

Henry George News

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THE EARTH IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF ALL.

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ZIMBABWE FORUM

David Domke



Dr. Nibaldo Aguilera

In many African nations that have only recently begun to extricate themselves from the shackles of colonial rule, and most of those after long periods of struggle, the problems of land reform and distribution are only now being addressed. Lifting themselves up after centuries of foreign domination and exploitation,

the indigenous populations of those countries are demanding equal share in land ownership and equal access to the political structures of their governments and economies

In Zimbabwe, much of the anger and frustration have been expressed in acts of violence against white farm owners, who until recently owned most of the farms in that country. The forceful repossession of many farms by native Zimbabweans caught the attention of the world wide press, but the underlying dynamics of the centuries-old problems of

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PHILADELPHIA CONTROLLER TO PROPOSE A FORM OF LVT

David Domke

Philadelphia's Controller, Jonathan Saidel, has been said recently to be considering proposing a form of Land Value Taxation for that city. According to a recent article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, "flying under Philadelphia's political radar, City Controller Jonathan Saidel has been quietly collecting influential support for a radical overhaul of the city's tax structure. Local real estate agents and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce are already backing the ambitious plan that includes the adoption of 'land-value taxation,' the

brainchild of Henry George, a 19th century native Philadelphian."

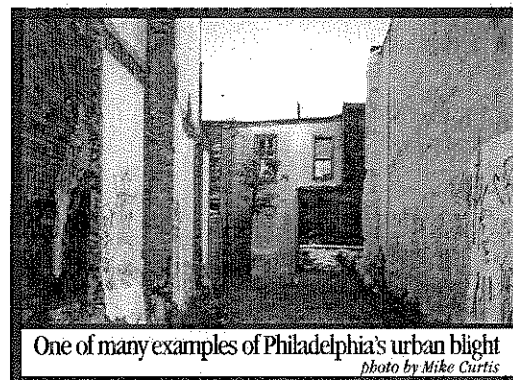
The article goes on to say that Controller Saidel has been working behind the scenes by briefing City Council members as to the merits of the proposal and garnering support among community groups and business associations.

The article explains the proposal: "George's theory holds that if taxes are raised on vacant, abandoned or underused land, the owners will

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As we were going to press, we received the very sad news that Dr. Jack Schwartzman, Henry George School Member Trustee, passed away. See page 3 this issue for a remembrance of Jack and see next issue for a fuller tribute.



One of many examples of Philadelphia's urban blight
photo by Mike Curtis

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land ownership went largely unnoticed.

This Fall, the School hosted a *Friday Evening Forum* on Zimbabwe, given by Henry George School Trustee Dr. Nibaldo Aguilera. Dr. Aguilera has a wide background in social and political-economic studies and is also head of the Social Studies Department at The College of New Rochelle's Manhattan campus. In addition, Dr. Aguilera was invited by the University of Zimbabwe to visit that country, a trip he undertook in the Summer of 2000.

Dr. Aguilera began his presentation by giving a history of Zimbabwe, formerly known in the modern era as Rhodesia. The country, which became known world wide in 1854, thanks to the British missionary Dr. Livingston, has had a long history of encounters with European colonial powers, dating back to 1513. By the late 19th Century, British colonial rule became solidified under the auspices of Cecil Rhodes, after whom it was then named.

From the 1960s to 1979 the people of Zimbabwe engaged in a long guerilla war with the occupying British-backed Rhodesian forces. The people's forces were headed by the ZANU-PF (Zimbabwean Africa National United- Patriotic Front), a coalition of fighters consisting of Shona and Ndebele warriors, and other political factions. The leader of the Patriot Front was Robert Mugabe, a former school teacher. In 1980, the British granted Zimbabwe formal independence but, as Dr. Aguilera pointed out, many of the problems created by colonial rule trouble the coun-

try to this day. Mugabe was elected President of the country and under his rule Zimbabwe made great strides. Being a former school teacher, one of Mugabe's first priorities was an enhancement of public education; today Zimbabwe, with a population of 12 million, has one of the best education systems in Africa. Also, under his rule, unemployment dropped from 50 to 40%. Still, the country is faced with grave problems.

One of the conditions negotiated with Britain during the granting of independence was the return of the land to the people of Zimba-

powers-that-be throughout the world," paid only lip-service to the land problem.

