

ANNUAL REPORT, TAX REFORM AUSTRALIA, 1991

Office and headquarters at 31 Hardware Street continue to operate as meeting place, bookshop and resource centre. The movement is deeply indebted to Mrs. Loma Sutton for her capable and tireless work as Office Supervisor.

"PROGRESS" Our monthly journal continues to be produced. We are grateful for the helpful initiatives of our printer, the distribution work done by Mr. Noel Wigmore, and the general work of our office supervisor. Miss Eva Best continues to play a major role editorially. The question of combining or amalgamating Australian Georgist journals has been considered.

L. Hemingway Book - "Rent as Revenue" is regarded as one of the best Georgist books available. A book launch was held in July, and efforts to promote the book as widely as possible have been undertaken.

Video: The educational media group has sold copies to schools. Two-thirds of the copies made have been either sold or are in process of sale. Circularization of youth groups and Apex branches yielded little response. S.B.S. declined to screen the video. Several meetings of outside groups featured the video.

Meetings: Meetings have included: The public video launch in March; the Commemoration Dinner, addressed by Race Mathews, M.L.A., in September; a public meeting at the Exhibition Building addressed by Dr. Rashmi Mayur in October; a Land Tax Forum held at Clifton Hill in November; the end-of-year social held in December.

Lunch-hour video sessions were held monthly. Success varied from nil attendance to two separate sessions.

Attack on Land Tax: This occurred mid-year, mainly arising from leases requiring tenants to pay land tax. Literature was distributed at a protest meeting at the Melbourne Town Hall. Following this meeting, the Land Values Research Group was reconstituted with Roland Staub as research director.

Very Fast Train: Our subcommittee (Messrs. Staub and Heywood) has been active, including liaison with other groups, and appearing at a Senate Inquiry.

University of the Third Age: Mr. George Charles continues to conduct successful classes. The notes prepared and used by Mr. Charles are in the course of publication.

Taxi Advertisement: This was tried for a period of three months, but yielded little success.

Dr. K. N. Grigg: The death of this outstanding worker for our cause in July was a great setback, and has left an irreplaceable gap in our ranks.

Publicity and Literature Distribution: Considerable success with letters to the press has occurred. Literature has been sent to a variety of targets. Known coverage is as follows: LVT, 360; PR, 38; SVR, 52; TOTAL 396 column-centimetres.

3LO Interview: Vice-President Bryan Kavanagh was interviewed by Paul Barber on 3LO for almost half an hour on October 8; this was regarded as most successful.

Site Value Rating: Moorabbin Council has dropped its proposal to discard SVR. Mr. Lance Hutchinson's effort in collecting signatures in this area was remarkable.

Liaison: Liaison with interstate, overseas and other groups has been maintained. Special reference should be made to New Zealand, and the heroic effort of Bob Keall to thwart attacks on site value rating.

1993 International Conference: This is scheduled for Melbourne. Arrangements are being made by the Georgist Council of Australia.

Sydney Conference: Several of our members attended in January.

Subcommittee System: The use of the subcommittee system has been attempted, so far with varying success.

General: The decline in the Australian economy was not a surprise for Georgists. However, outlets for our message are not easy to obtain.

Valuable work by individuals continues but cannot be reported in detail. The Georgist flame is being kept alight in many situations.

Failures of both collectivism and monopoly capitalism make our message topical, and hence highlight the importance of keeping it alive, ready for whenever public receptivity may suddenly increase.

There have been some heartening developments: Georgist inputs into eastern European policy-making; the inquiry strongly recommending site value rating retention for Brisbane; local successes in New Zealand despite moves to weaken site value rating; the

growing support for Citizens' Initiative Referendum; the increase in the betterment levy on developers in the A.C.T. (not quite our proposal, but in the right direction).

Let us not allow public apathy and confusion, nor distortion by vested interests, to quench the message of hope that we are offering.

Geoff Forster,
Honorary Secretary.