



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN on LAND MONOPOLY

In a letter to Mr. Gridley, of the firm of Davis, Lincoln and Gridley, Attorneys, Bloomington, Ill., Abraham Lincoln wrote:

"I respect the man who properly named these villains land sharks. They are like the wretched ghouls who follow a ship and fatten on its offal.

"The land, the earth, God gave to man for his home, sustenance and support, should never be in the possession of any man, corporation, society or unfriendly government any more than air or water—if as much. An individual or company, or enterprise, acquiring land should hold no more than is required for their home and sustenance, and never more than they have in actual use in the prudent management of their legitimate business, and this much should not be permitted when it creates an exclusive monopoly. All that is not so used should be held for the free use of every family to make homesteads and to hold them so long as they are so occupied.

"The idle talk of foolish men, that is so common now, will find its way against it, with whatever force it may possess, and as strongly promoted and carried on as it can be by land monopolists, grasping landlords and the titled and untitled senseless enemies of mankind everywhere.

"On the other questions there is ample room for reform when the time comes; but now it would be folly to think we could take more than we have in hand. But when slavery is over and settled, men should never rest content while oppression, wrongs and iniquities are enforced against them."

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In this age of complexity when the simple things have been lost in the aura of symbolism, false values, and emotional thinking, it is desirable that a voice be raised seeking to re-establish a semblance of reason. In 1879 amid the chaos, clatter and clash of economic and social forces, such a voice rose out under similar circumstances declaring to the world that all need not be in conflict that the mind and spirit of man could be set free.

It has been almost 75 years since this message was spread throughout the world. During that period of time many wonders in material progress have taken place. Yet the scourge of poverty takes its toll in countries everywhere. The terrors of war, fear and distrust suppress many of man's finer instincts.

Henry George has given us an approach to the problem. To us it has been entrusted the carrying forth of his ideas into reality. Let us not shrink from this noble duty.

*David Goldstein*

## SAGE COMMENTS

It is with the greatest of pleasure that we announce the wedding of Anita Wener to Mr. Jorgen Schaap. The date: April 18th. Anita is a charter member of SAGE and is our present Corresponding Secretary. She has been a most important and active member of our organization for the last  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years. We trust that she will still be able to continue with us. All of us who know her wish her and her husband the heartiest congratulations & best wishes.....Among the letters we've received these past two months has been one from Ada M. Shafer, Lincoln, Nebr.: "Congratulations on your March-April issue, last article on what Georgism can accomplish should be a reprint. Call it 'Georgism answers Marxism'"......A. David Jackson has volunteered for the S.P. News editor position, effective next issue. Welcome!.....Tom Stephenson of Trenton, N.J. has volunteered to contribute for forthcoming issues. Welcome!.....Glad to see ex-prexy Joe Rose at recent meetings. Not many of us are aware of his extensive contributions to SAGE.....Ann Jeffries & Finn Johnson, both originally from Odense, Denmark, met at the recent SAGE dance; they had not known each other previously. COVET: Are you surprised at Lincoln's strong stand on land monopoly and land speculation?

## POVERTY WITH PROGRESS?

Henry George maintained that with increase in material progress the wages of labor tended to a minimum level of subsistence.

Certainly his reasoning is sound: land is limited in supply and is an absolute necessity of production. Hence labor and capital must eventually meet the terms of the landowners--eventually the landowners get all the rewards of material production beyond that little which is necessary to insure the survival of the active producers, labor and capital.

Yet real wages (i.e., purchasing power) definitely seem to have risen since the advent of the present century. Was George wrong in saying that progress brings poverty?

There are four specific reasons why the poverty-with-progress tendency (which George proved by logic) has not yet shown itself in the 20th century:

1. Inflation - By the simple yet dangerous procedure of borrowing from its citizens, a government can induce a temporary Ponzi-like\* prosperity. But eventually debts must be repaid or the source of the loan disappears.

I can experience a prosperity by borrowing \$100 weekly from you and spending it. But eventually if you are not repaid you will either stop the loan or you will soon not be able to continue it.

So how long can inflation guarantee prosperity?

Furthermore, there are few greater immoral government actions than inflation: think of the robbery of those millions who are on fixed or relatively fixed incomes, and who have bank savings. Think of the tremendous diminution of their purchasing power and savings when inflation is let loose! Inflation destroys the thrift and foresight which are the pillars of any long-run prosperity.

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\* In the 1920's Charles Ponzi paid a huge rate of interest on money put in his care. He was able to do this by paying off old creditors with the money received from new investors. He was very prosperous for awhile, but soon his bubble burst, he was in jail, and thousands were robbed of their money.

