

The **NEW** LEAF

"EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SPECIAL PRIVILEGE FOR NONE"

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SAN DIEGO PLANS 'FLIGHT TO FREEDOM'

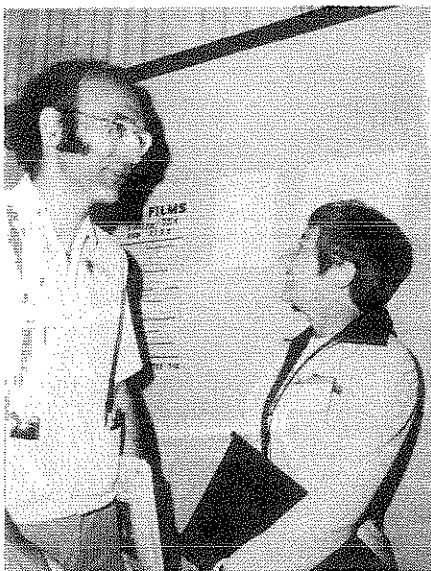
LEAF's Local Option Measure

The local option initiative for California, proposed by Robert Tideman at the annual Conference, and approved by those members present, has been drafted in legal form, with the help of expert counsel.

It "proposes to the people of the State of California that the Constitution be amended by adding Section 34 to Article XIII thereof, to read:

"34. (a) Improvements and personal property may be exempted from taxation or taxed at a lower rate than land.

"(b) The tax rate limits and debt limits of any local government which exempts improvements and personal property from taxation, or imposes a lower tax rate on improvements and personal property than on land, shall be adjusted to allow the same tax revenue and debt as if all property were taxed equally."



William Filante, President of LEAF, discusses with Betty Mann, Consultant to the California State Board of the League of Women Voters, how "proper assessment practice can save you property taxes." The League is making a two-year study of assessment practices throughout the state.

Land Near LAX Doubles In Value

Los Angeles Times (5-18-75) quotes Hub Byrne, Jr., air freight specialist with the industrial realty firm of Jonas Goodglick, "There has been a nearly complete turn around in use of land in the Los Angeles International Airport area ... property values have nearly doubled in five years.

"The boom in air travel made land near the airport desirable as sites of major hotels and high-rise office

buildings. This was followed by a boom in air freight that is still going on."

Los Angeles Observer (5-14-75) gives more details: "Demand for air freight facilities has raised the price of industrial land in the L.A. International Airport area to \$4 to \$5 a square foot, compared with \$2 to \$2.50 five years ago. Ten years ago that same land would have brought \$1.50 to \$1.75 per sq. ft."

LEAF's San Diego branch is working on plans to charter a jet plane flight to Australia and New Zealand next year to view first hand the results of taxing the land.

"At a cost of about \$750 each, we can take up to 300 people for ten days or two weeks," says Tom Sherrard, President. "Tours will be arranged there so they can photograph and record buildings and conditions in those cities which tax site values, and compare them with those which do not.

"We can give them instructions and help in putting together slide shows to present to friends and organizations here on their return, similar to Bill Onweiler's presentation at the LEAF convention.

"Opals can be purchased wholesale from the mines there, and people can sell them for enough to pay for their trip. We'll arrange for a jeweler and gem cutter to accompany us, so they can know what they are getting. Opals are an inflation-proof investment.

"We hope to recruit many tour members from other organizations which are natural allies of LEAF — "people movers" who will become supporters of the LEAF initiative when they see the advantages of taxing land."

Plans include pre-flight seminars and dinner meetings at which tour members and others will learn about the economy and tax experience "down under", and be better equipped to know what to look for.

"This tour should do much," continued Tom Sherrard, "to carry the story of land value taxation throughout California. After all, we got our ballot form from Australia—maybe we can get help from there toward achieving economic justice."

Editorial

DO LAND TAXES CAUSE TOO INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT?

