

# The NEW LEAF

"EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SPECIAL PRIVILEGE FOR NONE"

Vol. 2, No. 3

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## Convention Offers Continuous Entertainment



MEETING WITH PERRY PRENTICE. Some national Board members and officers, and local LEAFers, meeting in San Diego on February 27 with Perry Prentice, National Advisory Board Member, and former Vice-President, Time-Life, Inc. Mr. Prentice, at right, is President of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation.

## Expert Advises San Diego to Fund by Land Assessment

The City of San Diego recently retained Robert H. Freilich, Hulen Professor of Law at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, as a consultant to give recommendations regarding the City's growth management program.

In a report to the City Council on January 6, 1976, Dr. Freilich recommended extending the projected funding by land value assessments of capital improvements in North City West, to the entire fabric of newly developed municipal areas.

Dr. Freilich stated: "We propose that the special assessment district be used in conjunction with the long-range capital improvements program . . . in such a way that the City maintains effective control over the timing and location of new growth while the costs of capital improvements to service the new growth are borne primarily by the developers and owners in those areas. This is accomplished

by . . . simply using special assessments as a financing mechanism to shift the costs of new growth from the City's general fund to the affected landowners. . . . When the CIP [capital improvements program] indicates that an area should develop and be served by capital facilities and improvements, the City will form a multi-function special assessment district and levy the appropriate assessment on developers and land owners, thus forcing development to occur at that time."

In this way San Diego can recoup from the benefited land part of the added value which the municipal improvements have added thereto.

San Diego's original North City West plan of funding capital improvements from assessments on land values, irrespective of improvements, was engineered by City Councilman and LEAF Board Chairman, Floyd Morrow.

An exciting program is shaping up for the second annual LEAF national conference scheduled for July 3, 4, and 5, at the University of San Francisco. It promises to be a veritable three-ring circus, with the "main show" going on in an "indoor amphitheatre," and with presentation of slide film shows and motion pictures in a nearby room--continuous run. The main events will include panel discussions by leading figures in the news and TV world, political VIPs, and LEAF notables.

Membership participation will be stressed. One session is entitled, "Opportunities for LEAF," at which members may present projects they would like to see undertaken. Following this, small groups will gather to explore the proposals further.

The slogan of the convention is "Victory through Teamwork," and this refers not only to the organization of LEAF itself, but also to its relations with the Henry George Schools, and to its growing cooperation and collaboration with other groups working for social change.

Environmental groups are being invited to participate in a panel in which LEAF's representative will show how our program utilizes man's natural economic interests to preserve green fields and open space.

Three full days packed with challenge, information, and excitement start with a 10:15 Saturday morning session, "Why Are We Here? What Do We Plan to Do?" and continue through the close at 3:45 Monday afternoon, to be followed by a "Sunday morning quarterback" rump session, at which LEAF directors, Convention committee members, and others who wish will evaluate how well we did what we planned to do, where we succeeded, and where and how we can do better next year.

By filling in and sending the registration form on Page 2, you will be

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## Progress in Pennsylvania as Reported by Steven Cord

The following items are gleaned from copies of letters to and from Dr. Cord, who is editor of the LEAF-sponsored publication, Incentive Taxation.

The City Assessor of Altoona requests additional information to present to the City Council concerning the mechanics of introducing land value taxation.

The executive director of the Meadville Chamber of Commerce requests information about the land value tax base in Pennsylvania for a third class city. He states that the City Manager proposed this for Meadville, but not enough time was allowed to study the proposal. The Chamber of Commerce expresses a desire for a knowledgeable speaker to talk to Chamber members and answer questions.

A bill is pending in the Pennsylvania Legislature which would exempt all new improvements from taxation for a period of ten years.

## INCENTIVE TAXATION

Dr. Steven Cord, LEAF's Vice-President, edits the LEAF-sponsored publication, Incentive Taxation, for non-Georgist public officials. All LEAF members automatically receive it. (If you are not getting it, let us know, so this can be corrected.)