2. Income-Tax Socialism - by heavily taxing the prosperous and giving welfare and subsidies to the less prosperous, some increase in income is afforded to many people. But carried beyond a certain point, income taxation must fall heavily on the general population, as it is now doing. Increased taxation causes economic suffering, which incurs the need for welfare and subsidies, which in turn increases the seeming necessity for more taxation. A vicious cycle!

3. Increased productivity (output per man-hour) - Invention is a genuine and natural cause for prosperity, but how long can it continue when the incentive that evokes it is gradually killed by inflation and taxation?

4. Land Value Taxation - Our government is taxing everything so fortunately the taxes on land values have increased. Here is the genuine cause for any prosperity, but of course only a little progress has been made here.

So we see that while inflation and income taxation can produce some immediate benefits, any extensive use of these unjust means for raising wages can only result in nullifying or harmful effects. Like small doses of morphine, small doses of injustice lead only to larger doses, though there may be a temporary beneficial effect.

A genuine long-run prosperity can only be induced by adherence to the natural laws. Artificial methods for stimulating prosperity can only put off the day of reckoning - gradually these unjust methods will have to be more and more applied until incentive will eventually be crushed, with wealth production lessened and poverty therefore increased; eventually through some social cataclysm we will have slipped back into some pre-modern society. "Justice with the scales carries the sword." Perhaps that sword is the H-bomb.

Here is an additional consideration - psychological tensions, neuroticism, moral delinquency, insanity, crime, political witch-hunting, divorce and suicide rates have all increased. This increase occurred even before the war; the war has merely accelerated the increase. Perhaps the insecurity and injustice which pervade our economy are the root causes for these unfortunate developments, thus bearing out George's general contention.

Perhaps this is the price we pay for increasing the

wage level by unjust and artificial methods.

And even despite these methods, wealth production has increased faster than the average real wage. It seems that only the worst aspects of the poverty-with-progress tendency have been alleviated, and then only temporarily.

History has shown - and George in his Law of Human Progress so states - that when even a limited amount of freedom and economic justice prevails, definite material progress with an accompanying rise in the wage level can be made. But when a society reaches a certain point of development only ultimate justice & freedom can allow that society to survive.

Greece had its glory and Rome its grandeur, yet who had foreseen in their halcyon days that the seeds of impending destruction (of injustice) were being rapidly sown?

Material progress and general prosperity have moved in cycles; cycles of 20 years, which denote boom and bust, and cycles of 500 years, which denote the rise and fall of civilizations. Today we are riding the crest of both current cycles. If the injustice which is dislocating our economy remains, what will tomorrow bring?

Only Georgism is the answer because it abolishes the root cause of our economic problems - the private ownership of land.

"Unless its foundations be laid in justice, the social structure cannot stand."

-SC



Promoting recovery through credit control  
is like pushing on a piece of string.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT - Financial condition: much improved, especially as a result of the recent successful dance. But there is room for improvement in the response to Peter Ignatowsky's dues notices. Respond yes or no promptly! Give Pete a break!

FILM COMMITTEE - Tom Gilmartin has been quietly and efficiently handling the alternate Friday night film series. We can report nothing but progress here.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE - The St. Patrick's Dance was a resounding financial success, as well as the usual social success. The Lighthouse Dance Orchestra is perfect for our purposes. Nellie Wester (of Distribution fame) handled the refreshments detail excellently. People seem to like the informal atmosphere prevailing at our dances.

However, this important Committee is functioning without a chairman, without even a permanent membership. This imposes severe burdens on our president, Dave Goldstein. Someone is needed to assist with the organizing of the next dance: will someone help us out?????

DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE - 25,000 cards were distributed, one of the two largest distributions we've ever had, and the results were even better than expected: better than 1 out of 6 School enrollments were from the street distribution of these term announcements. BUT - Irving Faust, Kathy Schoaf and Helen Baihaus distributed the bulk of these announcements with not too much help from the rest of us. No doubt this situation will be corrected next time.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - Rona & Niva Bianco and Mrs. Mabel Rees have been writing letters to community leaders & newspaper editors. Important: write the Postmaster General, Washington, D.C. suggesting a "Progress & Poverty" 75th anniversary stamp in 1954. Think of the millions of people who would thus hear of P&P through such a stamp. The post office is impressed by the number of requests received for a particular commemorative stamp. Will you help?

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - Ethel Wayne & Elaine Wener are planning an extensive new-membership campaign.

JUNE 14th MEETING (tentative) - SAGE vs. ADA (Americans for Democratic Action); a lively debate on "Two Approaches to the Slum Problem". Be seeing you.

