

The NEW LEAF

"EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SPECIAL PRIVILEGE FOR NONE"



Vol. 2, No. 6

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Leaf Convention Called "Best Yet"



SCENES FROM BANQUET. Left side: A toast is proposed by Board Chairman (and Toastmaster) Floyd Morrow, and President, Dr. William Filante. Right side: featured speaker, J. Ted Gwartney. Mrs. Gwartney is seated next to him.

LEAF Seeking Executive Director

The Board of Directors, at their quarterly meeting on July 5, initiated action to employ a full-time executive director. Salary is open. Candidates who are screened will be interviewed by the full Board at the next quarterly meeting on October 2. Employment would begin as soon afterward as feasible, and continue through the current fiscal year, to June 30, 1977.

Duties of the position will include aggressive membership promotion, and initial action geared to a California land-value tax initiative as soon as practicable.

Applicants should correspond with, and send resumes to the chairman of the Search Committee, Dr. William J. Filante, whose address is: 1300 S. Elisio Dr., San Rafael, CA 94904.



Personable Cathy Covell "tells it like it is," at Banquet.

Delegates Say Bicentennial Confab "Most Inspiring."

LEAF delegates, assembled from all over the United States--and from Canada--applied perspiration, as well as soaking up inspiration, for a meaningful input into LEAF's second annual conference. The fete was held over the bicentennial weekend, on the beautiful campus of the University of San Francisco.

It followed an interesting annual conference of the Henry George Schools, held at the same location. Many delegates attended both conferences. A highlight was the combined School and LEAF banquet on Saturday evening, July 3rd. Following are some details of the three-day LEAF convention.

Friday, July 2

A cocktail party, sponsored by LEAF, enabled delegates to make new friends and renew old acquaintances, in an informal atmosphere.

Comey and vivacious Evelyn Friend was on hand at all sessions to register delegates and sell literature.

Saturday, July 3

The first Saturday session featured five approaches for ending tax rip offs. Bob Scrofani, San Francisco educator, recommended letter writing, and spoke in favor of the Mills Act, which permits special assessment districts to levy on land values for public improvements, such as rapid transit districts.

Floyd Morrow, San Diego City Councilman and LEAF Board Chairman, told of San Diego's publicly owned land, going back in history to the early Spanish land grants. He urged that municipally-owned land be rented, not sold, permitting the community to collect ever increasing publicly-created ground rents. He said the San Diego LEAF branch is sponsoring a local initiative to require the City of San Diego to do this.

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Should LEAF's Name be Changed?

Some of our active members in Los Angeles, and perhaps elsewhere, led by Stanley and Marion Sapiro, think that our goals would be advanced easier and faster if the name of the organization were changed to something like, "Committee for Incentive Taxation" (Although the Sapiros are asking members to suggest names). On the other hand, active members and founders, in San Diego and elsewhere, led by Floyd Morrow, think that the name is fine and should be retained.

We give below short arguments by both factions, and ask you to express your opinion on the form provided below.

Argument for Changing the Name by Stanley Sapiro

Our tax initiative will require tremendous financial contributions and support from conservative organizations of homebuilders, apartment house owners, homeowners, and manufacturers, who will benefit financially. These organizations are automatically turned off by such seemingly (although not actually) radical phrases as "Land Equality." A change to an unprovocative name is essential to success.

Argument for Retaining the Name by Floyd Morrow

First the name is a good name. It includes the basic thoughts of George's philosophy. Land, which is basic and a cornerstone of our economic thought. Equality, not only of opportunity, but of access to land, which is essential to any discussion of the land question. Lastly, Freedom was, is, and shall always be one of the most sacred ideas which people hold dear, in common with Henry George.

"Best Yet Convention" *Continued from page 1*



A candid shot of an informal discussion between Convention sessions. Ann Reeves and Leonard Nitz seemed impressed by what Bill Filante is telling them.

Stanley Sapiro, Los Angeles attorney, narrowly missed winning the June Democratic election for Congressional seat in the Los Angeles area. Land value taxation and removing taxes from improvements were important planks in his platform. Mr. Sapiro spoke on the legislative process necessary to achieve LEAF's goals.

Robert Tideman, LEAF Board member and educator, said that our reform is not radical enough. He discussed methods to achieve our goals and results flowing from them, including automatic preservation of wilderness areas.

William Wish, former San Mateo tax assessment official, recommended a state agency whose function

would be tax assistance for homeowners. He urged getting assessments out in the open, and ending assessment discrimination in favor of commercial areas.

The second Saturday afternoon session was entitled, "The Rich Get Water and the Poor Get Soaked," and dealt with Westlands and the politics of land. Glenn Weeks, Acting President of the New York Henry George School of New York, was moderator.

George Ballis, a leader in the National Land for People movement, headquartered in Fresno, California, presented a stirring slide film entitled "Discover America." It highlighted the favoritism granted to large corporations under the Federal Reclamation law in California's Central Valley.

