

The

Garcoyle



"A throat, mouthpiece, a spout." Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily endorsed by the Henry George School.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF NEW JERSEY

Issue #189

A P R I L 1 9 7 5

New Jersey H.G.S. Folks

Some years ago, C.O. ("Chick") Reinhart, formerly a Trustee of the Henry George School of N.J. migrated to Fla. where he took up permanent residence.

For a number of years, Louis I. Weitzman, who is presently a Trustee of the N.J. school, formerly a resident of Newark, N.J. and then of Massachusetts, took to spending winters in Florida.

A bit later Arnold Kleiner, another of our present Trustees, who maintains a residence at Califon, N. J., acquired a winter home in Florida.

Then, Stewart D. Woolley, resigned as a Trustee of the N.J. school when he changed jobs and moved from East Orange, N.J. to Florida.

Both Reinhart and Woolley are Directors of "The Free Land League" of Florida - organized by Gaston Haxo.

All of these New Jersey-Floridians of course speak for Henry George at every opportunity.

Arthur Hoffer, currently a Trustee of HGS-NJ, living in Keyport, N.J. is the proud father of a son, Arthur Wm., Jr., born recently, to join his two sisters, Jane Marie and Anne Lynn. Congratulations to Evelyn and Arthur, Sr.

Henry George School of N.J.

While the office of the N.J. school continues to be maintained at 50 Washington Terrace, East Orange, N.J. Mr. Tetley carries on most of the operations of the school from his home in Woodbridge.

The Board of Trustees of the N.J. school are desirous of obtaining a person who will become either full time or part time Director of the N.J. School to relieve Mr. Tetley of this responsibility and to extend the operation of the school.

If any reader of the GARCOYLE can make any suggestions in this respect please communicate with the school, P.O. Box 637 Woodbridge, N.J. 07095

The GEORGIST JOURNAL which covers concisely much of what is going on in the Henry George movement reports on LEAF, Tax-Free New Towns, The Free Tax League and Georgist activities throughout the world.

It is an "International Journal - Serving the Movement for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade Based on the Philosophy of Henry George".

Thus it serves both the International Union and The Henry George Institute. Robert Clancy is Editor. U.S. address: 55 W. 42nd St., NYC 10036

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that it admitted it made a mistake. The oil industry had to convert to non-leaded gas, which apparently is now not necessary, and of course the auto industry had to manufacture these converters and build plants to make them.

What we are witnessing is a sophisticated revival of the Luddities of the 19th Century. The Luddities were English workmen who went around destroying machines which they said were putting the cottage industries out of business. The modern day Luddite is a professional do-gooder who goes to Washington or Trenton and gets do-good legislation passed on presumably good reasons as a good environment but which amounts to preventing us from utilizing the developments which men of genius have produced.

Today's Luddities are worse than the 19th Century ones. Those men violated the law and so were restrained by the government. Today's Luddites get the government to pass legislation restraining production. So, whereas the 19th Century Luddites were reviled and denounced the 20th century ones are revered.

What we are witnessing is a confrontation between two types of intellectual endeavor--the one devoted to studying nature in order to arrive at scientific principles which will permit man to produce more things better and easier; the other group devoted to studying man.

There is no real conflict between the two. The study of both is necessary and there would be no reason to criticize either group if all they did whatever knowledge they discovered was to put it at man's disposal to use freely if he so chose. But what is wrong is when either group goes to government to bring the power of its force favoring something in which the group might be interested. Technologists have used government for example to give them monopolies on things they discovered.

Today, however, the worst offenders are the humanists--the do-gooders. They are pressuring government to prevent doers from doing. It's all in the name of some good purpose but men can never really know the ultimate results of their actions. To clean up the environment by instituting some device may cause more problems than it solves as in the case of the catalytic converters. The bureaucracies set up tend to perpetuate themselves in power so even in the unlikely event they solved a problem they would not go out of business but continually interfere on one pretext or another.

SENSE & NONSENSE

In 1972 the head of the Phillippine government ordered the "emancipation" of a million tenant farmers. The government which is far from democratic as it is run under martial law promised to make these farmers the owners of the land they tilled.