In 1916, when a bill providing for a gradual transition to land value taxation was pending in the New York State Legislature, New York City Mayor Mitchell appointed a committee to study and recommend city policy on this bill. The committee reported in part:

"The results will be, without doubt, that all vacant land . . . will tend to be covered with buildings, and that there will be a tendency to replace all low two- or three-story structures by skyscrapers in the business districts, and by lofty tenements in the slums."

The truth is that lenders are not going to finance, and builders are not going to construct more buildings or taller buildings than those for which there exists a market demand.

Admittedly, taxing land values higher would tend to encourage greater intensity of use of desirable sites. These are usually in or near urban or suburban centers.

But if some land sites are developed more intensively, other sites will be developed less intensively or not at all.

Intensive central city development would result in decrease of urban sprawl because it would no longer be profitable to develop outlying areas so long as more desirable and productive sites are fully utilized nearer in.

Thus the urban area would tend to be less spread out, with the real "country" closer in. People could live nearer their work, and would not have to travel so far to markets, theaters, doctors—any destination in the city.

The reduction in travel would result in less air pollution. Urban mass transit would again become practicable.

APPLY THE MILLS ACT

In 1968 Senator James Mills of San Diego authored a bill which is now part of California's statutes, providing that costs of public transportation facilities may be paid from local taxation of the increased land values resulting from those facilities. No tax on labor, the earnings of capital, or the consumer.

Wilbur E. Pereira of Los Angeles LEAF branch, says Senator Mills wrote him, "This is a bill of which I am most proud."

Communities wishing to create rapid transit can benefit by the provisions of the Mills Act, letting the "unearned increment" resulting from the transit system pay for the system.

"The politicians promises of yesterday are the taxes of today."
W.L. Mackenzie King

NYC Municipal Bonds In Danger Of Default

Excerpt from speech of Congressman Paul Findley (R. Ill.) August 1, 1975:

"We recently saw in headlines in the press 'the recession has ended.' But we see in much bigger headlines on page one of The New York Times that the world's largest and richest city is in imminent danger of defaulting on . . . \$3 billion . . . of short term debts . . .

" . . . 45 per cent of the huge nationwide tax exempt Municipal bond market is composed of New York City debts . . . default would be a

TAXES vs PROGRESS



New York World Telegram — 1/42
MOKEY DICK AND THE DUKE
"Don't bother to improve our property, Duke—we'll only have to pay higher taxes."

SCA/22 Approved

California State Senate has approved proposed constitutional amendment SCA/22 granting tax exemption for five years on home improvements up to \$12,000. Introduced by San Francisco Senator Milton Marks, this bill appeared at first to be an application of sound taxation principles, and roused interest among LEAF members.

Further analysis reveals that instead of allowing the lost revenue to be replaced locally, the measure would require the State to reimburse local government for losses. Thus it merely substitutes State income and sales taxes for local taxes on home improvements, which would further centralize California's tax structure.

If the Assembly knocks out the provisions for state reimbursement, SCA/22 will then conform to the recommendations of economists who are calling for a shift of taxes from buildings to land. LEAF could then support the measure.

disastrous blow . . . London and Rome are in even worse condition than New York City."

LEAF member Noah Alper points out that a small fraction of Manhattan Island, the 12 acres of New York City on which stand the skyscrapers known as Radio City, produce rent—ground rent—\$3¼ million a year.

"If New York City—or any other city—" says Noah Alper, "would collect even a fraction of the ground rent in taxes, it could pay its debts without difficulty."

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir: I have been attending annual meetings of Henry George organizations since 1938—and I am more encouraged by what I saw and heard at the LEAF conference July 4-5 than any of the others.

I got the feeling of aliveness, alertness, youthfulness, and the ability among the leadership to see some value in other reform groups.

William B. Newcomb
West Melbourne, Florida

SIDNEY G. EVANS • A TRIBUTE ★SAVER

Prepared by Louis Freeman for First Annual LEAF Convention, San Diego, July 4-5, 1975.

