

Henry George Newsletter

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"BY GEORGE" PRESS COVERAGE UPDATE

The merits of Georgist property tax reform are making further inroads on the public dialogue, and an even more encouraging sign is that this month's coverage includes three op-ed pieces that eschew the usual habit of damning Henry George's ideas with faint praise.

A piece entitled "Revitalized Cities Require Property Tax Reforms", by Seymour Rauch, appeared in the *Buffalo News* on January 17. Rauch's article argues for a two-rate property tax as a powerful tool in the fight against urban decay—particularly if the tax is gradually shifted to fall completely on land. Buffalo, Rauch writes, is an ideal city to exploit the virtues of this tax reform, because it is blessed with many natural and locational advantages, and waits only for the proper incentive to develop them.

The Chicago HGS is reprinting an article by William S. Pierce, "Make Tax Abatement General", which appeared in the February 15 edition of *A Heartland Perspective*, issued by the Heartland Institute. Pierce's article observes that while tax abatements for real estate developers serve some useful purposes, they also serve to reward existing privilege and encourage corruption. Why not, Pierce ar-

HARD DECISIONS

(continued from page one)

The sentiments of the meeting were with John Vernon who argued for decriminalization. Removing exorbitant profit from the drug trade is the only way to roll it back and cut down on related crime; the only way to lower the profit is to allow a free market to replace monopoly.

Two volunteers served as "designated hitters" to open the discussion period with hard questions: libertarian Michael Green and printing firm owner David Byrnes. Also, copies were distributed of a correspondence on the pros and cons of Prohibition from *Science* (Journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science).

Next Final Friday will be on March 23rd (not the last Friday, due to Michael's Restaurant closing for two weeks) and the topic will be the first of three on the external, rather than internal, environment: "Local Pollution (and urban sprawl)." Speakers will be Margil Wadley, an associate of LA-HGS, and Jeff Smith, Green activist. April's theme deals with electric power and ecology, and May's Final Friday will be on global warming and other possible catastrophes.

Errata: Our February 1990 article on "To

gues, let everyone in the the community share in the benefits of tax abatements, and institute a permanent tax abatement—by removing the tax on all improvements?

Also on February 15th, W. Philip Cotton, Jr., an architect and the treasurer of the Public Revenue Education Council in St. Louis, Missouri, published a piece in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* called "Property-Tax System Promotes Slums". Cotton's article argues for site-value tax, and hints at the beginning of a movement in Missouri for constitutional change allowing the adoption of local two-rate property taxes, as Pennsylvania's constitution now does.

Mr. Cotton has also been active in the public dialogue abroad, corresponding with Mayor Manfred Rommel of Stuttgart, West Germany, regarding the usefulness of land value taxation against housing shortages. Mayor Rommel was quoted, in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on Nov. 4, 1989, as saying that the West German government would have to spend many times the \$1 billion figure it has projected for new housing, to keep up with the skyrocketing demand.



Smoke, To Drink, To Die in L.A." contained two errors: Fred Allen should read Steve Allen (*the* Steve Allen); and David Byrne should read Byrnes. Apologies to Mssrs. Byrnes and Allen!

- Editor.

SECOND L.A. ESSAY CONTEST ANNOUNCED

In addition to the college undergraduate essay contest reported in our last issue, the LA school has announced a high school essay contest on the same theme: "Managing the Earth's Limited Resources: Henry George's Policies as Tools." Prizes are \$1000 for first, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third place. Deadline for submissions is April 15th, and is open to high school students in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Prize money and copies of *Progress and Poverty* for the contests are being provided by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. For more information, please contact the LA school in Tujunga.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Winter term graduation festivities in New York will be held on Friday evening, April 6th. Contact the New York School for the exact time and location.