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REPORT ON TOUR OF THE COLLEGES

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THE OBJECTIVE of the tour is stated in the agreement made with me by the Foundation, and is phrased as follows: "WHEREAS, Foundation is desirous of creating interest among the faculty and student bodies of the colleges of this country in the land problem as so ably posed by Henry George in his writings..."

The tour was made by my wife and myself, Mrs. Carter serving as my secretary and participating directly whenever there was entertainment to be extended or received.

This was a carefully planned and integrated operation, involving necessarily a high order of cooperation from the headquarters staff of the Foundation. As a first step, an itinerary was drawn up from Lovejoy's College Catalogue, listing in numbered sequence the colleges upon which I planned to call.

Letters of introduction were then sent from headquarters to the first colleges on the list, addressed to prior acquaintances where such existed, and to heads of economics departments in any case. Thereafter a stream of these introductory letters would precede me, ideally reaching their destinations a few days before my arrival on each campus. Following these initial calls on each campus, I would then extend my visits to others, either as suggested by professors already seen on this or earlier campuses, or as indicated by the college catalogue.

Reports on all calls made were sent in to headquarters weekly. These reports were as comprehensive as I could make them, covering the subjects discussed, a description of the professor, and the request for materials to be sent.

Thereupon headquarters sent out follow-up letters to each professor visited. These letters were of a high quality, in many instances drawing on my reports for the personal touch. They elicited favorable comment frequently from their recipients. As a further follow-up, the professor would receive the materials he had requested, such as P & P or other works of George, or others of our publications.

For each call, wherever practicable, I made use of "An Introduction to Henry George." It would be difficult to overstate the usefulness of this 17-page manuscript, which I had prepared in 1957 for the initial tour. It was the theme around which headquarters built the advance publicity (the introductory letters). It was an effective means of inviting the cooperation of the professor wherever that seemed advisable. Because it is in tentative form (planographed, and without author's name) it invited comment and suggestions. It is in addition an effective means for the introduction of George's ideas, both to the student and to the professor himself.

Many of the professors I saw on a number of occasions, one such I saw five times. In all this procedure, there was the effort to produce lasting results, and the subsequent correspondence with professors is one measure of the success of this attempt. An instance of this is a note received in July from Dr. Williams of the University of Houston, saying, about the "Introduction", "A very good introduction all in all," on the back of our letter to him dated February 13, 1959.

The technique of my calls is simple. In introducing myself, I state my name, my association with the Foundation, and the Foundation's function as publisher of Henry George's works. Thereafter, I try to remain in the background of the conversation, encouraging the professor

to talk about George, about local community problems which relate to the land question, probing his interest in George that the Foundation may the better assist with materials in any presentation he may wish to make, placing in his hands a copy of the "Introduction", briefing him on Foundation activities such as the Groves and Lindholm projects, and answering any questions he may ask about George and George's ideas.

On this tour, I have visited 28 colleges in Pennsylvania, 4 in Virginia, 63 in Texas and 1 in Louisiana. One area in Pennsylvania was covered before the Christmas holidays. Then, realizing that it was advisable to travel below the snow belt, we made a slight sampling in Virginia on our way to the winter objective, Texas. Besides the students I reached through lectures, I called on 269 persons. With the exception of a few off-campus people to whom I was referred by various professors, these visits were made on officers and professors of colleges and universities.

In 42 cases, the objective of the tour was probably not furthered. Typical in this category was the CPA Sipes, teaching economics at Alvin Junior College, and too busy making out income tax returns to bother with Henry George. However, there is no office, even in this category, to which I cannot return at any time in the future.

There were 23 calls which I cannot evaluate. One such was my visit with Dr. Miller and Mr. Tallant at Pan American College in Edinburg, wherein Dr. Miller's reservations appeared to be blocking any possibility of gains with either of them. Yet at the end it was Dr. Miller who suggested that I see, at San Marcos, Dean of the Graduate School Derrick and Head of the Social Science Department Taylor, and three professors at the University of Texas.

The remaining calls were definitely successful in furthering our objective, many of these enormously so. The officers and social science professors on whom my calls succeeded ran the entire gamut.