"It is typical of land reform historically that when land is redistributed, the peasants most often get the worst land"

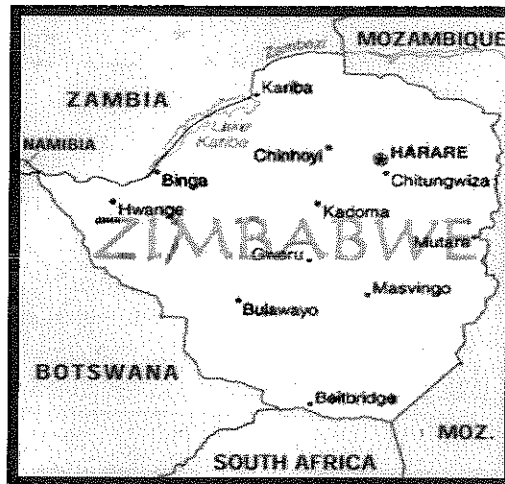
Frustrated by years of neglect by the international community, Mugabe in the late 90s formed a new constitution which legitimated the repossession of the farms owned by non-Zimbabweans. The international media focused almost exclusively on the violence that resulted from repossession and did little to bring to light the dynamics of the struggle of Zimbabweans for ownership of their own land. "Subsequently," Dr. Aguilera pointed out, "Britain and the United States condemned Mugabe and his government, cutting off financial aid. As a result of this, Mugabe is now isolated and is considered a pariah in the international community."

This isolation has further deepened Zimbabwe's financial crisis. Indeed, a recent article in Britain's *Financial Times* reports that the Mugabe government has promised a doubling of public spending and tax cuts totalling \$400 million dollars over the next year. As Mugabe is up for reelection in a few months, this is perceived by many economists as an "electioneering budget," according to the *Financial Times*. It describes Zimbabwe's financial minister, Sima Makoni, as "shrugging off concerns over deepening recession, a depreciating currency and escalating inflation," as he prepares next years budget. "Once the election

is out of the way, we will see the real budget," the *Times* article quotes one economist as saying, add-

ing that Mr. Makoni's proposals "reflect a growing desperation within the government."

Dr. Aguilera summed up his remarks by making a forceful proposal, "the only real way out," for the country of Zimbabwe. Citing the historical evidence, he noted "the land ques-



bwe. Britain however lacked the commitment to this reform, and most of the productive farm land lay in the hands of white farm owners. Dr. Aguilera succinctly summed up this critical situation: "The reconciliation of land and people never took place; white land owner apartheid, in many ways worse than it had been in South Africa, remained until recently."

Dr. Aguilera continued, "in addition to the land that remained in the hands of white farm owners living in Zimbabwe, 35 to 40% of the land was owned by absentee land-owners." According to Dr. Aguilera, Mugabe continually pleaded with the UN to remedy this situation "to restore justice to Zimbabwe by clearing up the problems of land ownership and the ongoing colonial legacy that still gripped the country's economy." The UN, which "often represents the interests of the

"The reconciliation of land and people never took place; white land owner apartheid, in many ways worse than it had been in South Africa, remained."

Henry George News

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Jack Schwartzman

1912 - 2001

David Domke

Noted scholar, author, editor, college professor and Henry George School Member Trustee Dr. Jack Schwartzman passed away on November 30. Jack, who had taught for 30 years at Nassau Community College, had a scholarship established in his name, the Dr. Jack Schwartzman Learning Disabled Award, in 1991. Jack also had a long and distinguished association with the Henry George School for more than 60 years, where he taught for many years and was elected a Member Trustee. Jack was also Editor-in-Chief of the scholarly publication *Fragments*, an individualist review inspired by such thinkers as Henry David Thoreau, Leo Tolstoy and Albert Jay Nock. Three other School Board members, Sydney Mayers, Oscar Johannsen and Irving Starer also sit on the review's editorial board.

As a young child, Jack and his family fled revolutionary Russia, and this experience left an indelible mark on him and was behind his fervent commitment to individualism and freedom. One of Jack's most popular writings was *Henry George, Emma Lazarus and Liberty*, an essay, published in pamphlet form, outlining the precepts of Henry George and comparing them to the 19th century American poet Emma Lazarus, whose words are quoted on the Statue of Liberty.

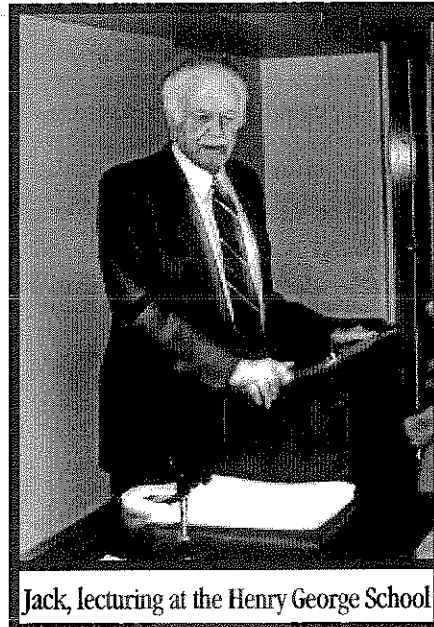
The essay, still available from the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, was written in 1997 in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the death of Henry George. Jack wrote that George and Lazarus, who both "achieved fame and international recognition for their association with the concept of liberty" were "voices of Liberty, dreamers of justice, symbols of Eternal Hope." Jack went on to compare both writers' views on immigration, seeing both of them as anti-Malthusian.