## MEETINGS

APRIL 12th MEETING - A panel of experts, David Targ, Art Fleming, H.B. Goldstein,

APRIL 12th MEETING - A panel of experts consisting of David Targ, Art Fleming, H. B. Goldstein, and Stanley Sinclair answered questions from the audience (60 strong) on the subject of economics for two straight hours. The discussion was lively, to say the least, and a most surprising controversy developed on whether or not the land value tax could be passed on to tenants (!?!).

MAY 10th MEETING - Seymour Rausch & Al Kliegman formally debated against Michael Harrington & Bogdan Denitsch of the Young Socialist League on the subject of the Single Tax vs. Socialism. 75 people attended. The discussion grew rather heated at times and we do hope that future audiences at debates will manage to restrain their sometimes extreme enthusiasm, especially during the question period.

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## PHOTO CONTEST

Seymour Rausch is organizing the SAGE Wonderful wealth Machine Photo Contest, named after Phil Grant's newly published book. The publisher, Devon-Adair, has donated 10 books for the contest. The following are the tentative details: All entries to be on 3 subjects - use of land, use of labor, use of capital; 50¢ entrance fee; experience photo contest judges; prizes \$15, \$10 & \$5. books are to be used as honorable mention prizes; closing date September 13th. SAGE officially elected officers ineligible to compete; SAGE members are eligible. Write for the Contest rules.

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## EDITORS' REPORT

Henry George Day has been proclaimed by the City of New York (Sept. 2nd)! The publicity resulting from this can be terrific. This idea had received much of its original impetus in SAGE.....In a speech praising the Distribution Committee's activities, Tom Gilmartin said in emphasizing the enjoyable aspects of their work: "Passing out with Irv Faust is an experience in living!"..... Bernard Lefkowitz is helping Seymour Rausch with the Photo Contest.....150 people attended the last dance... Ruth Dominick (691 Gerard, Bx.), instructor, has been ill for some time; Mr. Bennett Challis, CC Head, is not feeling well. We send them our very best wishes.

## SAGE: QUO VADIS ?

THE CART WITHOUT A HORSE - by Ed Cooney, former SAGE president

The question of SAGE in politics has long plagued small minds and imbued the genuinely intellectual Georgist with silent though cynical amusement. The answer, of course, is to be found in the amazing revelation that Henry George was the foremost Georgist - and engaged in politics. His most noted associates were also politicians. Those who enthusiastically but childishly profess to accept George's doctrine but desire to escape anything "controversial" must ultimately face the fact that Georgism to be realized must become fundamental law and this means direct and militant political action.

SAGE should use its organizational structure as its first weapon in the battle of politics. You should seek to enlarge your membership to 5000. When achieved, aim at the next 10,000. From these members collect dues. When you have sufficient funds for a down payment buy your own world headquarters. (Arrange for a tax-free status of course but do not advertise this fact.) Then retain a competent attorney who understands land economics. Follow his advice in matters of law.

While this noble program is going forward SAGE should get out of the ivory tower and join any and all organizations devoted to the improvement of the public weal, such as the Hoover Commission Association, United Nations Association, Public Education Association, Citizen's Budget Commission, Women's Voters League, etc. Trade speakers and information with these establishments. Spread your propaganda. Publicize your friends and they will publicize you.

This course is SAGE in politics. It is SAGE associated with what is going on in the world. It is SAGE expanding its circle of friends and its sphere of influence. It is SAGE effective as a propaganda force.

This means a lot of hard work but it is an excellent training ground for the energetic Georgist. It is also the only way to make Georgism a reality instead of a dream. You must decide if the objectives warrant the effort. I believe they do.



FIRST THINGS FIRST - by Steven Cord, SAGE vice-president

There can be no doubt that only through politics can Georgism eventually become a reality.

But it is equally undeniable that SAGE is not, never has been, nor in the foreseeable future never will be in a position to enter politics. Our numbers are too few, our financial resources too small, and our economic principles too little known. Immediate political activity is thus doomed to failure.

What is needed now, today, is a more general understanding of Georgism; this is a job for education, not for politics, and this is where SAGE can & is helping.

By boosting School enrollments 20% with the distribution of term announcements, by doing radio advertising, by creating social activities for the School, by engaging in publicity work, SAGE is not burning up the world but it is making progress in the only way that genuine progress can be made - in small but specific steps.

Some people might say that this program is too unambitious to excite the interest of many P&F graduates. This might be so, but it is the only area of activity where SAGE can be effective, can get something done.

That SAGE can do more is undoubtedly true - more people are needed with ideas, more people to take charge of specific activities such as publicity campaigns, writing pamphlets, contacting political & social clubs.

