

SAN FRANCISCO H.G.S. PUBLISHES "ECONOMICS FOR A PEACEFUL PLANET" BROCHURE

The Henry George School in San Francisco has released a brochure of a keynote speech prepared by Director Robert Scrofani entitled "Economics for a Peaceful Planet," originally delivered in June, 1982 at Westminster, CA. The brochure was used at Earth Day events in S.F. and other areas. Excerpts of the speech are reprinted below:

"Peace is that human condition of trust between men, that human capability to share the earth's bounty, that human desire to cooperate for the common good. Peace permits man to enjoy his brief existence on this planet."

"We know from reading Henry George that human reach their greatest potential when numbers of people come together in cooperation. If peace is that special condition within which man can grow and prosper, a close examination of economics and its role in achieving this condition is essential."

"'Economics' comes from the Greek word 'eco,' for house; 'ecology' means the study of the home, or environment; and 'economy' means the management of the house. Our house is this planet."

"In a well-managed house:

- no one kills another.

- there is trust.

- everyone eats.

- everyone who can work and wants to work can find it.

- land is accessible for life, with labor at decent wages and capital at a decent return.

- the productive members of society are allowed to produce."

"But this house of ours is not a well-managed house:

- millions go hungry.

- vital forests are stripped for firewood or for ecologically disastrous development schemes.

- the poor are flocking to cities where there are no jobs."

"To solve these problems, some say we must take from the rich and give to the poor nations. Others espouse family planning programs to cut down on population growth. Still others argue that we must feed the hungry from our bounty."

"In order to have a well managed house, we must have priorities. First, and foremost, we should recognize that we are all land animals and without land we cannot exist. As Henry George said:

"If you realize what land is, think of what men would be without land. If there were no land, where would be the people? Land is not merely a place to graze cows or sheep upon, to raise corn or raise cabbage. It is the indispensable element necessary to the life of every human being. We are all land animals, our very bodies come from the land and to the land then return again."

"Therefore we must focus on the key problem of mismanagement of land tenure. To achieve economic equality, we cannot divide the resources of the earth equally among the billions who will be here in the twenty-first century and beyond. But we can divide up the wealth of the land more equitably. Significant studies have shown that improvements in social and economic conditions can reduce much of the pressures on the land."

"If we retain the paradigm that land tenure systems must gratify ownership without productive effort, then our hopes for the future will be dashed on the record of the past. Inequitable land tenure systems allow the monopoly of nature's resources and deny labor access to the land. From poverty and the accelerated population growth we see in all undeveloped countries, a cease-fire on the economic front, like a cease-fire on the political front, is the first step in the cooperative effort for peace and justice. Let us take the first step, for without economic justice, we cannot have peace. Without access to land, we cannot have economic justice."