Jack, biographical entries on whom appear in *Who's Who in the World* and other editions in the *Who's Who* series, was born in 1912 in Ukraine, which was then part of Rus-

sia. His family fled Russia in 1922 and later settled in the U.S. in the late '20s.

Jack also served in the U.S. Army during World War II, rising from private to captain and receiving an Army Commendation Medal for what the army termed "extraordinary skill and application to his task."

In 1949, he wrote *Rebels of Individualism*, of which a reviewer in the *Chicago Daily News* claimed "[it is] as powerful an appeal for individualism as I have ever read." He was also known for the much acclaimed and often reprinted



Jack, lecturing at the Henry George School

prose poem *Lilacs*.

Jack had two doctorates to his name, a Ph.D. from NYU and a law degree from Brooklyn Law School. He practiced law in New York State for 55 years, retiring in 1993. He was professor of English at Nassau Community College, N.Y., and in 1974 won the New York State's Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. In 1975, he was appointed to the state-wide Distinguished Professorship Review Committee. Jack retired from teaching at the age of 82 with the rank of Professor Emeritus. "Upon your retirement, you rightfully assume the designation Legend" wrote the president of Nassau Community College, Dr. Sean Fanelli.

Jack taught numerous classes at HGS, initiating a one year course on the great economic thinkers. Long time HGS student Don LeVor, who became a student of Jack's after the 2nd World War and remained a lifelong friend, recalls, "Jack was

sort of the St. Paul of the Henry George Movement. He really kept it going." Don also remembers Jack for his prodigious feats of memory. "He had a terrific memory. He could memorize an entire page of the New York City telephone book. He'd study it for two minutes then hand it over to someone. That person could ask Jack the phone number of anyone one on that page and Jack would remember it," Don recalls. Don also says that Jack's classes were so popular at HGS "they had to be held in the auditorium on 69th St., which was considerably larger than the one the School has now."

Mike Curtis, the School's Director of Education remembers, "When I first started teaching at the Henry George School, there were a few very bright students who said they weren't interested in the moral aspects of political economy, only the economics — only cause and effect. And to that Jack Schwartzman declared: 'they won't be around this movement very long.' Well, 30 years have come and gone since I heard him utter that prediction, and I can't think of anyone who has been active in this movement for more than a couple of years, who wasn't motivated by moral principles. Jack was right."

Fellow Member Trustee Simon Winters remembered Jack's intellectual prowess: "His was an aspiring and principled intellect that would not be compromised by his physical being."

Such was Jack's renown that in 1991 Thomas S. Gulotta, County Executive of Nassau proclaimed March 22 (Jack's birthday) of that year Jack Schwartzman Day. A similar proclamation was issued on Jack's 85th birthday in 1997.

Jack will be sorely missed by the Henry George School, the Georgist movement, and all who had the privilege of knowing him.

To summarize the moral and economic philosophy of Henry George: Ethics is not merely a polite injunction of behavior, such as etiquette; or a rigid commandment of obedience... It is the Golden Rule itself! Without the adherence to the eternal principles of proper economic distribution; without conformity to the time-honored precepts of justice and natural rights, the Georgist philosophy becomes meaningless. "Single-Tax," "LVT," "communal collection of rent" - these are merely methodological phrases; they are but means to the end itself; and that end is justice. Jack Schwartzman - *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 1986

Henry George

In 15 Minutes

Mike Curtis

Recently, I was asked to address a group of investors, about 20 people, and explain the philosophy of Henry George. When I asked how much time I would have, I was told "about 15 minutes."

There is no question, the Invisible Hand of the Free Market is the most efficient mechanism that has ever been devised and implemented to allocate labor and capital to its most efficient applications. Nothing in human history comes close.

Although it is hardly accurate to say this was devised. Incentive free enterprise is simply the opportunity to do what comes naturally. The reason that farmers grow food for the market is simply that by producing what you want, they get a lot more and better quality of what they want.

The reason the plumber fixes your toilet is because by fixing your toilet, he gets a lot more of the things he wants than he would get if he tried to produce all of them himself. We help ourselves by helping others.

Yet in spite of the amazing efficiency of the free market something periodically throws a monkey wrench in the wheels of progress.

We don't even talk about whether, but *when* the next recession will come. It's the same physical World, but one year everything is going well, and the next year it's not.