"Discover America" gave eye-opening data about the concentration of land ownership in California, including 140,000 acres of lush land owned by Tenneco, and 4 million acres owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad. The film showed that the requirement of limiting watered land to 160 acres per owner has been made a sham by illegal practices favoring the large landowners.

The next speaker was Keith Roberts, one of Nader's Raiders responsible for the epic, Politics and Land in California. He gave more incisive data on land ownership concentrations and resulting political implications in California. He stated 1976 findings which reveal that 76 entities (individuals, corporations, etc.) control 90 percent of the agricultural land in California.

Additional significant facts and suggestions were furnished by Allen Hayworth, economist and land developer, and recent addition to the roster of members of the Santa Cruz

Continued on page 3

Please give us the benefit of your opinion on the desirability of a name change for LEAF. Send to National Headquarters.

- () I favor retaining the name of LEAF.
- () I think the name should be changed.
- () I would make the following suggestion for a new name:

Name _____

Address _____

City and State _____ Zip _____

LEAF Convention Continued from page 2

branch of LEAF.

LEAF President, Dr. William Filante, a practicing physician in Marin County, California, urged doing it the "Wright" way. This was in reference to California's 1899 Wright Act, which permits State irrigation districts to levy assessments on the benefited land, irrespective of improvements. He stated that as a result, Stanislaus County, in California's lush San Joaquin Valley, has the largest number of small farm owners in the State. He explained that the initial concentration of absentee land ownership, similar to that in the Westlands area today, was effectively broken up by the irrigation district levy, with land sold to small, occupying farmers who developed the land intensively.

Dr. Arthur Becker, professional economist from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and newly elected LEAF Board member, gave a revealing talk on classical, Keynesian, and Georgist economics. He discussed "stagflation," which includes a large measure of cost push inflation, accompanied with unemployment. He said this was caused in large part by owners of economic resources, non-producers, and criminals demanding an ever-increasing slice of the economic pie. Foremost among these are landowners. The result is that investment in real capital is discouraged, with resulting slowdown in the GNP, accompanied by rising dollar prices.

Dr. William Truehart, economist and one of the founders of LEAF, gave a brief history of the birth and growth of LEAF, including progress since the first annual Conference in San Diego a year ago.

Banquet

At the start of the after-dinner program, Floyd Morrow, toastmaster, asked each person present to introduce himself or herself briefly, and tell the year he or she was first introduced to the concept of supporting government by land rent. Dates ranged all the way from a few weeks ago for Mrs. Bruce Michels, recent bride from Toronto (married to our staunch friend in Los Angeles) to more than 60 years ago for veteran politician and educator Russell Conklin, former mayor and state legislator from Great Falls, Montana.

The featured speaker was J. Ted Gwartney, who has made a name for himself as chief assessor of Southfield, Michigan, and Hartford, Connecticut, and is now head of the

British Columbia Assessment Authority. He had just arrived in San Francisco on a Princess cruise with his lovely wife.

Mr. Gwartney described vividly his current work in supervising a province-wide staff of over 700, committed to correcting assessment inequities, and bringing all property in British Columbia up to 100 percent of market value. He is drawing on his wide experience with the latest sophisticated methods of assessment. However, he personally favors taxing land values only, exempting improvements and personal property.

Sunday, July 4

The bicentennial morning session consisted of a symposium by LEAF's seven-man Board of Directors, on "How to Achieve Land Value Taxation, Starting in California."

The first speaker was Floyd Morrow, who gave a brief history of how LEAF came into being, and gave a stirring appeal to "keep the faith."

He was followed by Robert Tideman, who urged regular branch meetings, with goals geared to local concrete issues.

Dr. Steven Cord, social science professor from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Vice-President of LEAF, urged an amendment to the California Constitution, removing the requirement that all property be taxed equally. He urged that land value taxation be made mandatory, and offered wording for the amendment: "Untaxing improvements."

Dr. Arthur Becker urged working through existing organizations with large memberships, such as the Sierra Club, the California Teachers Association, etc.

Everett Seeley, San Diego candy-maker, told how the San Diego branch of LEAF, in cooperation with the San Diego Henry George School and Basic Economic Education, is pro-

ducing a motion picture, "One Way to a Better San Diego." He said this film will be shown on local public access and educational TV, and perhaps on commercial channels, both to advance the cause of LEAF and of the Henry George School.

Harry Pollard, irrepressible President of the Los Angeles Henry George School, urged a program of effective education and research, based upon his professional experience.

Dr. William Filante, LEAF President, urged several things: (1) a campaign "in the streets;" (2) letters to editors, columnists and legislators, with a copy to The New Leaf; (3) working to get local assessors to exempt improvements up to \$5,000, which he said is now legally permissible; (4) forming special benefit districts, which can tax land values only; and (5) launching an initiative campaign in California.