There were those who had never heard of Henry George, like the economics professor at the University of Corpus Christi, who after hearing Henry George's name said, "I'm sorry, you'll have to come again." There were those who had no awareness of Henry George beyond his name. There were those whose interest in him had to be awakened as from a state of torpor. There were those who identified him with the single tax, with no understanding of what the single tax means. There were those who remembered him for some subsidiary contribution he had made. The vast majority of these looked on him as a historical figure with no relevancy to today's world. A few professors were "for" Henry George before I called; among these were some socialists who identified themselves with George because of his awareness of the problem. An even smaller number are, or call themselves, Georgists.

In all these instances, real gains were made.

One measure of these gains would lie in the written response received at headquarters to these calls and to the materials that were left and sent. In these terms, the most successful campus visited would be Washington & Lee where I saw two deans and three professors, where I left four copies of the "Introduction" and from which we received three very gratifying letters.

But a sounder measure is the way in which the tour resolves the underlying problem we confront on college campuses today. That problem can best be dramatized by my call on Brother LaSalle, economics professor and head of the department of business administration at St.

Edwards University in Austin, who told me that he had learned of Henry George in college, but that George had been rejected by his professor. I asked Brother LaSalle if he personally had made the rejection. He explained that when there wasn't time to cover a matter personally, it was the practice to take the professor's word. Now he saw that he was making the same rejection for his students each term, without first-hand knowledge of the subject. As a result of my visit, Brother La Salle will now examine Henry George's ideas for himself and will do this with some feeling for the relation of these ideas to today's problems.

The influence of the teacher is tremendous. I wonder how many people have been affected by lovable Prof. Hale, Chairman of the Department at the University of Texas. In his work with graduate students, he is a teacher of teachers. I have met professors, former students of Hale's, from Michigan down through Texas. There are two, and only two, ideas about George that these professors have derived from Hale's course in History of Thought: 1) George was not a socialist; 2) he was the first to present the picture of production as a continuum. In my interview with Hale, we talked about the 1959 problems of Austin, and very shortly we were relating them to the land problem and to Henry George's ideas thereon. He thanked me for my visit as I left, and in his letter to headquarters afterward he referred to the fact that he and I had had things in common about which to talk.

Russell McFarland, an economics professor at San Antonio College, is one of these former students of Hale's. A letter from him, subsequent to my visit, says in part, "The pamphlet you left with me

(An Introduction to Henry George) is, I think, a well done piece of work. I have a much clearer understanding of George's contribution than I had before reading it. I think of no way in which the paper could be improved.

"It will be a pleasure to receive a copy of the book (Progress and Poverty) and if your firm is good enough to provide me a copy of it I shall certainly see that it is read well and often by students."

Prof. Alexander at St. Philips College, also in San Antonio, was one of the economics professors who had never heard of Henry George. His letter says, in part:

"I have thoroughly enjoyed reading 'An Introduction to Henry George.' Your having visited our College will be of inestimable value to me personally, and certainly to my students in Economics classes.

"Henry George, undoubtedly, has given us something to think about, and it is gratifying to know that we have an American economic philosopher to whose works we can refer our students.

"I am indeed grateful to the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation for having kept Henry George in print and I anxiously await copies of Progress and Poverty and Social Problems."

Another important call was that upon Walter Prescott Webb, noted historian, professor and writer who, in the course of the visit, requested four copies of Progress and Poverty and 12 copies of the "Introduction" for use in a graduate seminar he was then conducting at Rice Institute.

A large gain was scored with Dr. Carey Thompson, the scholastic tax authority for the State of Texas and professor of various courses in public finance at the University of Texas. On February 20, 1958,

he had appeared before the Texas State Tax Study Commission at its invitation and testified "that all taxes must rest on one of three bases: (1) wealth, (2) sales, or (3) income. He asserted that taxes on wealth -- or property -- had about reached practical limits."

(Page B-2, Report of Taxes State Tax Study Commission, January, 1959.)

To quote from my report in part: "My interview with Dr. Thompson was thoroughly gratifying. It began slowly. He evidently had nothing against George, it was just that he had not thought about him recently, if ever ... by the end of the interview, he was in the frame of mind to welcome a copy of the 'Introduction' and to be most enthusiastic about what he will do with the other five of George's books (he already owns P&P), saying that if we would send them to him, they would be well-worn by the use to which both he and students would put them." Dr. Thompson has cooperated with Chairman Hale in getting out the correspondence courses in economics, and this coming year he will be in charge (head up the staff of professors) of the Principles course, which will probably be given to more than 1600 students.

