

SCHOOL NOTES

LONG ISLAND APRIL MEETING

"Inflation"

On Tuesday, April 10th a subject of 'immediate concern' will be discussed by a distinguished panel. You will join **Albert Coletti** — president of the Design Capital Group of Melville, **Richard Rocchio** — Executive VP of Oil Heat Institute of Long Island (and former Energy Resource Director for Nassau County), and **Oscar Johannsen** — trustee of the New York Henry George School and the Schalkenbach Foundation, as they work on the problem: —

"Inflation: How can it be controlled?"

Tuesday, April 10th is the date. The location is the Plainview-Old Bethpage Library in Plainview on Old Country Road. The meeting starts at 7.45 pm. Alumni and friends are welcome.

LAST CHANCE IN SAN FRANCISCO!

FINAL REGISTRATION

"Spring Semester Classes"

Wednesday, April 11th

Upper Haight

117½ Frederick Street
San Francisco

Fort Mason

Bldg #312 — Room 2 K
San Francisco

Thursday, April 12th

Henry George School — Room 1009

833 Market Street
San Francisco

University Avenue Coop.

1414 University Avenue
Berkeley

Corporate Planning Consultants

1715 Lincoln Avenue
San Rafael (behind Colonial Hall)

All classes begin at 7 pm

Personal contact is the best way to enroll good students. Take time out NOW to consider some choice prospects among your friends and 'phone their names to the school. A special invitation will be sent over your name. Call or write at once!

The land wars in the British Isles

People tend not to bother very much about political economy, except when things go wrong. In the 1850's, the 1860's and for more than half the 1870's, things were — on the whole — steadily improving for most people in the British Isles, in the wake of free trade.

Then everything began to go wrong. It began with the weather. There were several poor summers; then the skies opened. In November, 1879, the English grain crop was rotting in the fields in November. The Irish potato harvest was down to perhaps a third of what it had been a few years earlier. There was a very real fear in Ireland that there might be a return to the unspeakable famine, which some thirty years before had killed perhaps a tenth of the population of the country.

The Irish peasants organized their famous Land League, under the inspiration of Michael Davitt. The Land League's short term object was to help the peasants in the struggle with their own landlords; to cut the rent, to ensure that people were not thrown out of their holdings without very good cause and to ensure proper compensation for the man who had improved his land.

The measures that the Land League recommended were either undoubtedly lawful, or at least not manifestly and obviously illegal. Peasants were encouraged, for example, to boycott bad landlords — to refuse to have any dealings with them whatsoever. Arguably, this was a criminal conspiracy; but the law wasn't really certain. What the peasants were not encouraged to do was to shoot their landlords, or to destroy their landlords' property; although some people did these things nevertheless.

The Land League also became interested in the possibility of a radical restructuring of the whole land system of Ireland on a permanent basis. It also forged a powerful link between land reformers and Charles Stuart Parnell, who led the Irish Nationalist Party and was pressing for a large measure of political independence.

The course of the "Land War" is very interesting and very famous. Suffice here

by
ROY DOUGLAS

to say that the British Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, was soon persuaded that the immediate demands of the peasants must be granted and he forced a measure to that effect through Parliament. That didn't end the Irish Land War by any means; but the rest is outside my brief. What does concern us now is that a vast amount of attention was focussed on the ideas of an American economist, Henry George.

His great work — **Progress and Poverty** — was distributed in vast numbers through the agency of the Land League; and another book — **The Irish Land Problem** — soon followed. These works became the center of great public interest in the British Isles, and Henry George visited both Britain and Ireland several times in the 1880's for reporting and lecturing tours.

I do not think that the importance of these books and visits can be overstated. Here, for the first time, most of the people in Britain were conscious of a man who had made a deep and serious analysis of economics, and was arguing that a mechanism existed through which the whole social system could be restructured, for the particular benefit of the poorer people.

Somebody, I suppose, will reply that Karl Marx had already made a very different analysis; to which I shall reply that the first English edition of **Das Kapital** did not appear until 1887, four years after Marx's death, and long before that **Progress and Poverty** was under active discussion by every keen radical in the country.

Largely, but by no means exclusively, through the activities of Henry George, the idea of land reforms of one kind or another became a great concern in many parts of the British Isles during the 1880's, and for long afterwards. In most rural areas, however — including Ireland — the land reform movement took several curious twists away from Henry George.

(to be continued)