

Henry George Newsletter

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EDITOR'S NOTES

This issue includes material held over from last issue, which was largely devoted to the June conferences at Lafayette College. We also mark the centenary of Henry George's *The Condition of Labor* with our cover story and other related items, and conclude the report from George Collins on his Spring trip to Russia and Estonia.

Oxfam America has been in the struggle against hunger and poverty, and is well respected in its field. Like Henry George, Oxfam sees poverty as the result of unjust human institutions, not a stingy mother-earth. Oxfam supports the notion that the struggle against hunger is intimately connected with the struggle against militarism. There certainly seems to be a connection between militarism, colonialism, what is now called "internal colonialism", and the closing of the frontier (with its lack of a real margin of production, or free land). As Agnes de Mille says in her introduction to *Progress and Poverty*: "We have reached the boundaries and we turn back on ourselves and devour."

Here's what Oxfam says: "More than enough food is grown to feed everyone on this planet. Today, 60,000 people will die of hunger - two-thirds of them children. Four times more malnourished children are female than male. What the world spends in half a day on military purposes could finance the entire malaria eradication program of the World Health Organization. The amount spent on weapons every minute could feed 2,000 children for a year. The price of one military tank could provide classrooms for 30,000 students."

As George also pointed out, land, labor and capital devoted to arms manufacturing and maintaining standing armies means less will be devoted to producing wealth which directly satisfies human desires. Georgist economist Ralph Borsodi used the term "illth" for products (like pollution) that do not directly satisfy human desire but rather do more harm than good. It is a concept worth considering. Meanwhile, the time is right to talk about converting to a real and prosperous peacetime economy, paying off the national debt, and lowering taxes to the ground.

Bread for the World is another champion of the poor and oppressed. A recent mailing from this organization says: "Between 1982 and 1989, Iraq obtained more than \$42 billion in weapons and military technology from other countries, including our own. That's 28 percent of all worldwide arms sales during that period."

This relationship between dire poverty

and militarism was also noted earlier by no less a military leader than Dwight Eisenhower, when he said that every missile produced takes food out of the mouths of the poor. And Henry George wrote that his single tax on land would not be quiet as helpful to the poor if the proceeds were to be spent on government & military waste.

Bread for the World is at 802 Rhode Island Ave., Washington, DC 20018.

The Eleventh Annual E. F. Schumacher Lectures are being given on October 19, 1991. This year's proceedings are in memory of Lewis Mumford and address the theme of *Human Habitat and the Natural World*. Featured speakers are authors Thomas Berry on "The Dream of the Earth" and Stephanie Mills on "Whatever Happened to Ecology." Yuri Bocharov, visiting Professor from Russia, will participate as part of a panel discussion. Earlier this year, Dr. Bocharov spoke at the Eleventh Annual Conference of the Council of Georgist Organizations, and he has been doing research at the New York HGS. The Schumacher Lectures, from 9:30 to 4:30 in Great Barrington, MA, cost \$15. For further information, contact the Society at 413-528-1737.

Financial Democracy is the theme of the Summer issue of *Community Economics*, published by the Institute for Community Economics, a leading promoter of land trusts and other cooperative alternatives. According to this issue, the Financial Democracy Campaign is challenging current plans to bail out the Savings & Loan industry at the expense of average taxpayers.

Campaign Chairman Jim Hightower's April address in Amherst, MA is excerpted at length: "I'm talking about economic fairness, social justice, equal opportunity, and stewardship of our resources.... 80% of American families lost income during the 1980s. The wealthiest one percent had a 74% increase of their income.... They started at \$314,000 average income, ended with \$540,000. And their income was enhanced the old fashioned way: they got the government to give it to them... the most massive redistribution of wealth in our history. The wealthiest one half of one percent of the American people... own more than all the bottom 90% of the people own."

Financial Democracy Campaign is at 739 8th St., SE, Washington, DC 20003. Institute for Community Economics is at 57 School St., Springfield, MA 01105.

LOST & FOUND: A wristwatch was found after the June graduation at the New York HGS. If it's yours, please call the school with an accurate description.