

The NEW LEAF

"EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SPECIAL PRIVILEGE FOR NONE"

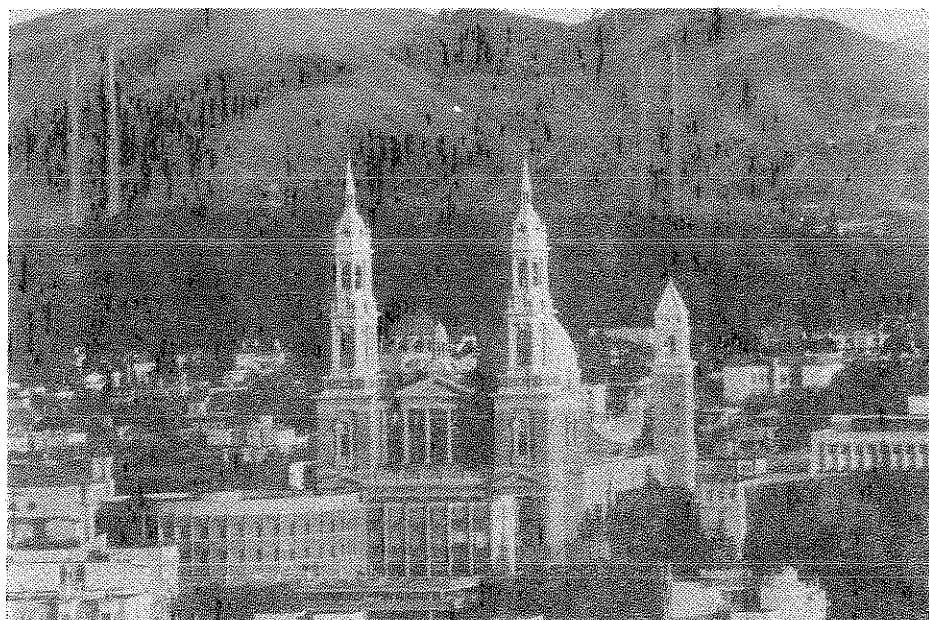


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Convention Promises Exciting Events



SITE OF 1976 CONFERENCE. Here we see a popular shot of the University of San Francisco: St. Ignatius Church, against a backdrop of the Marin Hills and Golden Gate Bridge.

Site Value Taxation in Johannesburg

The following is largely excerpted from a paper, "Arlo Woolery's Observations on Site Value Rating in Johannesburg." Mr. Woolery is the executive director of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, in Cambridge, Mass., who visited Johannesburg early in 1976.

Municipal taxes in Johannesburg are largely on land values. This has been the policy since 1918. Says Mr. Woolery:

"The actual valuation of the City is increasing at about 22 per cent a year. Part of this stems from inflation, but Mr. McCulloch [the chief assessor] assures me that this high rate of value growth reflects the development stimulation of the site value rating system. . .

"One thing was apparent; there is tremendous building of new structures and renovation of old structures going on in the City of Johannesburg. During a visit with Tony Hall, director of the largest land development firm in South Africa, he stated his belief that Johannesburg's healthy development was a result of the site value rating system. Mr. Hall grew up in Capetown and is quite familiar with the development there vis a vis the development pattern in Johannesburg. Capetown taxes land and improvements. Mr. Hall was quite emphatic about the effect it has in depressing new construction and retarding improvements of older properties. He was a strong supporter of the site value rating system. . ."

Details Unfolding

"If you had a powerful organization with which to achieve land value taxation, starting in California, how would you go about it?"

Each of LEAF's board members will have an opportunity to give an answer to this challenging question, in the opening session of the Second Annual Convention at the University of San Francisco, July 3, 4, and 5.

Members will have their chance to respond to this challenge in a Monday morning session titled: "Opportunities for LEAF: Proposals, Programs, Plans, Strategy, Ideas, Hopes." Marion Sapiro, President of the Los Angeles Westside Branch of LEAF, will moderate this brouhaha.

To encourage member participation, the following hour on Monday is set aside for meetings in small groups to explore further the proposals that have been presented.