Even in the best of times, there are millions of people — it's a small percentage, but it adds up to millions — who are willing and able to work, and all they want to do is exchange their labor for the products of other people's

Wages of the least demanded workers always *tend*, in the free market, to a bare subsistence.

labor and yet they can't participate in production.

Of course, when the economy is "going well," we say they aren't employable; they don't have the salable skills to pro-

duce \$5.15 per hour.

Now the question is: are there 100 jobs for every 100 people who can perform on a basic level and above?

Or, are there fewer than 100 jobs for every 100 people — which means that someone will definitely be unemployed. And that someone will be the least productive worker, no matter how much they produce?

Go into McDonalds; you don't have to know how to read or write they have symbols representing the items of food Go into the Super Market

As technology advances, less knowledge and skill yield a greater result. So, if it were the



absolute level of productivity that was needed for employment, we would see the numbers of unemployables steadily diminish. We don't.

And, in spite of the incredible level of productivity, a level which has been steadily increasing, the general level of wages has not kept pace. In terms of what you can buy, the American worker has not experienced a significant increase in their hourly wage.

In fact, wages of the least demanded workers always *tend*, in the free market, to a bare subsistence. All workers with greater knowledge and skill get higher wages based on the equation between the supply and demand for their greater potential which are needed to maximize production.

So, in this republic you could say: the workers vote themselves a raise. The minimum wage, the eight hour day, Social Security, etc. etc. And to that equal extent we reject the free market.

The question boils down to this: Why don't wages, in a free market, equal whatever the workers produce? Why don't those who make productive invests, get the full results of those productive investments.

**The question boils down to this:
Why don't wages, in a free market,
equal whatever the workers produce?**

Or, in other words, why do wages and interest always tend to an amount below which productivity would fall... No matter how much they produce?

And the answer is that land - the natural opportunities on which we live and work, and the materials out of which we produce our products and grow our food - is treated as private property

We assign it to individuals and corporations so they can keep what they produce on it.

But this institution which starts out by simply granting the product to the producer, becomes, as population increases and invention goes on, a license for some people to take what other people produce.

The value of land, in addition to its mineral content, fertility, or its proximity to the navigable waters, is created by the community.

Can two people build a house more than twice as fast as one person working alone? One group grows food, another makes clothes, and a 3rd builds shelter, etc. Each group develops a special knowledge and skill, they accumulate capital tools and machines designed for each specific job; and we experience economies of scale. Far more is produced than would result if each person were independently making their own food, clothing and shelter.

The denser the population, the greater the potential to subdivide labor, to accumulate tools and machines for each production, and to produce in economies of scale.

Imagine trying to set up a auto assembly plant in a town with less than a thousand people. As the population grows, the level of productivity grows.

And at some point transportation is hampered by mud, and the same rivers that connect one city to another, also impede transportation within the economic community. At

some point well water is harder to establish, and human waste becomes a problem.

Each new person no longer adds a greater level of productivity than the last. We have reached: the law of diminishing returns.

So we pave our streets, construct bridges, build the water and sewer systems, gas, electric, and add police, firemen, etc. And now we can live in multi-story dwellings and factories with greater and greater subdivisions of labor, and economies of scale.

And the greater productivity which results from the denser populations, and is enabled by the infrastructure and public services, attaches itself to the land.

First, because it is only where population is dense that the greater productivity can take place, and 2nd because where ever population is dense, all the land is owned.

So people hold land as an investment and they hold it in anticipation of an increase in the selling price. Speculation.

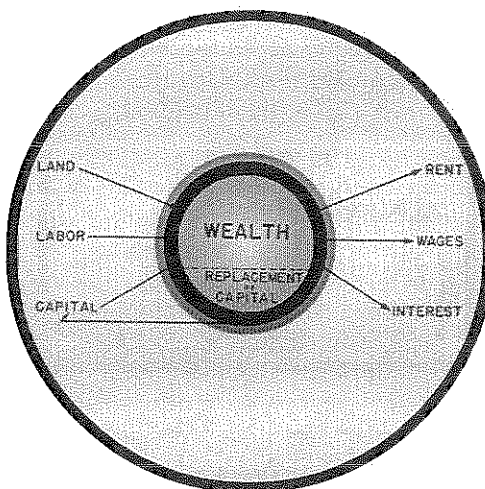
Any time you expect the value of a piece of land to increase faster than the current rate of interest, you have an alternative investment. As long as the increase in the value of your land, minus the real estate tax, is more than the current rate of interest, land speculation is a good investment.

Look around at the 50% of the land in the U.S. that's designated for private use. It is all owned — but there's an enormous amount that's unused or grossly underused. It is held because its owners expect its value to increase (speculation). Check out the price of undeveloped land surrounding any city. Whether its farm land in the path of suburban development, or a center city parking lot with nothing but a little black top.

