

POP GOES THE DREAD!

Southern California's Henry George School held its last two Final Friday dinners of the school year on May 25th and June 29th at the usual place, Michael's Restaurant in Hollywood. "Pop Dread! How to Scare the Masses" was the May theme, while "Solving Problems! Dealing with the Real Reality" was presented in June.

"Pop Dread!" was coined by LA-HGS Director Harry Pollard as a catch-all label for what he sees as an alarmist approach to today's ecological problems such as global warming, ozone-layer depletion, and deforestation. Bret Barker chaired the meeting and guest speakers were Mindy Lorenz and Jack Jennings. Mindy Lorenz is environmental activist and Green Party congressional candidate. She has also been a radio producer and, for twenty years, a college professor. Jack Jennings is a retired rocket scientist who was involved with the Saturn booster for the Apollo program. He is now a leading member of the Southern California Federation of Scientists and author of *Nuclear War in Los Angeles*. Harry Pollard joined Drs. Lorenz and Jennings in addressing the issues.

There was much disagreement which made for an "awfully good meeting," according to Harry. Designated hitters who opened the question period were David Byrnes, Professor Mason Gaffney, Michael Green, and Bob De Tolve (all known to readers of this Newsletter). Most participants, including the speakers, stayed for more than five hours, until after 11:30, even though Frank Tilton closed the meeting at 11.

"Solving Problems!" saw Mason Gaffney and Jack Jennings switch roles as speaker and designated hitter. Prof. Gaffney (who teaches economics at University of California in Riverside) was joined by two other speakers: Ted Gwartney and Jon Myhre. Gwartney has been described as "perhaps the foremost land appraiser in the country, with particular expertise in computerized assessment." He has served as assessor in Hartford, Connecticut, the Province of British Columbia, and (currently) Orange County, California. Jon Myhre is an iconoclastic landscape architect who has been involved with a variety of projects including the Van Norman Dam and Richard Nixon's Western White House. His second book looks ahead seventy-five years and asks "What if...?" Joining Dr. Jennings as designated hitters were Toni Churg, Michael Green, and John Vernon. Ms. Churg is a biologist and producer of a TV show on science and social science; Mr. Vernon is the former Chairman of the California Libertarian party.

How best to save the environment was the subject of the evening. The role of land speculation as the major factor causing premature development of rural land was examined, as well as the land value tax solution.

A special touch was added by the presence of Eduardo Cabral, who was on hand with his parents to receive a special \$500 award for his entry in the School's high school essay contest on Henry George's environmental policies. Mr. Cabral is fifteen years old and has just completed the ninth grade.

Next Final Friday will be in October, and will have politics as its theme.



Next Year In Jerusalem

March 18th to the 27th are the dates for the upcoming conference of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade. Hebrew University's Maierdorf Faculty Club on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem will be the site of this conference, held one weekend before the Easter/Passover weekend. "War and Peace" will be the theme of what may prove to be a unique and very memorable international conference. Those interested in attending are urged to immediately contact the office of the International Union at 177 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EU, England.

THE MERCURY RISES AGAIN

(continued from page 2)

seeks to heal the split between the humanity and the earth, and to find the divine in nature (see Mark Sullivan's essay on page two).

"The relationship we have with land is a sacred one," Fox writes, "none of us created it, and all of us will return to it. And yet much land in America goes unused, abused or becomes reduced to the status of one more object possessed... A land tax would tax all land but not improvements... It would run the speculator and the absentee landlord out of town... George's... starting points are impressively compassionate." Rev. Fox's book is published by Winston Press, 430 Oak Grove, Minneapolis, MN 55403.

The Mercury is edited by Bob Scrofani, who concludes this issue with a critical review of Frances Moore Lappe's book on *Rediscovering America's Values*. The book, he writes, "is a series of readable and animated dialogues in which Lappe speaks with two voices... the classical liberal who views government as a necessary evil, and her own voice... the modern liberal who sees the government's role as one that must serve all the people in society." To receive a copy of *The Mercury*, contact the San Francisco Henry George School.

Henry George School of Social Science
121 East 30th Street
New York, NY 10016

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