Following lunch, a business meeting chaired by Bill Filante, President, will give opportunity to take action on those things members want to include in the ensuing year's program.

In addition to lively membership participation, plans call for a panel of Nader's Raiders who made the study of land in California published as Politics of Land, a shocking expose' of how taxpayers in this state are being ripped off for the benefit of the landed "aristocracy." Willie Hearst, publisher of the San Francisco Examiner, is being invited to tell of Westlands, which is part of this same boondoggle.

Sunday afternoon there will be a showing of the motion picture, "The Incredible Bread Machine," based on the best selling book (4 printings first year, 100,000 copies sold) of the same title, written by six young

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Editorial

Land Speculation

A recent issue of The Wall Street Journal contained the following ad: "Real Estate Investment--1,000 Prime Acres. 1,000 acres prime property located in fast developing area. Land values are skyrocketing in the smallest communities of the South. Opportunity to buy while land cost is low. Located near West Monroe-Monroe, La. Beautiful rolling hills, trees, natural springs . . . in the midst of natural gas field. Priced at 1/2 of surrounding land sales. Great opportunity for appreciation in value over next few months. Terms available."

Yes, land speculation is still very much with us. And notice what the ad stresses: fast growing area (population increase), in midst of beautiful natural endowments, as well as a gas field. All these things are either gifts of nature, or the result of the growth and development of the community. They represent not one solitary thing an owner-speculator does.

Well, one might say, what's wrong with making a quick buck? If I gamble (and speculation is a gamble) and win, who cares? What's wrong with this? Our answer: plenty! Not that the individual has done anything wrong. But the system which permits this is wrong. The first thing that's wrong is that the individual, who did not do anything to create the land (God did that), nor to produce its value--this is the result of the growth of the entire community--is pocketing this increased land value, which ought by rights to go to the community for necessary public needs. As a result, the community has to levy taxes on what you and I produce and earn.

The second thing that is wrong with land speculation is that, since land's supply is strictly limited (fixed, that is, by nature, or location), if one speculates in land and holds it for a price which he hopes or expects it to be worth sometime in the future, he has effectively taken it off the market as far as its availability for use today is concerned. This is because he is very likely holding it for a price higher than the current use value is today. This results in an artificial shortage of available land sites, and raises the price of other (in reality all) land in the area. Land's slice of pie goes up, but at the expense of that going to labor and capital. And, the sad part is that this represents a net drain from the earnings of the active factors of production.

LEAFers Prominent at Congress for Continuation of American Revolution

LEAFers and other Georgists made a lasting impact on delegates to the Congress for the Continuation of the American Revolution, held at the Dream Inn Hotel in Santa Cruz, California, on Saturday and Sunday, March 26 and 27. The impact was great enough to cause the Congress to adopt two land value tax resolutions.

Bob Colonna, Santa Cruz LEAFer, was a principal organizer of the Congress; and Dr. William Filante, LEAF President, was a featured speaker. Delegates came from 7 counties in Northern California, and from as far away as Chicago and Seattle.

A contingent of nine people from the Northern California Henry George School in San Francisco, headed by LEAFer Cathy Covell, did an outstanding job at the workshop sessions, and were largely responsible for the L.V.T. resolutions. Position papers supporting land value taxation were presented, and will be carried in the Congress newsletter.

The following is excerpted from a report to the LEAF Board by Terry Newland:

"There were ten people from the Bay Area who went down, who were

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Board Nominations and Election

Two upcoming Board vacancies, caused by Floyd Morrow and William Truehart having one-year terms, are being filled by mail balloting by LEAF members in good standing. The ballots are to be postmarked no later than May 10, and sent to the LEAF Election Committee, at national headquarters in San Diego.

The nominees are: Arthur Becker, Bob Colonna, Cathy Covell, Louis Freeman, Archie Gerard, Morgan Harris, Floyd Morrow (a candidate for reelection), William Newcomb, Stanley Sapiro, Robert Scrofani, and Louis Weitzman.

The two receiving the highest and second highest numbers of votes will be installed at the annual convention in July.

All members are urged to get their ballots in promptly. Cumulative voting is allowed. Each member has two votes, and can divide them between two candidates, or put both on one candidate.