Sunday Afternoon Session

The afternoon began with LEAF members presenting their ideas on "Opportunities for LEAF." The session was chaired by Mrs. Marion Sapiro.

Louis Weitzman, retired businessman from Massachusetts and Florida, presented a paper on "Influencing the Influencers," in which he urged a direct mail campaign to selected lists of V.I.P.'s.

William Newcomb, real estate broker from Melbourne, Florida, urged a comprehensive program, which hopefully would utilize the combined income of all organizations in the Georgist movement (estimated by him at around \$1-1/2 mil-

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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: _____

Convention Continued from page 3

lion). Included among his proposals were: (1) a black-latin division, especially in Washington, D.C.; (2) borrowing from within, utilizing other organizations; and (3) concentrating on the State of Idaho, where through the efforts of Leafer Bill Onweiler (a member of the Idaho Legislature), he felt the probabilities of success would be the greatest.

Ann Reeves, of Marin County, California, gave her impressions, and asked some searching questions. Harriett Wendell, of Santa Monica, California, suggested that LEAF should be international, and that The New Leaf be enriched with pertinent input from everywhere. [We will certainly welcome this--Editor.]

Phil Raffalow, one of the founders of the Congress for the Continuation of the American Revolution, suggested getting into the rough and tumble of current issues. He stated that there is more poverty today than there was two hundred years ago. He invited LEAF to cooperate with the Congress.

Morgan Harris, LEAF Convention Coordinator, urged planning a campaign, utilizing careful and effective know-how. He recommended that LEAF employ a professional organizer.

Earl Hanson, who is carrying on a highly successful LEAF branch in Cedar City, Utah, recommended that even a few Leafers--anywhere--can operate effectively as a steering committee. As such, he has written a series of articles for his local newspaper, carried on exciting breakfast meetings once weekly at 6:30 a.m., and written a tax policy platform for the Republican Party in Utah. Earl, incidentally, has volunteered to be in charge of LEAF's projected booth at the National League of Cities con-

vention in Denver, in November.

Stanley Sapiro recommended contacting groups likely to benefit from land value taxation, for the purpose of raising much-needed funds. He singled out apartment house owners, manufacturers, and public utilities.

Allen Hayward spoke favorably of the work done in Santa Cruz by Leafer Bob Colonna, in exposing unfair assessment practices. He told of a book he (Hayward) is writing, Poverty of Economics.

Noah Alper, President of the Public Revenue Education Council, of Saint Louis, suggested approaching churches, with a view to getting them to embrace the Mosaic principles of common rights to land.

Business Meeting

The last session Sunday afternoon was a spirited business meeting, with suggestions and motions breaking the sound barrier. The session was Chaired by Dr. Filante.

Heated discussion centered around the work of Bob Colonna, in Santa Cruz. After much discussion a motion was made, seconded, and carried that we express confidence and appreciation for Mr. Colonna's work, and that the members present recommend to the Board of Directors that he receive matching funds of \$200 a month provided he raises a like amount locally.

Other matters discussed during the business meeting were: (1) a change in name for LEAF, advocated by Stanley and Marion Sapiro; and (2) proposed by-law changes, suggested by Morgan Harris. (See the arguments pro and con on a name change, on p. 2, and the box for you to register your opinion.)

Monday, July 5

The Monday morning session was devoted to the subject of "Allies."

Speakers included Scott Fitz Randolph, California Director of Common Cause, who told revealing facts and techniques on how to run a large organization successfully.

A second speaker was Raymond Cunningham, an engineer, who presented lucidly the Libertarian viewpoint. Searching questions were asked by the audience.

The third speaker was Captain Jacques Giddens, California citrus grower, who made national news by refusing to obey federal regulations to destroy a portion of his orange crop, to keep prices high. Giddens gave a stirring indictment of federal bureaucracy. He is, incidentally, subject to fines and possible imprisonment.

Monday Afternoon

The first event on Monday afternoon was the showing of the motion picture, "The Incredible Bread Machine," produced by the young people with the Campus Studies Division of World Research, headquartered in San Diego.

Then followed a session with two speakers: (1) Howard Jeter, Director of Rural Urban Dynamics, an organization of young people in the Berkeley-Oakland area concerned with obtaining and growing their own food; and Dr. E. Gareth Hoachlander, Research Assistant in the Department of Government, at the University of California, Berkeley. He discussed, among other things, the financing of schools through a state-wide property tax.

After adjournment (parting was such sweet sorrow), a lively Board of Directors meeting ensued, at which the Board reaffirmed its determination to expedite a dynamic, growing membership organization, and put as a high priority an initiative campaign for land value taxation in California.

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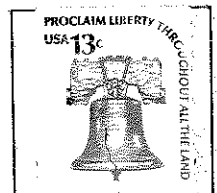
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