We are assembled in this conference today because of the dedication and imagination of one man, Sidney G. Evans, who spent most of his adult life promoting the philosophy of Henry George and doing everything in his power to educate the public about the advantages of Land Value Taxation.

★SPECULATOR

Sid made his money through the system he deplored — speculating in land. He said, "As long as we have the cart-before-the-horse system of taxation, I prefer to be a beneficiary rather than a victim, and then use the funds to get the tax system corrected."

★BOXER

In his late teens Sid was a professional boxer and fought a main event in one of Chicago's well known boxing clubs. Shortly after graduating from the University of Nebraska at

Lincoln, he went to work for his hometown paper and became the owner and publisher of the Daily Republican of Hastings, Nebraska.

★NEWS MAN

In 1910 he came to California and worked on newspapers in Los Angeles and Sacramento. Later he was with the City Press of Chicago, and in Washington, D.C. he worked for "Searchlight on Congress."

During World War Sid joined an expedition sent to Russia by a government agency, "The Committee on Public Information." He arrived in Vladivostok late in 1918, and in November the war ended.

★WANDERER

As he was not far from the Orient, he decided to see that part of the world, so he travelled extensively in China using any means of transportation available, including shank's ponies.

Sid was known for his extreme frugality. About a year after his stroke, he phoned me one Sunday to drive him to Linda Vista to talk with a widow he had known a long time. She wanted advice about her son who was somewhat retarded and causing trouble in the neighborhood. On the way back to his retirement home apartment, Sid said, "I sure appreciate this transportation, as does the Henry George movement. If I had taken a taxi, it would have cost \$10 or more. This way we have another \$10 for use in promoting the philosophy of Henry George."

★PHILANTHROPIST

This frugality made it possible for him to form Basic Economic Education, Inc. and endow it with property which was sold for several hundred thousand dollars. Through careful handling of these funds during Sid's remaining years and since, the corpus has grown so that the income has underwritten LEAF and resulted in this conference, the first of many we hope.

★EXAMPLE

May we keep in mind that this movement has been made possible by Sid's sacrifices, and see that the resources derived from his estate is expended carefully on explicit projects with the same frugality that he practiced during his life. The highest tribute to Sid's memory will be given by those who spend Sid's money doing so with the utmost care.

In his quiet, unassuming way Sid may do more to improve the lot of mankind than many prominent persons with whose names we are all familiar. It depends on us.

Los Angeles Leafers Take To The Air

When a radio station announces, following an editorial, "We recognize our obligation to broadcast opposing points of view," members of the Los Angeles LEAF branch take it seriously.

If the editorial has commented on taxation or some matter with which LEAF is concerned, they get on the air and broadcast a response. To do this, they phone the station immediately and ask for a copy of the editorial. Without waiting for it they compose an answer for the time allowed — usually one or two minutes. When the editorial arrives, they check the answer against it and submit it to the station.

Screen actor Walter Brooke or sales representative Roy Begley turn up at the station and tape the response, and the station broadcasts it as many times as the original editorial was broadcast.

Any individual member of LEAF can do this with any radio station.

If you do it, work fast, because the station wants the rebuttal to be aired as soon as possible following the editorial — to keep up the listener interest in the debate. Also, mail a copy of the editorial and your answer to the NEW LEAF.

New Brochure

Members who have found the brochure "What is LEAF?" not as helpful as it might be in turning people on to join LEAF will be glad to know that a new one is being written which will be simple, direct, selling copy.

You can help by asking a couple of your non-Georgist friends to read the present brochure and give you their quick reactions to it. Just a sentence or two. Send these to the LEAF office.

OKAY!!

OKAY!!

OKAY!!

I'LL JOIN.