During the tour, various recommendations were made to me by professors, which I shall list at this point.

(1) Drs. Fry, Williams and Sailors of the University of Houston recommend (a) that we try to reach those teaching economics "which is just what you are doing on this tour"; (b) that we sponsor research on the unearned increment of land values in the two most significant areas: underdeveloped countries and urban complexes; (c) that we sponsor a tax expert for consultation with administrative heads of underdeveloped areas, who would "see things as we see them" and be able to offer expert help. They proposed two qualifications: 1) he must be a professional, and 2) he must be an older man.

(2) Dr. Zingler, also of the University of Houston, recommended that we sponsor an annual institute on Henry George in the conference quarters of the University of Houston, to be conducted by prominent professionals, to be attended by a small group of top professors from all over the country, to last a week.

(3) Dr. Johnson, Chairman of the Department of S.M.U., recommended that the Foundation sponsor a graduate student at S.M.U. to translate the ideas of Henry George into modern economic idiom.

(4) Dr. Barton of North Texas State College recommended that we issue a paper edition of Progress and Poverty to sell for 35¢ so that professors might more freely recommend the widespread purchase by students of this masterpiece.

In addition to these recommendations, the following things have been discussed which may at some time in the future materialize as recommendations:

(1) Dr. Yeager in the newly formed Thomas Jefferson Center for Political Economy at the University of Virginia is watching for a suitable candidate for our sponsorship to undertake a study of Title I Housing as a vehicle for the exploration of land value taxation in urban complexes.

(2) The Texas Research League will welcome a contribution by us toward the general property tax study, if as and when the pending bill requesting this study is passed by the Texas legislature.

(3) Dr. Reagan, Chairman of the Real Estate Department at S.M.U., is contemplating the formulation of a possible project in his department, for us to sponsor.



(4) Professor Hodges, chairman of the Economics Department of Rice Institute, is considering a project in the area of the oil industry, which he would like to do personally (probably as his doctoral dissertation).

(5) Dr. Warren of Huston-Tillotson may suggest a project for a promising young Negro graduate student.

(6) Dr. Mai, chairman of the Economics Department at St. Mary's University and co-chairman of a community-wide International Relations Institute sponsored by St. Mary's, is exploring the possibility of a seminar or short lecture series on Henry George, likewise to be sponsored by St. Mary's.

In addition to these things in process of formulation, Dr. Das Kelley Barnett, Professor of Christian Social Ethics and Director of the Research Center of Christian Theology and Culture at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, in Austin, is planning to present Henry George's ideas in two different graduate courses, and has invited me to prepare and deliver a comprehensive 30-minute address to the first of these on either November 5 or 6, 1959, to meet with this class informally at his home afterward, and to be introduced on a following occasion to a second interested group.

A UNIQUE PATTERN seems to be developing in Texas. It is a pattern of potential interrelationships, either existing or susceptible of cultivation, among various of the individuals and institutions which I have visited. Part of the pattern inheres in the dynamic nature of the current Texas economy; another part evolves from the developing interest in Henry George.

Texas is today one of the great growth areas of the country.

Despite the near wilderness which covers most of the land area of this state, Texas will probably rank 4th in population by the 1960 census. The three great land economists I met in the Agricultural Division of Texas A&M all testified to the revolution this growth is causing in Texas. For instance, as recently as World War II, the portion of Texas around Tyler had been predominantly an agricultural area, producing substantially all its living from farming. Now the rural population is down sharply in numbers, and for those remaining on the land only one in every six dollars of income is derived from the sale of agricultural produce.

Dr. Sargeant, of this group, gave me a paper entitled "Land for Hunters" which deals with the process by which vast acreages are becoming deer preserves, and he was excited at the suggestion that this might be analagous to the historic English land enclosures. There are evidently areas in Texas where the common right to pasture land has been historically recognized, and where cattle raisers now are cutting fences on land thus enclosed.

Such things may suggest that Texas is presently a fertile field for research by those who know what to look for, in this respect perhaps resembling California at the time George was living there.

