

GUEST COLUMNIST

A \$500 wager-and black journalists accused of apathy

Wilbur Johnson
writes from
WASHINGTON

I ACCUSE the nation's black journalists of shirking their responsibilities to the black communities and other minorities who have been traditionally at the bottom of the economic ladder. It has been a combination of ignorance or wilful neglect which has prevented them from reading and attempting to understand *Progress and Poverty* by Henry George which was published in 1879.

White journalists are equally as guilty, but they do not have the burden of racial prejudice to overcome in order to gain employment. However, due to their demands for greater income, the industries are rapidly resorting to automation in order to survive. Many jobs are consequently abolished.

Although many political obstacles exist to oppose his remedies, Henry George provided the answer to the major economic cause of involuntary poverty and low wages! Since 1953 I have been wagering sums from \$500 for anyone who could establish that George was not scientifically correct. I present this challenge again, hoping that all journalists will do something about educating the public about this knowledge that is successfully being concealed by our costly educational system.

The only black leader of national fame whom I ever heard mention

the name of Henry George was Martin Luther King Jr. in his pamphlet "Where do we go from here?"

How many black journalists are able to carry Henry George's message to the masses of poor and deprived people throughout the United States?

AMERICAN titles of landownership have in large part originated from the European practice and custom of receiving grants of land from nobility or the crowned aristocracy. Government officials in America continued the custom.

More detailed information may be obtained from *Land Title Origins* by Alfred Chandler and *Land Tenure and Land Taxation in America* by Aaron M. Sakolski. There is no moral or legal justification for unlimited landownership rights for anyone in the U.S. or any where else in the World.

Until governments all over the world abolish taxes on labor products and use rental income to finance government costs, domestic revolutions and international wars will continue and become worse.

Henry George demonstrated how our economic system could provide an adequate living for everyone without the need for the growth of a parasitic governmental bureaucracy that takes the wealth from

people who use land for production, and gives a large portion of this production—to landowners who speculate in land.

Tax concessions made land speculation a more desirable investment than actually putting the land into production. According to *U.S. News and World Report* (10/30/72, page 40 and 10/15/73, page 49) the best estimates of total land rent in our economy approximated \$150 billion yearly while corporate profits after taxes averaged only \$45 billion yearly from 1963-1973. Land speculation does not create job opportunities—it reduces them!

It is not capitalism but government that extends special privileges to favoured individuals and enables the feudal system to survive and grow even stronger!

The conclusion to which a reasoning person must arrive is that: *our economic system is really a sophisticated feudal system that forces supid leaders of capital and labor to fight each other over diminishing portions of the economic pie as land costs go skyward!*

A piece meal approach to tax reform merely postpones the inevitable day of reckoning. Sooner or later the general public will awaken to the fact that land rent should be paid to government to finance the services and protection it provides its citizens.

Top speakers line up for centenary conference

RALPH NADER is one of the speakers provisionally lined up to speak at the San Francisco conference which will celebrate the centenary of *Progress & Poverty*. Speakers from as far afield as New Zealand and Denmark will converge on August 20 for the five day conference. Among them will be top-line academics

like Dr. Mason Gaffney and Dr. Steven Cord, along with authors like David Hapgood (*The Screwing of the Average Man*) and British historian Dr. Roy Douglas. To attend, contact Terry Newland, 833 Market St. Room 1009, San Francisco, CA. 94103.