Dr. Cord says: "If any member is actively campaigning for the adoption of a heavier tax rate on land values--either with a mayor, city council, school or sewer board, etc.--he can write to me at 580 N. 6th St., Indiana, PA 15701, and get the names of his best prospects on the mailing list at only \$2.00 per prospect.

"If in addition he gives specific information about the proposal he wishes to make, and also some background information about the particular situation he wishes to remedy, an article of specific interest to his prospects could be included in a future issue.

"Put I T to work for you."

## Bi-Centennial

*Continued from page 1*

doing LEAF a favor, and also doing yourself a favor--since you get a \$2.50 discount for "early bird" registration.

## U.S. Land Values

According to Fortune Magazine, the total land values (including natural resources) in the United States amount to over One Trillion Dollars.

## Charter Amendment Approved for San Diego Primary Election

On March 4 the San Diego City Council, by a 5 to 4 vote, approved a ballot measure proposed by Floyd Morrow, which would bar the sale of any more City-owned land without a vote of the people. Morrow said that the City historically has "squandered" its land.

The proposed ballot measure was referred to the City Attorney for precise wording. It will then be submitted to the Council for a final approval. If final approval is secured, it will be placed on the June 8th primary ballot.

The City of San Diego currently owns 57,000 acres of land, including 8,000 of the original "pueblo" land, going back to the days of Spanish land titles. The pueblo lands originally comprised, in municipal ownership, a good part of the present City limits, and have been sold off largely in the present century. The charter amendment would permit the City Manager, supported by a Council ordinance, to lease city-owned land, but not for a period exceeding 55 years. Thus community-created ground rent would be collected for public purposes.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

The enemies of land value taxation must be chuckling over the treatment in the New Leaf of SB 1375, which is a clever and deadly attack on l.v.t.

By shifting taxes from improvements onto sales, it would reduce property tax bills, and thus reduce homeowner pressure for tax reform. We need to channel this homeowner pressure in support of l.v.t.

At the same time, this bill would eliminate one of the strongest arguments we have for l.v.t., which is that a tax on improvements promotes slums.

SB 1375 would make it much more difficult for LEAF to attain its goal.

--Morgan Harris

(Editor's note: SB 1375, proposed by California State Senator Peter Behr, would remove improvement taxes on homeowners, substituting a combination of a 4 per cent sales tax on homes when sold, and a special income tax geared to homeowners. The land value component of the homeowner's property tax would be retained.)

Reservation Form for

## THE BIG BI-CENTENNIAL DOUBLE HEADER

(Send to 454 Mission Valley Center West, San Diego, CA 92108)

Henry George Schools Conference and LEAF Second Annual Convention  
July 1-3 July 3-5 1976  
University of San Francisco

A TWO-FOR ONE REGISTRATION . . . Your registration to either event will admit you to both.

Please register me for: ( ) The Henry George School Conference  
( ) The Second Annual LEAF Convention  
at the regular registration fee of ... \$7.50

Less "Early Bird" discount for registration before June 1 ..... \$2.50  
\$5.00

Please reserve room for me/us the nights of: Thursday, July 1 ( )  
Room, including meals: Friday, July 2 ( )  
Double: \$13.50 per night per person ( ) Saturday, July 3 ( )  
Single: \$15.50 per night ( ) Sunday, July 4 ( )  
Monday, July 5 ( )

Check (Payable to LEAF--herewith) - Total for room and meals \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## "Picture Proofs" Contest Announced

A picture may be worth only a thousand words, as the proverb claims, but your picture(s) may be worth five thousand cents (\$50.00) if you can supply LEAF with "picture proofs" of the need for Land Value Taxation.

To inspire your Instamatics and quicken your Kodaks, five prizes will be awarded at the Second Annual LEAF Convention, San Francisco, July 3, 4, and 5.

First prize: A crisp \$50 bill to be spent at the store, market, or tax office of your choice.

Second prize: \$25 cash.

