

## SCHOOL NOTES

Close to 250 students enrolled in Fall Semester classes at New York Headquarters. Joining 120 Basic Course students were 24 enrolled for "The Many Faces of Fascism"; 28 for "Urban Politics in the United States"; 21 for "A History of Social Reforms" — from Henry George to F.D.R."; 32 in "Money and Banking"; and 15 for "A History of Economic Thought". Twenty-five additional students from Hunter College of City University enrolled for college credit in "Urban Politics".

Long Island Director, **Stan Rubenstein**, reports excellent enrollment. At four High Schools, Basic Courses have enrolled 135 students. Thirty-five are enrolled in Seaford; 45 at Valley Stream; 30 at Massapequa; and 25 at Westbury.

The Henry George Schools' affiliate in Toronto, the School of Economic Science, has a new manager of operations. He is **Laire Teich**, who will be remembered for his fruitful contributions to the Bryn Mawr Conference this year.

On the west coast, San Francisco's Director, **Wendell Fitzgerald**, spent a busy pre-election day weekend. After a morning exhibiting Interstudent High School materials at the annual East Bay Social Studies Teachers Conference, he changed hats to become Treasurer for Eric Moncur, Assessor candidate with strong Georgist views, and worked hard throughout the rest of the day. Moncur has been hitting at underassessment of city land, particularly pointing to the 'Pier 39' scandal where a piece of land is assessed at one fourteenth the value of its neighbor.

## Collins of Philadelphia

by **MARTIN HIRSCH**

A free, 10 week course in Fundamental Economics begins this week at the Henry George School of Social Science, 413 S. 10th st. Classes, which meet one night a week from 7 to 9 p.m., are held in the house where the American economist and social philosopher Henry George was born almost 150 years ago.

The irony is that George, who was as well known in his time as Ralph Nader is today — and whom some still recognize as the most original economic theorist this nation has ever produced — has become a forgotten man in his native Philadelphia. Few Philadelphians, it seems, have ever heard of Henry George, though many have probably passed his birthplace on the east side of 10th st. a hundred times without realizing its historical significance.

HOWEVER, according to George L. Collins, 43, director of the Henry George School of Social Science, if Proposition 13 and other property tax reform measures continue to engage the public consciousness as it appears they will, the name of Henry George will be resurrected from undeserved obscurity.

Collins is an uncommonly handsome West Indian whose mesmerizing manner and glistening shaved head are reminiscent of Geoffrey Holder, the mysterious deep-voiced black actor/choreographer who captured America's imagination a few years ago as the guardian of 7-Up's mythical "Un-Cola Nuts."

After a 4 year stint in the U.S. Air Force, Collins moved to New York City in the late 1950s "to find some direction for my life" and it was then that he first learned about Henry George. Collins' ambition at the time was to become a social worker. But a newspaper advertisement which referred to George "as America's most original economic thinker" and announced a free course at the Henry George School proved provocative enough to alter his career path.

COLLINS HAD NOT heard of Henry George before he attended the free course. But by the time he was half way through the course, he recalled, "I found myself defending George's theories whenever other students attacked them. "After taking several more advanced courses, Collins was invited to join the faculty of the New York school in 1961, and then moved to the Philadelphia extension of the Henry George School of Social

Science in 1964.

Since then, he has been spreading the gospel according to Henry George—a philosophy he says that has been drawing more and more followers in recent years.

Why the sudden surge of interest in a forgotten economist of the Industrial Revolution? Because, Collins explained, George's thesis is based on the belief that land, like the air we breathe, is a gift of God which should not be hoarded by the rich and powerful. It is a point of view which could, understandably, become very popular at a time when middle America is crying out for relief from soaring property taxes.

AS COLLINS explained it, George's economic theory is based on the assumption that the utilization of land is the primary determinant of economic conditions. He believed that underlying the wage-price spiral is a continual land price spiral that traditional economics ignored.

"George believed that our treatment of land as private property, which allows the owner to use it productively or not productively, is the basic cause of poverty in the world," Collins said.

(cont'd on Page 4)

*Hirsch is a journalist with the Center City Welcomat, from which this article was taken.*