

# HENRY GEORGE NEWS

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April 1979

## ROOTS

by Stan Rubenstein

In our centennial celebration year of Progress and Poverty, it's time to reflect — to take note of our successes and failures. The marked interest throughout the country in balanced budgets and property tax reform, especially since Proposition 13, may be attributed to many factors, one being the lack of current sound economic principles. Another could well be the tireless efforts of indefatigable Georgists, for who can say we have not had influence?

Involvement with contemporary issues and problems has brought Georgist philosophy into the real world. And the results are encouraging. For, travelling the routes of politics has enabled the merits of land value taxation to gain a wider audience. Our contributions to various journals about Georgist principles have begun to edge our ideas closer to the mainstream of public opinion. We no longer encounter resistance. Rather do we find friendly acceptance of our ideas; This is all to the good, but there is a less encouraging side of the shield.

The avant garde of the Georgist movement can trace their roots to our magnum opus and to its study in

formal classes. Sadly, however, throughout the country fewer classes and fewer graduates are being developed. Unless this condition is reversed, we may be past the point of no growth. We may be losing more men and women through attrition than we are gaining through our courses. At this moment in history, when hope and vigor ought to permeate our souls, when the portents indicate to those with the slightest vision that now is the time to reach for the stars, we seem dispirited, hopeless and apathetic. Yet, this need not be the case.

Take heart from our experience of the last two years on Long Island. In each of these years, three to four hundred students have enrolled in four contiguous towns, so that large follow-up classes and an alumni association, led by students, could be developed. Extra large first night attendances were derived by tying in the courses with the crying need for property tax reduction and reform. From these beginnings, we made the transition to the heart of the Georgist philosophy.

Successful classes have led to a renewed faith in teaching, leaving class discussion leaders with that warm glow we experienced during our

"If I go this night over the civilized world, I would find men who would gladly clasp hands with me . . . if it has been given to me to help forward a great movement — it is through no merit of mine ; it is not from my energy ; it is not from my learning ; it is not from my ability ; — it is from the simple fact that, seeing a great truth, I swore to follow it."

### CENTENNIAL '79!

The Centennial Committee, under the direction of Chairman **Terry Newland**, is laboring well in San Francisco.

The international festival in honor of the 100th year since publication of **Progress and Poverty**, will be headquartered at the Jack Tar Hotel from August 20th to 26th. The program shows an impressive group of top-grade thinkers and speakers. A preliminary listing appears inside the **NEWS**.

Plan **now** to join hundreds of fellow-Georgists from around the world who will rendezvous in San Francisco this August.

introduction to this challenging philosophy. How gratifying, once again, to open for students that door to a promising world of the future.

Let us not forget, however, that the decades of yesteryear are gone — those days when reception of our ideas was much kinder. Social, political and cultural forces have made our task more difficult. Past successes may be today's failures. Classes must conform to our changing audience. Ideas, no matter how valid, cannot be shared with a group that is unable to understand them. (cont'd — Page 4)

# ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF PROGRESS AND POVERTY

1879 - 1979

## First Draft Conference Program

Monday, August 20th — Evening session

Reception & Welcome — JACK TAR Hotel :

Hosts — Wendell Fitzgerald & HGS SF

Tuesday, August 21st — Morning session

**THEME : "The Spirit of Henry George"**

History and Future — Georgist Movement :

**Robert Clancy** (Henry George Institute).

Philosophy of Henry George :

**Dr. Louis Wasserman** (SF State Univ.)

Henry George and the American Ethic :

**Frank Goble** (Thom. Jefferson Res. Ctr.)

World-wide spread of Georgism :

**Dr. A.M. Woodruff** (Lincoln Foundation)

Danish History of the Single Tax :

**Knut Thorstrup** (Stichting Grondvest).

Tuesday, August 21st — Afternoon session

**THEME : "The Intellect of Henry George"**

Henry George's Message :

**Philip Finkelstein** (HGS NY)

Films on Henry George :

**Floyd Morrow** (Basic Econom. Educ. Inc.)

Organizational meetings

(Schools, Leagues, Institutes, etc.)