But things aren't working out the way they were supposed to. The reform was to be a gradual one. The big estates were to be broken up first and the small holdings last. Certain exemptions were given for absentee landlords if they could show they had no other sources of income or if a small landowner was in the army or in government. It paid to have small landholdings so the number of small landlords proliferated. In 1973 there were 400,000 tenants on holdings of less than 17 acres; in 1974 this was 500,000. What happened is that those with more than 17 acres decided the land to relatives to reduce the holdings.

In a population of 40,000,000 - 192,050 tenants have received certificates making them the owners of the land they till. But due to legal controversies over titles as well as administrative failures, only 5,083 actually have ceased to pay rent for the land they occupy. At the rate the reform is going, it would take 70 years.

Essentially the problem is that 60% of the land promised to the tenants belongs to small landlords and they are using all their political pressure as well as whatever judicial and administrative tactics they could to delay implementation. The government apparently is afraid to go ahead. There are just too many small landlords.

Here is an obvious instance where the usual land reform of dividing up the land runs into enormous problems. It is not too difficult to do if the land is owned by a few large landlords once the government is controlled by men who really wish to put in some land reform. But when the land is held in relatively small holdings by a fairly large proportion of the population serious problems eventuate.

What the Phillippine government should have done was to raise the taxes on the land value as every Georgist knows reducing the taxes on improvements. As the taxes rose the landlords would have found it unprofitable to hold the land unless they actually used it so they would have sold it to the tenants. But this reform is one that is not very dramatic. It is not understood by the so-called intellectuals so how could one expect simple farmers to understand it?

Until some knowledge of the Georgist view percolates through the Philippines, it is doubtful that anything really worthwhile in reforming their land tenure structure will be accomplished. What may happen is that there will be considerable social unrest if not serious violence as too many hopes have been raised among the tenants. When few of those hopes have been realized trouble can develop and of a serious nature.

The story of the CIA project in partially raising the sunken Russian submarine is remarkable for two facts, one of which was only casually mentioned, the other given considerable play.

What was hardly noticed was that the U.S. was able to do what the Russians could not do. Locate the submarine and at least raise it in three miles of water, even though it did fall back into the water. This is a truly remarkable feat and demonstrates the superiority of our engineering ability. It is another indication that a closed society as Russia's simply cannot compete with an open one as ours.

The other more prominently discussed fact is that it brought forcefully to the attention of the public the increasing battle which is now going on over the oceans. Technologically it is becoming increasingly possible for man to "farm" the oceans, that is to explore and develop the minerals and other resources as oil which are in or at the bottom of the seas. As salt water seas and oceans cover 72% of the globe a big problem is arising and that is the system of land tenure which will be utilized.

Up till now, for all practical purposes the oceans have been free land outside of the three mile limit. But increasingly attempts have been made to increase this limitation from three miles to 200 miles. Once that is achieved how much further out will a nation declare it is sovereign? And where it does declare its sovereignty, how will it permit the oceans to be used?

It could be that unknowingly nations might adopt George's ideas. Already, the U.S. government leases off shore rights to companies to explore and develop oil. Other nations do the same thing. If they merely try to get the economic rent, development will proceed rapidly; if however they try to declare themselves partners of the companies doing the actual development, socialism will creep in by the back door.

Development of the oceans can lead to a recognition of the proper system of land tenure to be applied not only to the oceans but also to the dry surface of the earth. But it can also lead to socialism if governments attempt to develop the seas themselves or through partnership with private companies.

It will pay Georgists to get a better understanding of the means by which the nations try to get control of the oceans so they can use their knowledge to further the proper development of the oceans and ultimately the proper system of land tenure for the dry land itself.

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America's new slogan: Born free, but taxed to death.

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We are most sorry to announce the passing at age 96 of a man who for many years has been a most prominent Georgist - DR. HARRY GUNNISON BROWN of Columbia, Mo.

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Space does not permit of our usual bit of humor "Salt of the Earth" in this issue - will return next month.