Certainly...I want to be part of this down-to-earth activist group working to realize the American Dream

month year
☐ CONTRIBUTING ☐ \$10. ☐ \$120
☐ SUSTAINING ☐ \$ 5. ☐ \$ 60
☐ REGULAR ☐ \$ 15

Please use \$3 of my dues to pay for my subscription to The NEW LEAF

☐ Check enclosed ☐ Bill me.

I'm interested. Please count me as a

☐ FRIEND OF LEAF

☐ Here's a small contribution \$ _____

Name — Please Print

Address

City

State

Zip

Area Code & Phone Number

Activities Of Leaf Branches

SAN DIEGO

Meeting at the home of Tom Sherrard in La Jolla, Sunday, August 10, San Diego Leaves heard Ms. Dana Quittner, coordinator of the League of Women Voters, speak on the "Simple Majority" initiative.

Ms. Quittner explained that a two-thirds majority of the Legislature must vote to change the taxes on corporations, banks, and insurance companies. This initiative would change this to a simple majority.

Slightly over 312,000 signatures must be filed by September 26 to qualify the measure so it will go on the ballot. San Diego's quota is 100,000.

Joining with LWV in sponsoring this initiative are the California Teachers Federation, Nader's California Citizens Action Group, National Health Federation, and the People's Lobby.

LEAF members endorsed the project, and President Tom Sherrard urges all LEAF members to get petitions signed and returned before September 26. They may be obtained from Ms. Dana Quittner, 6945 Regner Road, San Diego 92119 -- phone 461-7422.

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San Diego Branch is sponsoring a debate between the candidates for mayor, Sunday, September 14 at 4:30, two days before the primary election. Auditorium of First Unitarian Church. Mayor Pete Wilson's chief competitor is city councilman Hubbard. Three other candidates will also speak. Meeting is co-sponsored by Unitarian Social Action Committee.

MARIN

LEAF President William Filante spoke to 2,000 Marin residents at a hearing August 11 sponsored by the Golden Gate Bridge and Highway District. He presented the case for a land assessment rather than increased bridge tolls or bus fares to finance the Larkspur Ferry.

LEAF members distributed a flyer citing San Francisco's Twin Peaks Tunnel and Stockton Tunnel, which were financed by assessments on the benefitted land.

Dr. Filante said the directors should use the Mills Act to create a benefit district, or ask the State Legislature for a specific act enabling them to apply benefit financing.

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BOSTON

Mitchell D. Lurio reports a branch of LEAF has been organized in Brookline, Massachusetts, with 16 members.

It will concern itself with proposed amendments to the State constitution, already in the legislative hopper:

One would permit assessing property according to its use, instead of its full market value.

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SAN FRANCISCO

At the monthly meeting, August 27, progress was reported on research into a program to replace Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) sales tax by a land value tax.

Jack Morrison, former San Francisco Supervisor, and Jeanne Miller are spearheading the program.

SANTA CRUZ

Upon being notified that LEAF is conducting a sales ratio study to evaluate assessment practices of the Santa Clara County Assessor, the State Board of Equalization arranged a meeting in Sacramento August 22 with Bob Colonna, who is coordinating the study, to discuss with him possible action by the Board.

The following day — August 23 — the Steering Committee met and laid plans to invite representatives of 200 civic and community organizations to a meeting in September at which the results of the survey will be presented in a press conference with TV coverage.

These organizations will be invited to appoint a representative to an enlarged task force to mount a campaign to end the under-assessment of idle and underused land.

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ORANGE COUNTY

Orange County Leaves held their second meeting with Bob Tideman August 9, the day newspapers announced the conviction of County Assessor Jack Vallerga for misuse of public funds and accepting a gift.

The steering committee authorized Margil Wadley and Bill Shipley to ask the Board of Supervisors to allow citizens to question candidates when they are interviewed for the Assessor's position, which will be filled by appointment by the Supervisors.

Next meeting will be Saturday, September 6, 2:00 o'clock at Republic Federal Savings, 2400 East 17th, Santa Ana. Anyone concerned about taxes is invited to attend or call Wadley 637-2681.

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