Reservation Form

Second Annual LEAF Convention / University of San Francisco
July 3 - 4 - 5, 1976

Please register me for 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 nights of: Friday, July 2 ()

Room, including meals: Saturday, July 3 ()

Sunday, July 4 ()

Double: \$13.50 per night per person () Monday, July 5 ()

Single: \$15.50 per night ()

Check (Payable to LEAF--herewith) - Total for room & meals \$ _____

Name _____
(Please Print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

July Convention

Continued from page 1

authors under 26 years of age. This is the story of individual and economic freedom, which needs only land value taxation to complete the story. The authors will be there for follow-up discussions.

The current proposal to relieve the "central business district" of Los Angeles from taxes is part of the national urban renewal picture, which reporter John Henshaw of "Liberty Lowdown" called "the nation's biggest graft." With this background, the panel on Urban Problems, planned with participation by faculty members from the University of California's School of Urban Planning, could be an exciting confrontation.

Program stars also include Scott Fitz Randolph, State Director of Common Cause, and Dr. Randolph Hamilton, Dean of the School of Public Administration, Golden State University. Bob Colonna will tell how his life was threatened for his exposure of assessment practices in Santa Cruz, and what is being done about it.

These and other features in the works, make Convention Committee members feel delegates can expect "never a dull moment." "Early Bird" registrations get 1/3 discount. Mail yours today. Use the form on page 2.

LEAFers Make Presentations at Social Studies Conference

LEAF members and officers were well represented at the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the California Council for the Social Studies (secondary school teachers) March 19-21, at the Hyatt House Hotel, Los Angeles International Airport. Dr. William Filante, President of LEAF, chaired a session on Growth, Density, and Intensity of Land Use on Saturday afternoon, March 21.

The following is excerpted from a letter from LEAFer E. Robert Scrofani, a teacher in the San Francisco Bay area. Board member Harry Pollard's mini courses were used prominently, particularly the one on land speculation. Says Scrofani:

"The major focus was to use the California Tomorrow Plan, as a means of considering growth . . . we proceeded from:

"(a) an explanation of the plan, and discussion

"(b) a use of Harry's mini course

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LEAFers Prominent at Revolution Congress

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involved with the Henry George School. The names are: Terry Newland, Cathy Covell, Bob O'Donnell, Pat Marcus, Bea Spiker, Warren Burel, Charlie Turner, Allen Hayward, Otto Grimm, and Dr. Filante...

"The convention started with a speech by Bill Filante, who talked generally about the single tax, then about the problems that are involved with transportation. . . After about two hours of various speeches, we broke up into workshops. There were seven of them, and I believe on every one there was a Georgist making some sort of contribution.

"The one I was in was the Alternate Systems Workshop. . . I read my paper on making land common property, and the George alternate system of economics. Before I read the paper, there seemed to be quite a bit of dissention and lack of real cooperation between the people in the group, but I felt that after I read my paper, it sort of pulled people together and gave us a focus. I pointed out that all the problems we were trying to deal with were actually subsidiary problems, and that if the land problem wasn't taken care of, they wouldn't reach the goals that we desired. So after reading my paper and putting the proposal in front of them, the group unanimously decided to support the single tax resolution.

"Cathy was on the panel for Land Reform and Taxation, and one fellow was there from the Unitax idea. She pretty much nailed him to the wall and explained the basic taxation theory, and I'm afraid the guy dis-

appeared right after the workshop. He didn't stick around to back up any of his claims. But, again, her group adopted the single tax resolution.

"I know that Bill Filante and some of the other people who were in the other workshops put forth some good basic Georgist ideas."

The next day, Sunday, at a meeting of the entire Congress, "Cathy proposed the [land value tax] resolution and it was accepted unanimously. And then Allen Hayward came up with a very similar proposal, without all the whereas's, and it was accepted unanimously. . .

"Of all the position papers and all the ideas that were passed on during the Congress, I would say without a doubt some of the Henry George ideas and especially the revamping of the property tax in California came out as the main issues and the ones that seemed to have the widest range of support."

