

The Henry George News

published by

Henry George School
of Social Science

JUL-AUG 1981

Almost everyone who attended the 1981 Joint Georgist Conference expressed good feelings about the event. Many said it was the best conference in recent years and some thought it was even the best ever. There was much to justify the positive response.

The setting was perfect. The mountains, lake, pines and birches combined with sunny days and sparkling nights to display New England in her best summer finery. Franklin Pierce College was a splendid host with the most attentive and helpful staff and pleasant facilities. No request for any service went unheeded for very long, a quality not often available even at luxury hotels.

Beyond the setting, the program in less than three days demonstrated the diversity of interests and issues that followers of Henry George will pursue. From the local politics of New Hampshire to the global concerns of Bread for the World; an important message was conveyed in every arena. From the techniques of the classroom to the use of the media, almost all forms of communication were explored, if not in depth, at least with real attention. It became clear in 1981, as perhaps never before, that Georgists are very much involved with the world and its current problems. We are neither hidebound protectors of a doctrine from the past nor radical visionaries of some distant future. We are rather, no matter what the particular motivation or interest, a contemporary group joined by the compelling wisdom and justice of the remedy we seek to apply to many of the ills of the world in which we live.

It is significant too that we can relate the political crises of the Caribbean to the anger of taxpayers in Massachusetts or see "supply-side" economics in the broader context of the free market for ideas as well as goods. Not that we are ready to offer the same nostrum to all but that the central principle of collecting the economic rent of land, which works very well under another name in Alberta, as we were told, could be a practical solution in many other arenas as well.

The conference was the first one planned and executed through the Council of Georgist Organizations. The value of the Council in cutting across group and geographic lines and in reaching out to other bodies as well was clearly demonstrated and confirmed in the unanimous agreement to continue and formalize its existence and functions. The Henry George movement has shown it can get its act together. At next year's international conference, we can start taking it on the road.