

From Politics to Objectivism

AL GANTS of White Plains, in Westchester County, New York, is a professional man who volunteered to run for the office of Mayor on the Conservative ticket. Why, why, cried his fellow Georgists, who remember him from way back in the 29th Street days in New York.

"I believe in the collection of land rent," he said, at a faculty and members' dinner at the Henry George School on September 18th. "In White Plains we spend thousands and thousands on education at the very time that you don't have to know how to read or write to vote. Every voter should have at least one course in economics."

He joined the Conservative party, with 5500 enrolled members, believing he could stimulate some interest in land value taxation. There are things in the party he doesn't like, but he came to the conclusion that he'd rather be a "live single taxer than a dead Georgist."

"There are so many," he said, "who never heard of land value taxation. Where would I get a chance to speak my piece? In coffee klatches I meet 15 or 20 people. They talk about urban renewal—how they can get rid of the old buildings, and how to get more funds from the government. People look shocked when I ask if they ever thought about eliminating the causes of slums."

He is frankly enjoying this experi-

ence and says lots more people speak to him now that he's running for something. He will talk on subjects such as "Do it yourself urban renewal." Some will heckle, but some will ask questions. He recalls that a handful of Georgists in the Democratic party in Pittsburgh made enough noise once to influence legislation later when the party grew stronger.

Candidate Leo Cohen of Oakland, New Jersey, was also in the audience and took a bow. He is running for Mayor on the Independent Republican ticket and has a good chance of being elected. He too has taught Henry George classes.

Another speaker at the dinner was Sydney Mayers, who told of a 20-week course in "Objectivism," at the Nathaniel Branden Institute. Objectivism represents the philosophy of Miss Ayn Rand, author of *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Fountainhead*, and other novels. "Whatever is, is," expresses a starting point, said Mr. Mayers.

Noting similarities and differences with the Georgist philosophy, he also pointed out that teaching methods differ. Objectivism is given as a series of lectures with a question period. The questions are for clarification, and no disagreements or disputes are expected. At the Henry George School, the Socratic method is favored, which allows full airing of students' views.

Peter Patsakos gave a report of his Latin American trip (see page one).