Even the workshop on Racism, Sexism, and Aging came up with a land value tax resolution, which read:

"We further resolve that another source of revenue can be acquired by land tax reform; community control of land tax assessment and collection necessarily implies assessing land at its true value. For example, land owners will be required to pay taxes in proportion to their land holdings."

See You in San Francisco in July 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:

- ☐ Regular . . . \$15 Yearly
☐ Sustaining (\$5. monthly)
 \$60. Yearly
☐ Contributing (\$10 monthly)
 \$120. Yearly

- ☐ Friend of LEAF
☐ Contribution \$ _____
☐ Check Enclosed ☐ Bill Me

Name: _____ Branch: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Presentations at Social Studies Conference

Continued from page 3

on land speculation. About 30 teachers led by Harry and two teachers who use his work regularly in the classroom, Bob Tideman [LEAF Board member] and Bill Filante broke up into groups to both experience the mini idea and the content.

"(c) After a brief presentation by me, Bob Tideman presented some cogent Georgist views on what usually gets forgotten about land, labor, and capital when we consider growth. . .

"(d) Bill Filante then considered the growth problems of various case studies, using his excellent course materials from Marin Community College. Lots of good questions.

Tax Freedom Day

May 1st is "Tax Freedom Day," according to the Tax Foundation, a nonprofit research organization. The average American taxpayer works the first four months of the year, just to support government at all levels: local, state, and federal.

Bob Brown, a Foundation spokesman said, "Whether May Day is perceived as a joyous spring festival or a cry for help remains to be seen. In my own view, four months a year to work for the government is just about enough."

We couldn't agree more! This means that a third of our income goes for taxes at all levels. LEAF members, however, know something more: how to reduce the tax burden, and have government supported out of a fund which in a real sense is publicly created--the value of land sites.

BRANCH NEWS

Cedar City, Utah

LEAFer Earl Hanson has proved himself to be a veritable dynamo of activity. He organized a LEAF steering committee in Cedar City, ran a large ad, calling a general meeting for organization, and then scheduled weekly breakfast meetings from 6:30 to 7:30 at a local cafe.

At one of the meetings, Mayor Kerry Jones of Cedar City spoke favorably of the land value tax feature of San Diego's North City West. He had previously discussed this with its architect, San Diego Councilman and LEAF Board Chairman, Floyd Morrow.

Other meetings saw the presentation of the Film, "One Way to Better Cities," and a talk by Harold Hiskey, Dean of the Business School at Southern Utah State College, who spoke in favor of land value taxation.

The Cedar City Branch has chosen as its immediate goal to work for the repeal of the Utah State property tax on livestock and honeybees. Mr. Hanson feels that there is a good probability of success in this initial objective.

Several years ago the property tax on inventories was repealed in Utah. Mayor Jones, who operates a farm implement and equipment business, described how the tax affected his enterprise. The efficiency of his business was greatly increased by the repeal, when he no longer had to deplete his inventory down to \$35,000 by January 1, to avoid a heavy inventory tax. Without that tax, he carried an inventory about \$100,000 higher throughout the year, which

made possible serving his customers better, and avoiding a large loss of sales.

Los Angeles

The West Los Angeles Branch of LEAF is offering \$25.00 to the winner in a contest to submit another name for LEAF, for consideration by the members at the July convention.

Names should be submitted in advance of the Convention, and should be sent to: Marion Sapiro, 4561 Round Top Dr., Los Angeles, Ca. 90065.

San Diego

A meeting of the San Diego Branch of LEAF was held on Sunday afternoon, April 10, at the home of Tom Sherrard, in the seaside community of La Jolla.

Those present felt that a better format, instead of formal officers and by-laws, would be an informal steering committee, which will hold weekly luncheons at Bob's "Big Boy" Restaurant in Mission Valley.

The objective of the branch was, however, formalized in the following motion: To publicize, through public access TV, public meetings, and appropriate media, factual information and issues, with a view to collecting public revenue from community-created land values, and exempting buildings and other improvements from taxation.

The following persons are to serve as the nucleus of the steering committee: Michael Devan, Louis Freeman, Archie Gerard, Bill Truehart, Harry Valasek, and Duane Wolfe.

THE NEW LEAF

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