

LVT for Urban Renewal

AT THE business meeting of the Henry George Foundation in Pittsburgh last month, Judge John R. Fuchs of New Braunfels, Texas, conveyed his desire to retire from the presidency for reasons of health. His resignation was reluctantly accepted, though he was re-elected a trustee; as were Lancaster M. Greene, Bernard B. McGinnis, William E. Schoyer, Ed Walter Walthall and Fred W. Workman.

William E. Schoyer, a Pittsburgh attorney and civic leader, was elected president. One of the original incorporators of the Foundation and its treasurer for 40 years, he is also president of the Graded Tax League of Pennsylvania and in that capacity has led the campaign to extend the graded tax plan to third class cities. In 1911 Mr. Schoyer was active in the Keystone party (an influential independent citizens' organization), the first group to advocate the graded tax plan for Pittsburgh which, two years later, was enacted by the Pennsylvania Legislature

Dr. Steven B. Cord, professor of history and economics at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and author of *Henry George — Dreamer or Realist?** was elected as a trustee to succeed the late Clayton J. Ewing of Chicago. Dr. Cord and Executive Secretary Percy R. Williams, recently conferred with city officials of Corry, Pennsylvania at the invitation of the Chamber of Commerce. The C. of C. is initiating a plan for the general exemption of improvements from the city real estate tax, which is now being formulated for consideration by the mayor and city council. Editorials in the Corry Evening Journal were favorable to the graded tax plan.

**Henry George — Dreamer or Realist?*
Special price \$5.00 at the Henry George School, 50 East 69th Street, New York, N. Y. 10021.

In June Wylie Young and Percy Williams addressed the convention of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce executives in Johnstown. The C. of C. in Uniontown was the first to respond and a graded tax plan is being studied there with favorable results.

LVT by Correspondence

Since January the Graded Tax League has sent a series of letters by Dr. Steven B. Cord to urban renewal authorities, city officials and others. Among many favorable comments was one from the mayor of Meadville who requested that representatives of the League confer with him to consider how LVT might be applied there.

The final letter in the series called on the experts to act now and join a growing company of others who are coming to see the merits of LVT. "Either we shift the tax from improvements to land values and give a continuous spur to the process of urban renewal, or we hobble the renewal efforts of both private builder and public authority alike. If we don't force land to be put to the use most consistent with market needs, then blight and sprawl will result. If we continue to levy a 50 percent excise tax on new construction (for that is what a 3 percent annual property tax over the average expected life of a building amounts to), then renewing our cities will be like swimming upstream or walking uphill. Techniques other than LVT are needed to renew our cities — imaginative and well-financed traffic planning is one, for instance — but without LVT these techniques will generate considerably less renewal momentum."

Officials in Great Falls, Montana and other cities have also been receiving these letters at their request.