Third prize: A subscription to every known Henry George publication in the world (printed in English).

Fourth prize: A copy of The People's Land, a symposium of 42 articles on land reform in the United States, edited by Peter Barnes for the National Coalition for Land Reform.

Fifth prize: A copy of Politics of Land, by Robert C. Fellmeth (the Nadar report on California).

This is what you do: Make up an 11" x 17" display of pictures and captions which tell a story about Land Value Taxation. The 11" side should be vertical. Two 8-1/2" x 11" pages side by side will do the trick. (We intend to print the winning efforts.)

Send them to Mary Frances Smith, c/o Henry George School, 833 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94103. We'll mount them on cardboard and display them at the Convention, where the delegates will vote for the best five. You can even vote for your own entry, and use the prize money to help finance your trip to the Convention.

## Slide Film Show Prizes Increased

Prizes for new slide film shows presented at the LEAF Convention, as announced in the February-March issue of The New Leaf, have been increased, as follows:

First prize: \$100 cash

Second prize: \$50 cash

Third prize: A subscription to every known Henry George publication in the world (printed in English).

Fourth prize: A copy of The People's Land (described in the accompanying "Picture Proofs" story).

Fifth prize: A copy of Politics of Land (described in "Picture Proofs" story).

*continued next column*

## Assessment Reform in a New York Town

New York's State Court of Appeals recently held that all property in the State must be assessed at 100 percent of market value by the end of the decade. Rampato, New York, was the first in the State to use a computerized system to achieve this (New York Times, 9/21/75).

The changeover went from a theoretical 30 percent of market value assessment to close to an actual 100 percent. It also represented a change in the frequency of assessment, from once every ten years--or whenever property was sold--to an annual basis.

As the change effected homeowners, about a third ended up paying more, a third less, and final third about the same. But the change represents a more realistic, and thus fairer distribution of the tax burden, according to the actual market value of property owned. The effectiveness of the new system can be judged by the reduction in average dispersion of assessed value from market value of less than 10 percent for the last three years, as compared to 35 percent for the State as a whole.

Those likely to suffer from the new policy are older homeowners whose property had formerly been under-assessed, and who are living on fixed incomes. And there is sentiment extant to give such persons some kind of tax relief.

## SLIDE FILM SHOW

*continued*

If you are putting together a slide film to present at the Convention, please let us know so we can arrange for its screening. Write Mary Frances Smith, c/o Henry George School, 833 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

## Mexican Land "Invasion"

As reported in the San Diego Union (Feb. 25, 1976), a Canadian born woman (now a naturalized Mexican citizen), Mrs. Eve Stocker, alleged that a group of 92 Mexican peasant families "invaded" a valuable tract of 764 acres of beach-front development land 39 miles south of Tijuana, on the Baja California peninsula, Pacific ocean side. Mrs. Stocker holds title to the land, in partnership with a Mexican resident of Ensenada, Jose del Rio Ayala.

The leader of the peasants, Jorge Salcedo Vargas, said that the land now belongs to the communal farming community of Lazaro Cardenas (named for a former Mexican President), established in 1959 by then Mexican President Adolfo Lopez Mateos. He produced documents signed by former President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz in 1965, which he claimed expropriated this land and added it to 35,000 additional acres which were expropriated as part of the Lazaro Cardenas communal holdings.

Mrs. Stocker, on the other hand, has maps issued by the Mexican agrarian department showing that the occupied strip of land was excluded from the communal holdings and kept in private ownership.

The disputed property is a strip of land less than a half-mile wide between the Pacific Ocean and the toll highway from Tijuana to Ensenada.

The "invaders" left as suddenly and mysteriously as they had come, about a month later, and have not yet returned.

## How to Join

It's simple, just check the membership level you desire and fill in the form below. Send it to LEAF's national headquarters or turn it in to your local branch.

