

Henry George Newsletter



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RUSSELL MEANS: What He Said

"Continue to contaminate your bed, and one night you will suffocate in your own waste." - Seattle - Suquamish leader circa 1853." It's not unusual to hear Seattle quoted at a Georgist conference, but it was unusual for him to be quoted by a fellow American Indian. Sam Venturella, Chairman of the Council of Georgist Organizations, first met American Indian activist Russell Means at an Illinois Libertarian Party convention in 1988. At the time, Mr. Means was campaigning for the Party's Presidential nomination. Ron Paul, Republican-turned-Libertarian got the LP nomination, but then the Republicans themselves got the election. This may have been just a ripple in Mr. Means's career, which included confronting US authorities at Wounded Knee as well as criticizing the Sandinista government for their treatment of Indians in Nicaragua. As he admitted, he's been labelled everything from a communist to an CIA agent.

Russell Means arrived at the 1990 Georgist Conference on Friday evening with his wife Gloria and young son Tatanka. Russell



and Gloria attended various sessions, while Tatanka played with the few other children who were there with their parents. Sam introduced them at the banquet on Saturday evening, and they were warmly applauded. [Upon later being asked how he felt about Georgist ideas, he said he would observe the Indian custom of waiting four seasons before replying (and he has been invited back to do just that next year); he added that he and his family felt very much at home with a group of people who

sang songs about the land.] We still did not know what Russell Means would say at his scheduled session on Sunday morning.

Sunday morning came, Sam introduced Russell, who launched in with the words from Seattle. "First the Bad News, Then the Good News (The Road to Peace)" was the title of his talk: "Since the first European boat people arrived on a Caribbean beach on day in 1492, American Indian people have been attempting to share the wisdom and insights which allowed them to inhabit this hemisphere for untold thousands of generations in balance and harmony with the natural order. Always, the Europeans ignored the validity of indigenous knowledge... defining their own world view as inherently superior.... Today, we truly stand at the edge of the abyss. The time has past when the arrogance and self-deception of Eurocentrism is viable in any way at all." Amongst the bad news caused by Eurocentrism, Russell mentioned homelessness and urban devastation in America, "expressways" that allow an average

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SANDLER: From Buenos Aires to Santa Fe

It has been said that a sure sign of the Georgist philosophy's gaining influence would be when Georgists began to undergo harassment from "the powers that be". By that measure, one of the world's most successful Georgists is Professor Hector Raul Sandler of Argentina. Introducing Dr. Sandler's talk at the Santa Fe conference, Jim Busey outlined how the professor and his family were forced to hide for two weeks in the basement of the national assembly building. Death squads were rounding up academics, and others who taught ideas that seemed to threaten the status quo, and Dr. Sandler, who had been teaching Henry George's ideas for many years, was lumped in with the "subversive elements" who preached land reform. A civilian government has since been elected, and Dr. Sandler has returned to his university post.



Considering the difficulties he faces, Dr. Sandler's attitude is remarkably upbeat. Although he has a small cadre of devoted students, he has been, effectively, a voice crying in the wilderness. His talk at the conference focused on Latin America's need for Georgist reform right now. The failure of Marxist economies in Europe has led people to question whether Marxism is the inevitable ideology of popular reform. Yet reform is desperately needed. Most of the people in Latin America live in crushing poverty, and everywhere the land is in the control of small groups of powerful landlords who are not answerable to the people's needs. The people of Central and South America, he said, must understand their alternative, and there is no time to waste.

In the effort to coordinate efforts to spread the Georgist message in Latin America, a center is being planned for Miami, Florida. Dr. Sandler came to the Santa Fe conference with this proposal, and it was approved by the CGO. The Miami office is to be a branch of Dr. Sandler's organization, Instituto de Capacitación Económica (Economic Training Institute), and will be under the direction of Juan Carlos Zucotti, also from Argentina. Common Ground USA agreed to facilitate the project.

IAN LAMBERT: Journey of a Thousand Miles

One of the most thoughtful and erudite presentations of the 1990 conference came from Ian Lambert on Thursday morning. Mr. Lambert, an attorney-at-law from the Cayman Islands, gave a persuasive discussion of reasons why the Georgist message has not caught on in the public dialogue. The main source of difficulty, he writes, is that George's ideas "run counter to beliefs...so deeply held that, even when people follow the logic of Georgist arguments, they still feel distinctly uneasy about them."

One of Henry George's greatest achievements was to develop a theory that arises logically from basic, incontrovertible principles: a science of political economy based on natural law. But, said Ian

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