Or, miles and miles of inner city land that's now worth less than nothing but was once held

when machines and innovations are replacing workers, when businesses are trying to expand, just as they did in the 1920s - when the value of land in general is soaring, those who hold the land that's needed for new production, choose not to sell. In the same way people don't sell gold and silver when the price is soaring upwards. So, if no one will sell you the land you need in order to expand, you lay off your workers. You certainly are not going to keep people working when you can buy a machine for less. Now days we call it downsizing.

The workers who are now unemployed are



not buying new cars and houses and shoes etc. and therefore the demand for those products is reduced. And that's called a recession. And not until the price of land falls is a recession over. All right, what's the solution? How do we set up the rules so that we have freedom and free enterprise — so that every worker and every investor has an equal opportunity, that every worker receives the full results of their labors, and every investor receives the full results of their productive investments?

Start by thinking of land as a natural opportunity — a common opportunity — assigned to individuals and corporations for the purpose securing the product to the producer.

Of course no one would plant a crop or build a house, much less a modern factory, if they couldn't put up a fence around it or lock the door. But if they paid to the community the full rental value of the land they held, they

would be satisfying everyone else's equal right to the same piece of land. To hoard land that

All people would have *free and equal* access to the marginal land, while the superior land would be assigned to those who would pay its rental value to the community.

you are only renting would be like getting a rental car from Hertz and parking it in your back yard for the weekend. There would be nothing to gain by holding the land idle but there would be every incentive to work and produce on it. By collecting land rent, we could eliminate all confiscatory taxes like income and sales.

We would redevelop our cities and the surrounding suburbs.

We would relieve the farm land from development pressure and the wilderness from being cleared for agriculture.

At this point, much of the land, although having a productive potential, would have no rental value at all. It would be in abundance.

All people would have free and equal access to the marginal land, while the superior land would be assigned to those who would pay its rental value to the community.

Not only would the government no longer steal, all increases in production would raise wages and interest -- and on superior land would increase rents.

Not only would the rents provide for the traditional expenses of government, but rents are the social fund out of which all people would share in social benefits or in cash dividends.

And this would clearly be the foundation for a just and prosperous nation.



The more land is held for speculation, the more people will be unemployed and homeless.

as an idle investment.

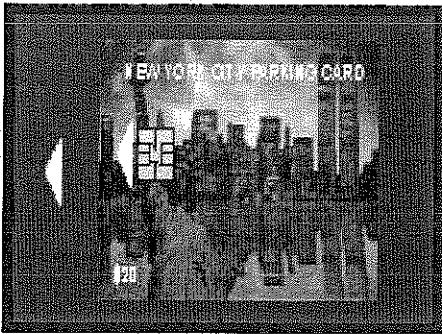
The more land that is held for speculation, the more people will be unemployed and homeless. And, when technologies are racing ahead,

The Henry George School would like to thank Dr. Alexander Elder for allowing us the time to make this presentation.

Meet Muni-Meter

Billy Fitzgerald/HGS Instructor

About six feet tall, made of metal, painted dark green, with a display screen and credit-card sized openings, this new arrival on New York City's streets would feel at home on the



starship "Enterprise".

The exotic-looking visitor's nametag says "Muni-Meter." What is Muni-Meter doing here?

Muni-Meter is a project of the New York City Department of Transportation to make payment for on-street parking fast, easy and convenient. Payment for parking is payment for the use of land, or, in a word, rent. Here is how Muni-Meter works:

The driver parks his/her vehicle.

The driver walks to the nearest Muni-Meter, which displays on its screen the cost of parking at that location for a specified period of time.

The driver selects the amount of parking time required. The driver pays Muni-Meter with a prepaid card, known as a NYC Parking Card. This card is similar to a prepaid phone card or Metrocard.

Muni-Meter prints a parking coupon that shows the amount of parking time allowed.

The driver places the parking coupon in the windscreen of his/her vehicle.

Just as the police and traffic agents can ticket vehicles that overstay a parking meter, they can issue a violation for overstaying a Muni-Meter coupon.

Muni-Meter is now in operation

in all five boroughs of New York City.

Muni-Meter has several advantages over existing parking meters, the most notable of which is that it allows various parking pricing plans to be implemented.

Muni-Meter could allow variable rate parking. At times of high demand for parking space, parking charges can be raised, thereby collecting a higher land rent for the community. Drivers who are unwilling to pay the higher parking charges can use cheaper alternatives, or avail themselves of public transportation. When demand for parking space is low, parking charges can be reduced or even eliminated.

In areas where parking space is limited, Muni-Meter could be used to favor commercial use over private use by offering a discount to commercial users.

