



Miss Louise McLean was born into a Georgist family. By gift and insight she has spent a rich and rewarding life by giving to others, less fortunate, the chance to share George's wisdom and teachings. Her favorite technique is to show interest in a budding politician's campaign for public office.

She contributes nothing that most Georgists or a committee could not contribute. What have been her results? You be the judge. Solely through her interest, the following public officials have completed the Basic H. G. School course: The nationally known Congressman Lionel Van Deerlin; California State Senator James Mills; James Bear, another California State Legislator and myself. I am on an Assessment Appeals Board for general property taxes in San Diego County. Many other persons have taken the course through her influence.

Miss McLean does not expect her "boys" to recite that "water is land." However, all of us now know the reasoning behind the view that the property tax is really two taxes with opposite effects on the economy.

The greatest reward to Miss McLean would come in seeing other Georgists take similar interest in politics. Schools cannot be politically active but individuals, acting independently thereof, can. Imagine the results if each of us were only one-half as effective as Miss McLean; and she is in her eighties!

TOM SHERRARD  
San Diego, California

I enjoyed reading Oscar B. Johannsen's article in the January HGN, "The Mail Never Stops." His entire report is evidence that one cannot argue with the ideas of Henry George, one can

only fail to understand him.

When the San Francisco Prophet said: "businesses which are in their nature monopolies are properly part of the functions of the State and should be assumed by the State. There is the same reason why Government should carry telegraph messages as it should carry letters;" he made an accurate prediction. Here in Packerland the Telegraph Company does dispatch local messages by first class mail.

If Mr. Johannsen could investigate all the functions of the postal service he would learn to respect the tremendous job that is being done by superior personnel. Also he would gain new understanding of this Henry George idea.

DONALD BONGERS  
Green Bay, Wisconsin

If any deficiency exists in the promotion of the Georgist proposal for the collection by government of the economic rent it lies in the area that Henry George himself decried, the lack of precision in the meaning and use of words. The difference between rent and taxation is understood although the collection of rent continues to be presented as a tax. As a matter of common observation The Henry George News commonly and frequently uses the abbreviation LVT to stand for Georgist policy, a sort of colophon of the school. There are strong psychological objections to the letters, standing for Land Value Taxation. Taxation, eg., is an exaction, or impost with the inference of police expropriation by violence; "land-value" implies something that inheres to the owner of the land in question. Thus we see immediate antagonism aroused needlessly by the inference that something is to be taken from him, whereas, nothing of the sort occurs.

My suggestion is that the use of LVT be dropped and ERC substituted. The "E" refers to the natural laws of

economics, derived from a higher than human source; the "R" refers to the product resulting from this law and is not the produce of the individual; the "C" refers to the *voluntary* agreement to surrender this excess creation of the community to its creator. The additional need is to justify government as the agent of collection.

The greatest deficiency may not be limited to a semantic phenomenon but may involve the logic and language of philosophy. While the distinction between the philosophy of economics, as a separate branch of general philosophy, should be maintained the general laws of philosophy as they would apply to the Georgist Philosophy should be more or less continuously explored and applied. Philosophy, as the more basic of the fields of philosophy and economics, is the stronger and without it economics cannot stand alone. It is this writer's opinion that too much attention is given to the mechanics of economics with partial exclusion of supporting philosophic argument.

I have in mind the philosophic basis for the justification of any kind of an exaction through government. As a small example of the semantic inadequacy consider the term for the most productive "income tax." As a meaningful term it is no less ridiculous than would be a "nincompoop tax." It refers to something "coming in," any one of thousands of things, as air, water, etc. In its true meaning it is an exaction or burden on the labor of production. Its derivation goes back to that indefinable philosophic principle of Money, commonly miscalled Community.

**"Only those cities and countries that are free can achieve greatness . . . In free countries we also see wealth increase more rapidly, both that which results from the culture of the soil and that which is produced by industry and art; for everybody gladly multiplies those things, and seeks to acquire those goods the possession of which he can tranquilly enjoy. Thence men vie with each other to increase both private and public wealth, which consequently increase in an extraordinary manner." — Machiavelli**

This is merely an introduction to what might well be a broad and intensive study of the whole field of the proper relationship of government to voluntary contributions for its support, as contrasted to exactions by violence under police supervision.

WILLIAM J. HARRINGTON, M.D.  
Appleton, Wisconsin

*Robert Clancy replies as follows:*

Dr. Harrington makes a good point in saying that LVT ought not to be taken as "Georgist policy," and he is right in inferring that community collection of economic rent more aptly expresses it. This is in fact brought out in the standing "colophon" at the bottom of page 2 in HGN.

However, from a practical point of view, land value taxation is the area where those who are seeking to introduce Georgist reforms have to work, for the most part. In reporting their efforts we naturally have to refer to it, and LVT seems a convenient and generally understood abbreviation.

On the matter of "voluntary" surrender of rent by the individual to the community, this has to be qualified. There is a great deal of voluntarism in the Georgist proposal, in that a person can in effect decide how much he is going to give the community by selecting the site—and if he selects free land, there is no payment at all. But this does not mean that a person can select a valuable site and then decide whether or not he wants to pay rent to the community. If he decides not to pay and still stays at that site, he is committing an injustice which will have to be rectified one way or the other. No violence, we hope—but firmness certainly.