

# Henry George School of Social Science

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To Teachers and Extension Directors:

CONFERENCE Another Annual Conference has come and gone - our 21st, which was held at Asilomar, Calif., July 14-18. Each conference takes on its own personality, impossible to determine in advance, but staying with us as a memory, as though it was supposed to turn out just the way it did.

The Asilomar Conference turned out to be an easy-going, free-wheeling type of conference. Held in a rustic environment, it tended to be an intimate, family-style type of conference, in contrast to the bustling city hotel conference last year. Which kind of conference is best? They are all good in their own way - variety, change of pace and change of scene help make each one interesting.

Why have a conference every year? Does it not tend to be a rehash? What good are they, if definite plans do not emerge which can be put into practice during the year?

These questions have been asked over the years - but still we meet every year - we do hear a lot of rehash, and very few definite plans emerge. Yet we have been hearing the objections less frequently in recent years. It must be that the conferences give some satisfaction, and justify their existence in some way. Perhaps there is a persistent hope that this time the Grand Plan will emerge? Apart from that, there is the pleasure of meeting old friends and making new ones - a satisfaction not to be underrated. We exchange views, we hear a lot of things over again, but we also hear some new things. And there are always some new people around who have not heard the old things. At Asilomar we had directors who are still relatively new, or just getting started - Ray Abrams of Miami, George Collins of Philadelphia, Ivan Dailey of Cleveland, Roy Davidson of San Diego, Laurie Mannell of Toronto, Mina Olson of Chicago, Loral Swofford of St. Louis - and the "rehash" may have been good news for them. Here are a couple of comments: - Ivan Dailey writes, "I always have better classes and fewer dropouts after attending a conference - and I do not feel as though I am working alone." Mina Olson writes, "After hearing results of class publicity in other extensions, I can see why we must do more advertising. Actually our percentage was very good for the number of cards placed." Other directors attending were: M.S. Lurio of Boston, Robert Clancy of New York, Bette Breese of Syracuse, John T. Tetley of New Jersey, James W. Ramsay, retiring Toronto director, Robert D. Benton of Detroit, Harry E. Pollard of Los Angeles and Robert Tideman of San Francisco. Missing was Raymond Perron, who recently resigned as director of the Montreal extension.

The Conference is reported in the August Henry George News, and more will appear in the September issue. The School directors' sessions were as follows: a pre-conference session on various subjects, including education and politics; conference sessions on Attracting Students, Effective Teaching, Involving Graduates, and Turning Graduates into Contributors; and a final Evaluation session, at which Goals were also discussed. Perhaps we heard some rehash at the sessions on Attracting Students and Involving Graduates - although we always pick up something from the exchange of views and experiences - and don't forget the new directors.

We heard some new and interesting contributions at the Effective Teaching session from Loral Swofford and Morgan Harris. Mr. Swofford gave several good pointers on establishing a personal rapport between teacher and students, and he stressed the importance of a "star opening" - something striking at the beginning of each session to hold attention. Dr. Harris presented some suggestions on being an effective leader, including the following: "Most important and most difficult item is to be open-minded