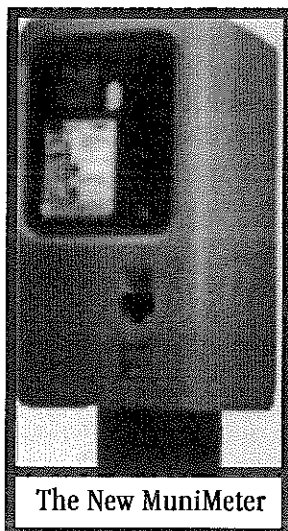


Currently, there is one parking meter per parking space, while there are only a few Muni-Meters per city block. That means less "street furniture" - obstacles for all, but making movement especially difficult for people with disabilities.

Not having to feed Muni-Meter with coins has its benefits, too. Drivers do not have to maintain a collection of coins. Companies will find it easier to administer parking charges by giving the prepaid cards to employees. New York City's expenses are also reduced. Gathering, counting, storing and depositing coins is an expensive process.

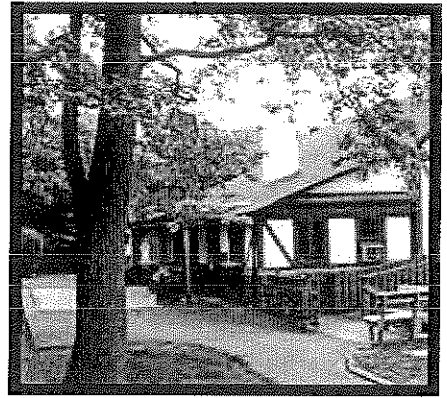
A disadvantage of Muni-Meter? Well, it means yet another card in our wallets. When will someone invent one card that does it all?

Billy Fitzgerald may be reached at: bilhyfitzgerald@yahoo.com



The New MuniMeter

UPCOMING SEMINARS



Film Forum - *Experimental Village*

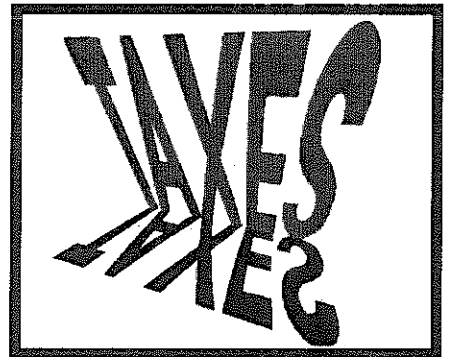
Friday, Jan. 25, 6:30pm

In 1895, followers of Henry George tried to convert the State of Delaware to a Land Value Tax system and failed. In 1900, they started a village, Arden, based on the same principles. By charging the full rental value, there was no private property in land. Life-long Arden resident Mike Curtis will present the film *Experimental Village* and discuss the history of Arden.

The Urban Dilemma

Friday, Feb. 22, 6:30pm

For thousands of years cities have been the most economical places to live and work. As civilizations advance, cities naturally tend to grow larger. Why are many American cities losing jobs and revenue? How would LVT reverse this trend? With Mike Curtis.



Taxes, Taxes, Taxes

Friday, Mar. 8, 6:30pm

As tax-time looms, we will consider the following questions, among others: Would lower taxes in general help our workers? Would the Flat Tax with no deductions help workers? How would a national sales tax work? With Mike Curtis.

Noche Literaria Ramon Alvarez

Friday, Feb. 15, 6:30pm

Literature as a force for social change. A reading of poetry focusing on social concerns and economic development.

Continued from p. 1

develop the property to cover their higher costs. And, because taxes would be lowered on buildings, property owners would have an incentive to invest in homes and businesses."

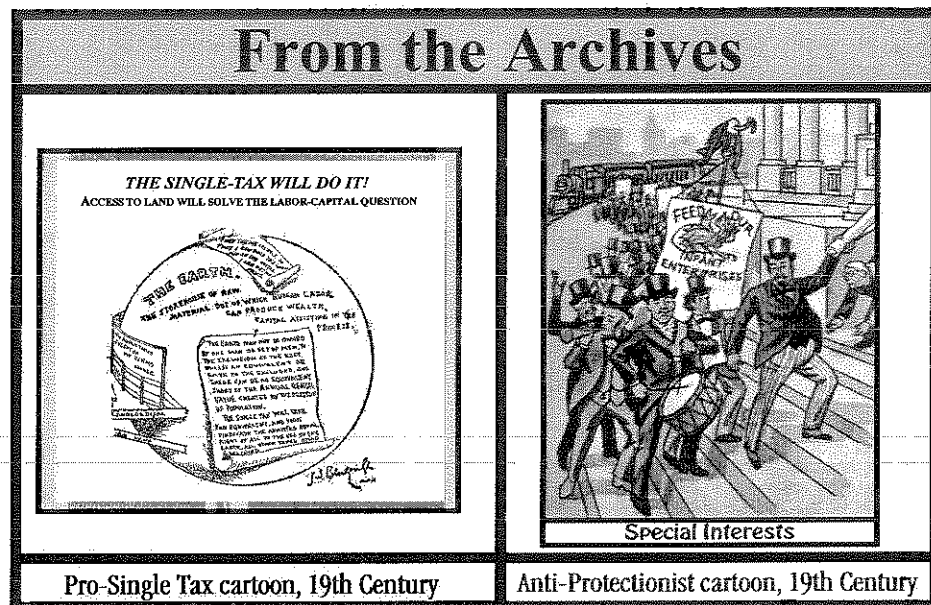
Under the plan to be proposed by Saidel, the city would cease taxing land and buildings at the same rate and tax land at a rate 3.44 times the rate imposed on buildings. As a consequence, the article states, the city's property taxes would drop "by modest amounts" for over 70% of the city's homeowners but would "increase for 50% of the city's commercial and industrial property."

