

'Why I Believe in Integration...'

Single-Taxer Sees No Other Honest Position

BY DONALD STEPHENS

(The author of this article lives in Arden, Del., near Wilmington, a community founded in 1900 by his father to demonstrate a system of land tenure whereby land is never sold but leased. Mr. Stephens has also assisted in founding two sister

communities, Ardentown and Ardencroft, and is especially proud that one-third of the leaseholders in Ardencroft are Negroes. He is an SCEF board member and is active in many other groups working for peace and civil rights.)

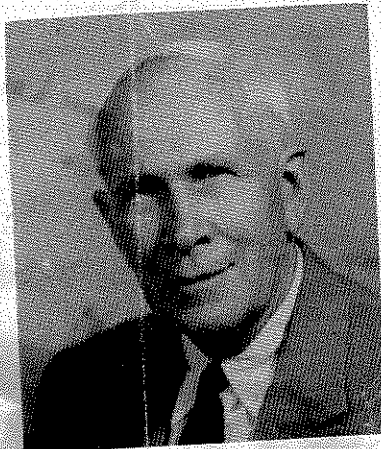
Why do I believe in integration? Primarily because I had the rare good fortune to be born the son of a truly remarkable man—Frank Stephens. He was a thoroughgoing Jeffersonian democrat who believed that no man could possibly have any rights superior to any other.

The course of his whole life was changed when, as a young man, he chanced to read an amazing book *Progress & Poverty*, by one of America's great thinkers, the economist, Henry George. My father became an ardent friend of this man and an unceasing fighter for the principles he taught.

George preached that not only were men brothers but that since all men were children of a common Father, each had an equal right in the common heritage which no man created—the earth. He believed that most of the great

scourges which plague mankind—poverty, ignorance, crime, etc.—arise because the few are permitted to hold as private property what rightfully belongs to all.

He demonstrated that this sit-



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uation could be remedied by the state's annually collecting from each person who "owned" land its full economic rental value. Thus, he said, there would be no need for any other tax. His plan became known as the "Single Tax." Like Christianity, it as yet has been considered too simple a solution for general acceptance.

Followers of Henry George, by the very nature of their basic beliefs, become interested in all efforts to tear down barriers and inequalities between men. Growing up in this atmosphere, I naturally joined in various movements for the common good.

So of course I believe in integration. It is impossible for me to understand how anyone who professes belief in Christ's teachings and in democracy, and who deeply and honestly faces the question, can believe otherwise.

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