In this explosive development, Texas is suffering growing pains and is faced with a multiplicity of problems at all levels. Texas leadership is struggling with these problems and in this grappling reveals a blend of both progressive and reactionary traits. It is progressive in that it wants and is working for and is willing to spend money on those things it believes will contribute most to the growth and betterment of Texas. It is reactionary in that it is almost oligarchic and feudalistic in its underlying attitudes.

This leadership is interested in research. In Houston, one element of it supports the Tax Research Association; in Austin, another, and not necessarily different, element sponsors and supports the work of the Texas Research League; and in Dallas still another element, operating as the Business Executives' Research Committee, sponsors research projects in conjunction with the staff of Southern Methodist University.

S.M.U. comprises a School of Arts and Sciences, a School of Business Administration (containing the Economics Department), a Divinity School, a Legal School. In all these I have established contacts and have enjoyed interested and favorable interviews. I have met, and exchanged letters with, Willis Tafe, the President. I enjoyed an excellent exploratory interview with Dr. Redus, himself a theologian, Chairman of the whole Social Science Division which loosely encompasses all four of the schools named above.

This is a university at which I believe Henry George has been getting almost no attention. Now, Dr. Johnson would welcome the sponsorship by us of a Henry George study, and Dr. Sydney C. Reagan is similarly interested. Furthermore, Dr. Andrew Cecil, Assistant Dean of the Law School and Director of Education there, is casting about for a spot in his curriculum where law students might be familiarized with George's ideas. To achieve breadth of scholarship, the new doctoral program in economics here will be on an interdisciplinary basis. Professors from two or more schools will sit in on these graduate seminars to contribute their viewpoints to the candidate's wider feeling for his subject. Dr. Johnson spoke of two philosophy professors and Dr. Douglas Jackson whom I had already met in the Perkins Divinity

School at S.M.U. as interdisciplinary consultants in his proposed Henry George project.

The Texas Research League, now in its 7th year, has recently concluded the work for the Texas State Tax Study Commission. While I was still in Texas, a new bill had already passed the House authorizing a four year study of the general property tax. This study would also be made by the Texas Research League for the legislative committee. James W. McGrew, research director of the League, has assured me that any resources, either material or financial, would be most welcome from us toward such a general property tax study. We could, in effect, join 'em instead of fighting 'em.

In this proposed study I would expect the League again to draw on Dr. Carey Thompson. I would also expect them to draw on T. B. Marshall, tax assessor of Austin, currently serving as President of the National Association of Tax Assessors, a close acquaintance of Dr. Thompson's, to whom the latter sent me. Dr. Thompson knows and admires The Rev. Das Kelley Barnett, already mentioned, who in turn knows and admires Dr. Paul Geren and Dr. Douglas Jackson of S.M.U., to whom he sent me. Dr. Barnett also knows, respects and is scheming with Dr. Kirk, past associate and protege of Senator Douglas of Washington, a Negro professor of government in the Negro college of Huston-Tillotson at Austin. Dr. Kirk shares the office with Dr. Warren, for whom I delivered three lectures, one in the nature of a Commencement address.

Father Rick knows Brother LaSalle at St. Edwards University, and is acquainted with Dean Curtsinger of the University of Dallas, and calls himself kissing cousin of Sister Perpetua, President of the Sacred Heart Dominican College at Houston.

In all these people, interest in Henry George has been quickened.

At San Antonio there is a veritable community of scholars associating in aspects of the International Relations Institute sponsored by St. Mary's. Headed by Dr. Mai, this program has had for guest lecturers the two economists I had previously met at Incarnate Word College and Our Lady of the Lake College, both in San Antonio, and Dr. Merzbach at Southwestern University.

Among the 6 colleges in San Antonio, I have made at least one friend for us on every campus. In addition we have, in San Antonio, Dr. Henry George Hendricks who has taught on every campus there except Incarnate Word, and has just begun the practice of investment counseling.

As a last instance of interrelations in Texas, there is the Southwestern Social Science Association whose annual convention I attended at Galveston, over this Easter week-end. Dr. Sailors of the University of Houston Economics Department had suggested this, also offering to have a cot put in the University of Houston rooms, if I couldn't get other accommodations. Now I am a member of this Association.