"Such a tax system is a way to raise tax revenue without hurting a local economy."

In addition, owners of less or non-productive properties, such as parking lots, car dealerships and businesses with large tracts of undeveloped land, would face higher taxes. Saidel also plans reductions in Philadelphia's business and wage taxes.

Allentown, Pennsylvania, adopted a similar land value system in 1996. According to Allentown Mayor William L. Heydt "it has proven popular with residents and has spurred development of vacant land," the article goes on to say. The measure proved so popular that despite two attempts to repeal it, it is still in force.

As we know, Pittsburgh had a similar LVT tax restructuring early in the 20th century. That city recently did away with its LVT system "after a controversial city-wide



Pro-Single Tax cartoon, 19th Century

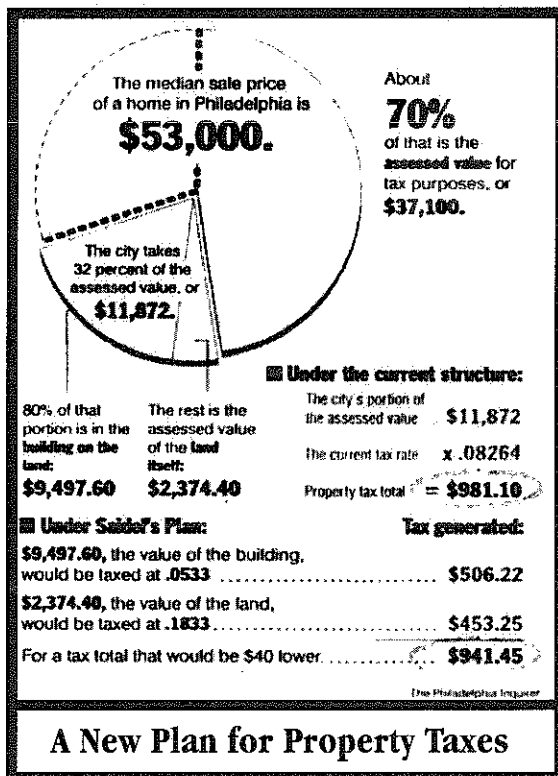
Anti-Protectionist cartoon, 19th Century

reassessment that drove up taxes," the Inquirer says, and "to reduce taxes overall, local government moved toward an equalization of land- and property taxes."

The Inquirer article cites a University of Maryland study of Pittsburgh's land value system which concludes that the system "may have spurred a building boom in the 1980s."

tion of Realtors, is quoted as saying: "If you pay for the land and not the building, the land has

"Land Value Taxation provides city officials with a tax instrument that generates revenues, but has no damaging side effects on the urban economy."



The study further concluded that "such a tax system is a way to raise tax revenue without hurting a local economy." One of the authors of the University of Maryland study, Professor Wallace E. Oates, has said, "Land Value Taxation provides city officials with a tax instrument that generates revenues, but has no damaging side effects on the urban economy,"

The article also mentions that Philadelphia realtors are squarely behind the proposal. Anne M. Rubin, president of the Greater Philadelphia Associa-

tion of Realtors, is quoted as saying: "If you pay for the land and not the building, the land has the value, and it encourages you to improve the building . . . not hang on and let destruction come [by virtue of abandonment] . . . we believe this is better for homeowners and for the city." Of course realtors stand to benefit from the increased buying and selling of properties that would ensue once such a tax plan were enacted.

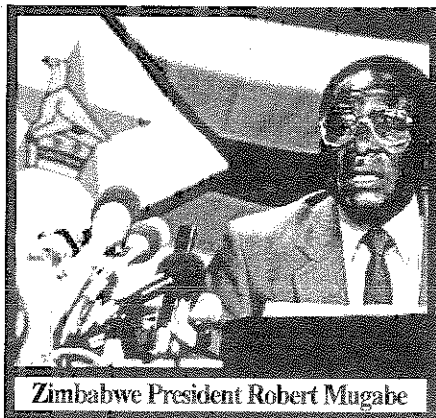
The president of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce is also quoted: "This approach . . . is really something we have been looking for and asking about over the past 12 years."