Ed Cooney urges that SAGE should emulate such organizations as the Hoover Commission, UN Association, Women's Voters League, etc. We can legitimately emulate the work done by these organizations to some slight extent, but we certainly have not the money to become their equal competitors.

We will be able to get something done if we don't try to do everything all at once. "It is better to light one candle than curse the darkness." A searchlight may be better but at the present all SAGE can light is a few candles. Let's start lighting more of them!

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT

1. We recently recieved a letter from Mr. Gilbert M. Tucker, President of The Association for Economic Justice, Inc., 123 State St., Albany 7, N.Y. and author of the wonderful book "The Self-Supporting City". He writes:

"In a previous issue I find the statement "there is no rightful basis of private property in land". There is room for misunderstanding and misrepresentation for the casual reader. I think much depends upon our definition of ownership. The objection to a statement like this to my mind is that it conveys the impression of the seizure of all land, the state becoming a universal landlord, and the annulment of all titles and I know from correspondence that this impression is very commonly held by those who oppose the Georgist philosophy."

Ada E. Shafer expresses similar sentiments. This criticism is to a large extent correct: there is room for misunderstanding, since there are many ways by which land can be made common property, the single tax being the only just and practicable way.

But in my opinion we must state that there is no rightful basis of private property in land if we wish to be consistent with our statement that labor is the only rightful basis of private property. And certainly, he who collects the rent from land is in reality the owner of the land. We merely obscure the meaning of our words and weaken our own argument when we try to deny the obvious.

But the criticism is well taken, and in the future in order to remove any possible misunderstanding when we say "there is no rightful basis of private property in land", we will be especially careful to emphasize and re-emphasize that it is the rent from land and not the title to land that we want the government to take.

2. George, in his many statements on the question of unionism, seemed to feel that unions could raise wages at the expense of monopoly rent; and that union activity was in fact a means of collecting the economic rent, although certainly not as good a method as the single tax. In other words, Monopoly Labor can better compete with

(Continued on Page 12)

## MORPHINE & SOCIALISM: an analogy

1. A man crawls into a doctor's office with a dislocated hip, and complains of gret pain. This doctor looks in his medical book under "P", and sees: Pain, cure for: small dose of morphine.

And so the doctor (if so he may be called) gives his patient a small dose of morphine and lo! the patient is happy - the pain is relieved. Satisfied, he crawls out of the doctor's office (for you see, he still cannot make use of his dislocated hip).

But soon the dose wears off. Seeking more relief, he returns to the doctor, who gives him a bigger dose of morphine than before because the same size dose would no longer be effective.

But soon, of course, the patient is back once more, and the same procedure is repeated again and again. Gradually the patient's condition becomes worse and worse, gradually his thinking becomes befogged and soon he doesn't know what is the original cause of his troubles. Eventually he will probably die of morphine addiction.

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2. A nation is suffering from dislocation of the economy - people are out of work although machines stand idle and the demand for the production of goods mounts. Reputable economists are called in and prescribe a little bit of inflation ("give everybody a little more money so that they can start buying again") and a little bit of the seemingly innocous socialism of the income tax, so that the government can have enough money to give charity to the unemployed.

This is done; at first conditions improve somewhat (although the same low standard of living in relation to the wealth production prevails), but before long the economic depression returns, even worse than before. Bigger and bigger doses of inflation and income-tax socialism are prescribed, but any improvement is only temporary.

Gradually the lack of incentive produced by these conditions will lessen the production of wealth and spread poverty. Gradually the original cause for the economic dislocations becomes obscured. Eventually, suffocated

by ever-increasing restrictions and regulations, the economy will weaken and disintegrate (if civilization doesn't atomize itself back into the Stone Age first).

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Morphine is to the individual's health what inflation and income-tax socialism are to the political economy. Any improvement resulting from their use lasts only temporarily. There is only one way to remedy any evil: find the original cause and remove it! We must deal not with symptoms but with original causes.

Our economic structure is based, both literally and figuratively, on the land. It is here where we allow the greatest injustice of all to exist: private ownership of land. Need we look further for the true cause of our economic dislocations?

#### EDITORIAL COMMENTS (cont.)

Monopoly Land than Free Labor. He did not seem to refer to a nation-wide union strike. But present-day Georgists feel that a union increase is paid for by the consumers so there is no general wage rise. George never seemed to refer to this possibility at all.

There is a definite contradiction here. Who is right? Have we stated George's position correctly? See p. 310, P&P. We are interested in our readers' views on this matter, and will print all letters on this subject in a future issue.

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AND ENJOY DOING IT!

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