These various interrelationships offer interesting possibilities. They offer, in the area of our interest both on and off college campuses, research so conducted as favorably to affect the Henry George climate at the institution in question. They offer the opportunity of favorable interaction of professor upon professor. And through these they offer the ultimate possibility that Texas leadership will identify the best interests of Texas with the reforms so sorely needed.

BRIEFLY, MY SUGGESTIONS are as follows:

(1) that a small advisory committee be formed to read my reports as they come in, in order to chart future courses of action the better to exploit opportunities as they present themselves. Ideally, these men should be schemers, strategists, promoters;

(2) that wherever indicated by the nature of the recommendation made by a professor, he be invited to visit the Foundation and meet with its executive or advisory committee to discuss his proposal. Whether or not the Foundation intends to prosecute the suggestion, this will favorably affect the professor, indicating the seriousness with which his suggestion has been received;

(3) that the Foundation act upon the various projects suggested by professors as ways by which to publicize the ideas of Henry George;

(4) to the extent that the Foundation's participation in these or other projects may be limited by the resources available to it, that other potentially interested groups be approached with reports of these potential opportunities;

(5) that because of the opportunities already suggested in Texas, we be authorized to return there this fall to follow up on work begun and to complete the calls on colleges not yet visited in this great state.

And, finally, I'd like to tell the story of Father Rick.

I met Father Rick in, of all places, a car wash. He is about my age, some six feet two inches tall, around two hundred forty pounds, a fine figure of a man. He looked at my Pennsylvania license and asked if I were visiting in Texas. I told him, No, and explained my mission in my usual terms. At this, the good Father almost fell on his face.

He had been for many years, he said, a thorough-going believer in the validity of George. He expressed his conviction that the Single Tax would eliminate depressions and bring about peace, and seemed filled with awe, admiration and delight that I was engaged in such a project. But he also told of his failures to communicate George's ideas and said he believed that vested interests had largely blocked this acceptance.

He had been in India for 27 years as a Catholic missionary. Now, in semi-retirement, he was on a fund-raising mission for Notre Dame University. We parted after an exchange of cards. Later in the week, I phoned him, inviting him to dinner. He selected Sunday at 5:30.

During this interval, a change had occurred in Father Rick. He came in cool, wary. He said that he had, in the past few days, mentioned George to various priests without striking any spark. It was obvious that his initial excitement at our meeting had entirely vanished.

The only attention he paid our mission was to sketch a procedure for me to follow in my calls: "Single Tax" is a mala sonans, he reiterated, carefully defining the phrase each time he used it; the idea of the social appropriation of this socially created value should be introduced before mentioning George's name.

Then he regaled us with his original contributions to Catholic theology and his cures for malaria, leprosy and arthritis, also original and involving wearing a copper wire under his clothing. He was entirely didactic on every subject he discussed, from the seven-fold nature of the Trinity and his analysis of the theory of Chapter I of

Genesis, to the question whether God knew ahead of time that he was going to scratch his knee.

Throughout all this, Mrs. Carter and I followed our usual practice: we let him go precisely as he wanted to without once trying to steer or direct him. This, which had worked so well in instance after instance before, finally seemed to fail with Father Rick.

As he was leaving, he said that perhaps it was best that George's ideas should not prevail; for out of them would come a lasting peace which would deprive the Devil of his ordained mission as tester of men's souls -- "and what is war if one man's soul, through war's horrors, can be saved for the Church?"

Four days later, early in the morning, Father Rick returned. He said he had been thinking a lot about our tour and that he didn't seem to know much about what we were doing or how we were doing it. So now that his interest was finally focused, he and I began at last to look at my fundamental problem of how to stimulate interest in Henry George's ideas and to work out together a solution. He said we'd be seeing him again. He and I were both glad he had returned.

By the time I had first met The Reverend, insofar as Henry George was concerned, Father Rick was a beaten man. Quite evidently his early experiences in attempting to present the truths he had discovered in George had been disastrous and had, as it were, led him to wall them off in a separate compartment of his life and take refuge thereafter in theological symbols.

Perhaps the real challenge of this tour is to evolve techniques through which people generally may discover the great truths of Henry George. One by-product of this would be to spare his disciples the defeats of a Father Rick.