Wednesday, August 22nd — Morning session

**THEME : "The Curse of Privilege"**

Whence Shall Come the New Barbarians? :

**John M. Kelly** (Management Enterprises)

Georgism and Third World Politics

— Ireland and Nicaragua :

**Robert Tideman** (HGS SF)

True Cause of Unemployment :

**S.S. Gilchrist** (Austral. Sch. Soc. Science)

Consumer and the Monopoly of Resources :

**Dr. Polly Roberts** ('Nader's Raiders')

The Richest Land :

**David Nesbit** (Nat. Land for the People)

Immorality of Private

Ownership of Ground Rents :

**Dr. Steven Cord** (Pres. H G Foundation)

Comparative Economic Systems,

the Henry George Paradigm :

**Allen Hayward** (Land Economist)

Women and the Land Question :

**Cathy Orloff** (Past Exec. Sec. HGS S.F.)

Libertarians and the Land Question :

**Bart Lee** (Attorney)

Wednesday, Aug. 22nd — Afternoon session

**THEME : "Tax Reform and the Real World"**

The \$400 Billion Theft :

**Perry Prentice** (Schalkenbach, Time-Life)

Why We Don't Have the Single Tax Today :

**Dr. James L. Busey** (Univ. of Colorado)

Group sessions :

Civic Reception — Rotunda of City Hall :

Thursday, August 23rd — Morning session

**THEME : "Conservation and Taxation"**

Will the Energy Crisis Save Our Cities? :

**Dr. Mason Gaffney** (UC Riverside)

Preservation and Stewardship

of Natural Resources :

**Michael McClosky** (Ex. Dir. Sierra Club)

Political Realities and Advanced

Techniques of Land Valuation :

**Ted Gwartney** (B C Assess. Authority)

Site Value Rating in South Africa :

**J. McCulloch** (City of Johannesburg)

Land-Value Taxation Applied to a

Large Metropolitan Area :

**Dr. William Truehart** (Economics UC)

Land-Value Taxation, Progressive Tax or

Related to Ability to Pay? :

**Senator Vernon Cook** (Oregon Legislat.)

Mathematics of LVT :

**Mike Trigg** (HGS SF)

Thursday, August 23rd — Afternoon session

**THEME : "Land Use"**

19th Cent. Advocates of New Age Politics :

**Mark Satin** (Auth. "New Age Politics")

Progressive Utilization Theory :

**Andrea Carman & Rich Gochal**

New Age Council — Conscious Land Use :

**Alanna Hartzog** (LEAF)

Henry George, American Physiocrat :

**Ronald Burgess** (ESSRA, London)

Three Pillars of Civilisation :

**Godfrey Dunkley** (Johannesburg S.A.)

Serious Evaluation of Comm. Land Trusts :

**Mildred Loomis** (Found. School of Living)

Friday, August 24th — Morning session

**THEME : "Politics and Promotion"**

Fighting Back By Improving

Our Communications :

**David Hapgood** ('Screwing Average Man')

Panel—ReformforOurTime:theTaxRevolt

**Chair : Dr. John Bardaro** (SF Com.Coll.)

**Dr. William Filante** (Assemblyman)

**Carol Ruth Silver** (SF Supervisors)

**Philip Finkelstein** (Director, HGS NY)

**Dr. Steven Cord** ('Incentive Taxation')

Communicating the Georgist Message :

**Dr. Morgan Harris** (HGS Los Angeles)

Debate — 'Who Should Own the Earth?' :

**Harry Pollard** (HGS Los Angeles)

**Bart Lee** (Libertarian)

Friday, August 24th — Afternoon session

**THEME : "Money — Measure and Medium"**

Money and Freedom :

**Robert De Fremery** (Monetary Econom.)

Banking and Monetary Reform :

**Oscar Johannsen** (Schalkenbach Found.)

Natural Economic Order of Silvio Gesell :

**Terry Newland** (Exec. Director LEAF )

Library Presentation (SF Public Library)

Saturday, August 26th — Morning

**THEME : "Economic Reform"**

Panel Discussion — Land Reform

Panel — Trade Reform :

**Chair : Vic Blundell** (Internat. Union)

**Harry Pollard** (InterStudent Program)

**Dr. Roy Douglas** (University of Surrey)

**Dr. Fred Harrison** (Ed. Land & Liberty)

Saturday, August 26th — Afternoon session

**THEME : "Recreation"**

Free time to see San Francisco !