## Membership Form

You can count on me as a LEAF member at the level checked below:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular ... \$15 Yearly     | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend of LEAF                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (\$5. monthly)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Contribution \$ _____                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60. Yearly                | <input type="checkbox"/> Check Enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> Bill Me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing (\$10 monthly) |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$120. Yearly               |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

## BRANCH NEWS

### Los Angeles

A LEAF committee in Los Angeles, headed by Marion Sapiro, is cooperating with its counterpart in the San Francisco Bay area, to plan and coordinate the 2nd National Convention in July. Committee members (in addition to Mrs. Sapiro) are: Gene Atwater, Morgan Harris, Ray Kornfeld, Frances Kuppner, Bill Pereira, and Harry Pollard.

Ms. Betty Shmaeff (whose name should have been included among active LEAFers last month) has given loyal services to Leaf. She helped staff the LEAF booth at the International Cooperation Council festival in Santa Monica on January 10-15, which was attended by some 2,000 persons.

### Sacramento

The Sacramento branch met with Floyd Morrow, San Diego City Councilman and LEAF Board Chairman, who was in town on business, at the Nitz residence on March 4.

The Assessment Practices Committee continues its information gathering, and expects to have something worthwhile to report shortly. A steering committee meeting was held on March 10, called by chairman Key Gettys.

### San Diego

At a well attended San Diego chapter meeting on February 1, the group rededicated itself to the objective of amending the San Diego City Charter, to prevent future sales of city-owned land. The City owns 57,000 acres, much of which is quite valuable. San Diego LEAF prefers that the land be leased to the highest and best tenant, as a better source of public revenue

than that of imposing taxes on labor and capital. Looking to New York City, San Diego LEAFers believe it would not be broke today if it leased out its original \$24 investment (the purchase price of Manhattan Island from the Indians), instead of selling it at what were surely bargain prices.

To further their goal, seven LEAF members have completed a course on TV equipment use in connection with a local public access TV channel. The group is now putting the movie, "One Way to Better Cities," on TV tape. Parts of it will be integrated with local scenes, to raise the conscious level of viewers toward a reordering of social priorities.

The present plan calls for a regular composite TV show, consisting of segments covering several facts of LEAF's objectives. (The TV time is free.) Suggestions and help from any and all members and friends are welcomed. Send them to national headquarters.

### San Francisco and Santa Cruz

The activities of these two branches are treated together because there has recently been considerable cooperation between them.

First, Bob Colonna, of Santa Cruz, was a guest speaker at a San Francisco membership meeting on February 29, talking on "Power and Land in Santa Cruz County." This was based on his LEAF-funded assessment survey of land in Santa Cruz County, in which he found that vacant and low-improvement land was assessed at only 15-17% of market value, while homes were assessed at 21%, compared to the state-wide mandate

to assess all property at 25% of true value.

The report was made public in November, 1975, and raised considerable political controversy. It is reported that Colonna even received telephone and written threats on his life. He stated, however, that he plans to pursue the matter further, and if necessary, initiate the recall of the assessor.

Several Bay Area people had prominent roles in the Congress for the Continuation of the America Revolution, which met in Santa Cruz on March 26, 27, and 28. It was sponsored by, among others, the Santa Cruz branch of LEAF. According to Cathy Covell, the Bay Area people making panel presentations were: Terry Newland, panel for Economic Alternatives; Bob O'Donnell, panel on Energy; Mike Trigg, panel on Survival; and Cathy Covell, panel on Land Reform and Taxes. A display of LEAF literature was available at the Congress, which had wide participation by organizations other than LEAF.

The Bay Area panelists also presented their proposals in the form of position papers.

There is a Bay Area Convention committee, headed by Mary Frances Smith, which is planning and coordinating the forthcoming LEAF 2nd annual national convention, in cooperation with a similar committee in Los Angeles. The San Francisco area committee, in addition to Ms. Smith, includes Tom Brazell, Cathy Covell, LEAF President Dr. William Filante, Lu Helmly, and Robert Tideman.

*See You in San Francisco  
in July*

### THE NEW LEAF

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