

# Committee on Taxation, Resources and Economic Development

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Antioch - 5/21/70

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I phoned the U of Chi and was put through to the office of a Mr. Coase who is either the editor or office mgr. of the Press which publishes the Journal. So he was out, but I left an order for a copy of the issue (Vol. XII - 1; April 1969) for delivery to you, to be billed to the Foundation. An interesting sidelight is that the last sentence of Stigler's 3-page introduction to the Marshall lectures reads: "The two published versions of the lectures were compared by R. H. Coase, who also prepared the footnotes accompanying the lectures." Coincidence? or relative?

If for any reason you don't receive the copy, let me know and I'll photo copy the photo copied pages Dan sent me. In fact, I wish I hadn't been so obedient and had merely done this in the first place, as I have made extensive marginal notes which I would have thereby been able to share with you.

Dan hasn't yet answered my letter asking for his explanation of why Stigler chose to reopen P&P and in this strange way. The Marshall lectures as reported, even after his evident editing, show an abysmal ignorance. The third lecture is devoted to a refutation of land nationalization, as though George was a land nationalist! The quality of his thinking is very low-grade.

What is amazing is that Stigler says that Marshall bested George, thus revealing the quality of Stigler's mental processes.

What this means to me is that when we have finally won over the public finance people (which we have so nearly done already), we must then turn to the theoreticians. Stigler lists his major fields as Economic Theory (Micro & History of Thought) and Business Organization. What is remarkable is that monopoly (and its counterpart, competition) falls under Business Organization. In the debate Marshall insisted that the land market in Britain was competitive because there were multiple landowners, which indicates how little Marshall understood the nature of monopoly and competition. But it also indicates how little Stigler knows because he upholds Marshall's position.

Actually, it wasn't a formal debate. Marshall was in the audience when George gave his Oxford address and he and George crossed swords in the discussion that followed. The reason I asked you if there was a copy of the address available is that the reporter gave such a garbled version of what George must have said. There

5/21/70

are words and whole phrases that a student of George would correct. ~~There is~~ One horrible paraphrase was: "They stood merely on the verge of starvation, and the only thing that kept wages above a certain point was that below that point ~~they~~ men with the habits of Englishmen could not live. The reason was simply this, when the man who owned the land could command all that came out of the land, he saved enough to introduce labour to produce that wealth." This is utter gibberish as recorded. But any student of George would know that what he said was "... the landowner could command all the product (?) of the land save only enough to induce labour to produce."

I had gone to the "Life" by his son and he gave a dispirited account of George's performance that night, but despite the reporting and the rowdyism, it certainly appeared to me that George was a giant among runts, certainly including Marshall.

No - I would not recommend that Stigler do the introduction to the abridgement of P&P that you contemplate!! How long before you have to choose? If you can wait until after our conference this year I might have a clearer answer. Jessie immediately suggested Dan Holland. Dan is a philosopher and a fast learner. He expresses himself beautifully. But I do not yet know how much he understands George yet. There are wholex gobs of academic Georgists I would turn thumbs down on: Cord, Brown et al. For my part I wouldn't want someone who would feel constrained to tell what part of George was right and what is relevant. I would want George introduced, and in the most favorable light - not criticized or evaluated.

Edward Hake Phillips might do a good job, but he has taken himself out of the main stream by going to Austin College. Jim Busey might be your man. Nelson Peach has told me that the world wouldn't be in the mess it's in today had it followed the teachings of George. George Benz, one of Nelson's students, is a real Georgist, though he writes carelessly. How long before you must get your man?

Must close. Will get a budget off to you Over the weekend. Have you gotten your report from the UofW Press yet?

Best again.

