from the mathematical morass, it may show anything—from the result desired by the employer, to the result measured by the statistician after he has artistically diminished some information and amplified the rest.

The use of statistics, particularly those labelled "Official" to prove a point, is suspect as Steven Cord knows. Long before any calculation or analysis is attempted, the raw figures are wrong. Yet the calculation and analysis are attempted. Morganstern gives an estimate of GNP statistical accuracy as plus or minus 15-20 percent — a range of error of 30 to 40 percent. To achieve an increase of GNP of (sic) 5 percent a year appears to be an artistic triumph of comparison between errors.

The measurement of economic rent suffers from all the statistical inaccuracies apparent in less important calcula-

tions. An example of this was the study funded by the Lincoln Foundation and made by three New York professors several years ago. It measured a residual that can in part be described as total rent less charges against rent plus speculative increment, etc.

As one can make a convincing argument for the proposition that ALL taxes are paid out of rent (what else can pay them?) any measurement of rent should have added to it total collected taxes. Care to think about that?

Before a statistician begins work, his instructions must be precise. Before he is asked to measure rent a political economist should define it. Before he is asked to measure wages or interest they should be defined.

Then he can begin and after appropriate elision of the inappropriate a useful picture of the truth may make itself apparent.

Circumstantial evidence is "better" evidence than witnessed evidence. In the same way reasonable expectation may be surer than "measured" fact.

Perhaps HGN readers would like to begin an exercise. List the things which must be included, or excluded from a measurement of total rent. The list should include all those things which would affect the final figure.

We might all be surprised.

HARRY POLLARD
Los Angeles

Claire Meirowitz is asking for a two-hour lesson in the fifth suggestion of her letter (Nov. HGN). Using as a guide the condensed statement on the HGN masthead, page two, the following may be assumed regarding full LVT.

Wise conservation of natural resources becomes the desideratum for each community competing with its neighbors to attract population and industry. Result: higher rental value of sites. Rent is the community's only income. Today shopping malls as well