

Labor and Land: America's Lost Legacy

Pittsburgh's massive surge of construction in the 1980s, known as "Renaissance II," followed sharp increases in its land value tax in 1979, 1980 and 1982. The city's long tradition of taxing land values dates from the birth of the American labor movement, and is one reason Pittsburgh has enjoyed a high ratio of wages to rents. Fifteen other Pennsylvania cities have followed Pittsburgh's lead, and all have enjoyed similar construction surges.

But this year, a county reassessment fiasco misvalued land so badly that Pittsburgh's city council panicked and replaced land value tax with conventional property tax, at least for one year, and the city is suing the county and the assessment company for failing to comply with Pennsylvania assessment law. Three smaller cities in the same

county defied the county, maintaining or even expanding their land value tax rates.

Will the anti-labor interests of land speculators win the day in Pittsburgh, destroying the most progres-

The 21st Conference of the Council sive property tax reform in the United States?

of Georgist Organizations This conference explores the vital connection between land and labor.
Pittsburgh Airport Holiday Inn
Wednesday, August 29 (evening)
through Labor Day, September 2.