Banquet — Awards and Presentations :

**Chair : Dr. Val Jaros** (HGS SF)

Sunday, March 26th — Morning session

**THEME : "Ethics and Religion"**

An Ethical Economic Order :

**Dr. Robert Andelson** (Auburn Univers.)

George, the Land and Religion :

**Rev. Wylie Young** (Antidote for Madness)

HGS — Henry George School : SF — San Francisco : LA — Los Angeles : NY — New York :

LEAF — Land, Equality and Freedom : UC — University of California : LVT — Land Value Taxation

(Descriptions for identification only)

## 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)

Dear Harry

Oscar B. Johannsen wrote recently: "I read with pleasure and delight your excellent article, Henry George, Prophet of the Good Society. I agree with you that we should stress that we favor no taxes . . . I've been looking for a catchy title, instead of 'Single Taxers' or 'Land Value Taxers' . . . ."

Oscar Johannsen is right. If we call ourselves "Land Value Taxers" people will get just one point — we are "taxers". They will believe we want to impose on them some kind of tax — and they will be against us.

If we say we are "Single Taxers", we will get a similar response. People will be turned off, thinking we want to impose a tax on them.

But there's a catchy title, made to order for us. If we call ourselves "Un-Taxers", the immediate reaction of nearly everybody will be, "Right On! We're for you!"

If they ask, "How far would you go in un-taxing us?" there are two answers. Everyone who understands economics could agree, "We would un-tax all the products of human labor; all buildings and improvements; all earned incomes."

Some would go further: "We would un-tax everything; eliminate all taxes."

This would probably bring the question, "How would you finance government?"

## A LETTER

The answer is precisely stated in the words Earl Hanson used in the resolution for the Utah Republican Convention. "Economic rent is the rightful source of public revenue."

In **Equal Rights**, James L. Busey wrote "Proposition 13 indicates the people want to reduce taxes, not increase them. They are not interested in some new or apparently added tax, such as 'land-value tax'."

"They want to reduce or eliminate a tax or taxes . . . the abolition of some tax such as that on improvements, would have tremendous appeal at the present time."

"Never mind about 'where the money is going to come from?' Did California voters fuss about that?"

But some will ask that question, and insist on an answer. Fortunately, we have a perfect answer: The money will come from charging people for the things they use — the land, radio and TV channels, ports, harbors, rivers, forests, minerals and all natural resources.

People will have more questions for us, but if they look on us as "the Un-Taxers" they will not be asking questions the way they do now of "land value taxers" — as though they are challenging an enemy.

**MORGAN HARRIS** is a multiple professor of economics, writing, and advertising. Here's a letter.

If we are "the Un-Taxers" who are working to reduce and eliminate their tax burdens, they will look on us as their friends. They will want to know more — not to refute us, but to understand what we are saying and to help us achieve our goal.

Is it not common sense to enlist their support — by calling ourselves "the Un-Taxers"?

Sincerely,  
**Morgan Harris**

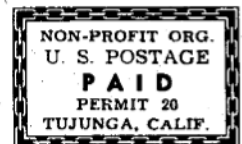
**ROOTS** (cont'd from Page 1)

Our message is not for this generation alone but for all generations so we need feel no trepidation about the teaching of Georgist philosophy. But changes are in order. We need a re-structuring of the basic course; more palatable reading material geared to the reading habits of our students; and more successful advertising to meet the changing tastes and attitudes of our communities.

We have never known a more propitious time, or a greater need, for what we have to give, the teaching of the principles set forth in **Progress and Poverty**. Paraphrasing Arnold Toynbee, the noted historian, every organization is judged by its ability to respond to its challenges. As the various celebrations of our centennial fade into history, may we take pride in having met successfully this most formidable of challenges.

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