The Inquirer article concludes with a pithy summing up of Henry George's career. "Creating wealth for working people was George's goal. He left Philadelphia as a teenager, and after kicking around the world as a seaman in the Pacific and then as a printer and newspaper reporter in California, in 1879 he wrote a best-seller, *Progress and Poverty*, outlining his economic theory. He lectured around the world and, in 1886, was drafted to run for mayor of New York City as a third-party candidate. He lost, but he did manage to outpoll Theodore Roosevelt."



Continued from p. 2

tion is behind the redevelopment problems of most countries undertaking the struggle to throw off the yoke of colonial legacy." He further pointed out that "mere land reform itself is not the solution" and that the only real solution will come about "when land rent becomes a part of society" through its appropriation by the whole community. "It is typical of land reform historically that when land is redistributed, the peasants most often get the worst land" on which to work and eke out a living. The result



Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe

"How ridiculous is it that they have to pay to work the land?"

of that is that the peasants become sharecroppers on their own land. "How ridiculous is it that they must pay to work the land?" Dr. Aguilera asked. He added that this would also solve the problem of absentee ownership. "The absentee landowners would rush to the country in order to make the land they own more productive, in order to pay the land rent." Indeed, 200 of the farms in Zimbabwe remain unoccupied.

Dr. Aguilera further noted that he does not believe that Mugabe lacks the political will to make such a radical reform. "He only lacks the knowledge of how to go about initiating a lasting reform that would truly solve that nation's economic crisis." Dr. Aguilera hopes to return to Zimbabwe and "acquaint Mr. Mugabe" with the ideas behind true land reform.

Fall Graduation 2001

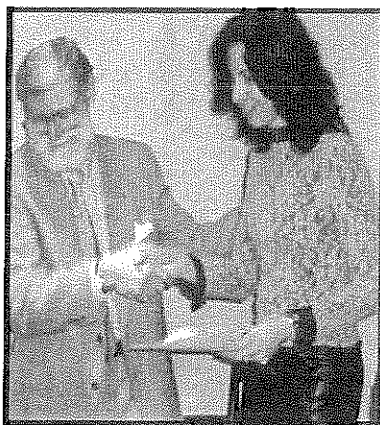
David Domke

On Friday, November 30, the School held its Fall graduation ceremony, celebrating those students who have advanced through our 3-part major course of study, the *Production and Distribution of Wealth*, comprised of the classes *Fundamental Economics*, *Applied Economics* and the *Science of Political Economy*.

This semester, there were 25 students who qualified to receive their completion certificates.

Henry George School Director of Education Mike Curtis began the proceedings by remarking, "You are to be congratulated. I'm sure that those of you who have been impressed by the power of these ideas, as I and thousands before me have, these ideas that have revealed to us the real causes behind unemployment, poverty and slums, have understood that while the road to truth is straight and narrow, the road to its implementation at times seems long and perhaps circuitous.

"For that reason, you are also to be consoled. It's ain't exactly like calling 911 or Crime Stoppers — with information leading to the ar-



Mike Curtis & Silvia Prado

Henry George School of Social Science
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rest and conviction of a landlord."

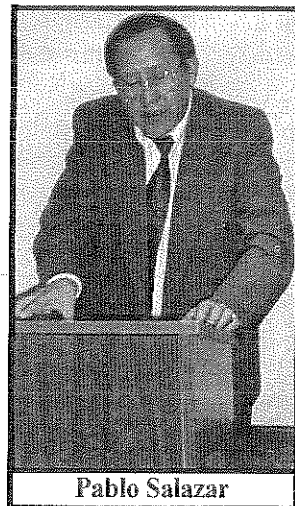
As each of the graduates were called up to the podium and individually presented with their diplomas, they were asked to say a few words.

Luis Avila said, "I would like to thank the staff and the School for helping us learn about the causes of the social problems that continue to plague our society." This received a strong round of applause.

Rosemary English remarked, "I have worked in the peace and social justice movement for many years but now I feel for the first time I understand economics. Reading Henry George led me to grasp the concept of economic rent."

Pablo Salazar, in his remarks in Spanish, deemed Henry George "a great philosopher, sociologist and one of the great thinkers in the field of Economics."

In conclusion, Mike cited Aristarchus of Samos (c. 270 b.c.), Copernicus and Galileo as harbingers of truths it took a long time to accept. But he added, "one day people will wake up and no one will believe in unconditional private property in land. Congratulations and -- good luck!"



Pablo Salazar

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