



THE PROVIDENT
PROVIDENT NATIONAL BANK

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December 23, 1982

Mr. Paul Nix, President
Henry George School of Social Science
5 East 44th Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Paul:

You have no doubt received considerable correspondence regarding the School's Directorship. Although I hope my comments and recommendation for George Collins will be given appropriate consideration, this letter represents an attempt to convey several thoughts on both program development and direction in the Georgist movement itself.

From the very beginning of my involvement, I have been convinced of the very pro capital consequences of George's proposals. As you well know, believing in something and getting others to so believe is a very difficult process. However, to the extent possible, I have made an effort to slowly introduce the merits of land value taxation (as opposed to any moral or philosophical perspective) to several senior members of the bank's management team. One of my immediate senior officers attended the recent conference in Valley Forge and has expressed some interest in our efforts. Obviously, there is no guarantee that a corporate response will ever develop from my efforts. Thus far, however, there has been no evidence of any negative impact on my career personally or conceptually regarding land value taxation.

I am convinced by my personal experience that achieving a real measure of success, which I would define as change in basic economic structure, requires support from the private, corporate sector. A very conservative commercial bank may not be a fertile enough ground, but I believe there are organizations led by farsighted chief executives which (if properly approached) could be induced to provide financial and other support for Georgist activities. The computer industry has always been future oriented, and would be an area from which support is very appropriate. This is particularly so because of the dependence upon computer technology for building modern assessment and tax systems.

As an example of the raw potential for corporate support, the enclosed article from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL details the social involvement of Control Data Corp. This firm should be first on our list. The one aspect which must be stressed is the necessity for thorough and professional preparation. I believe certain moral perspectives can be objectively conveyed. Doing so, however, will require a great deal of discussion among Georgists on the development of how to present our case.

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I am aware that the School's program has undergone considerable modification and changes in direction. Whether or not the results have, in an historical context, proved beneficial is a question on which there is much disagreement among Georgists. What worked in the past may continue to produce results; however, I believe a major dimension remains absent from the School's overall approach to an educational program. The dimension I refer to is best represented by the minimal treatment given to George's social program and economic analysis either in the government or academic environment. The reason, I contend, is that the bulk of individuals completing the School's programs have either already completed their college education (and are not working in an academic environment) or they have no intention of pursuing a college degree.

Early during 1982 Phil and I had a long discussion on this subject, during which I recommended development of a program which would result in a growing number of School graduates taking their understanding of Henry George into the mainstream of society. What I proposed is essentially as follows:

- Establishment of a college scholarship program for graduates of the Henry George School.
- Eligible candidates would be required to complete a program at the Henry George School (structured along the lines of that now offered in Philadelphia, perhaps expanded) and satisfactorily pass written and oral examinations on George.
- Candidates would also be required to have subsequently taught a certain number of classes at the School on a nonsalaried basis.
- Upon evidence of acceptance by an accredited college or university with a stated major in economics, political science, history, sociology or philosophy, that individual would be awarded a grant (which should be substantial, say, one-half or more of tuition) from an appropriately funded Georgist organization.
- During the period of education under such a grant, the individual would have continued access to the School's facility and staff for research and consultation. In return, publication rights to all research papers, etc. would be automatically granted to a designated Georgist organization (without remuneration).

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Paul, I sincerely believe that even a modestly-funded program supporting only two or three individuals a year represents an investment in the future from which the Georgist movement can only greatly benefit. Our technological future demands development of a new group of "educated" individuals who possess the credentials necessary for recognition of one's ideas. A grant program provides a meaningful incentive to those who come to take George seriously, helping to put them in places where the weight of their ideas can come to bear — namely, as college professors (or high school teachers), as corporate or government economists, as social workers or anywhere in society where policy decisions are made.

What I have outlined is certainly not a program where immediate results can be anticipated.

I am confident you will give these ideas the consideration I feel they deserve. Hopefully there will be an opportunity during 1983 to discuss them in greater depth.

Best wishes for the holiday season.

Very truly yours,



Ed Dodson