

The Saxifrage



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

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF NEW JERSEY

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"We must learn not to put faith in politicians. It will do little good to be-
lieve that electing candidate X or Y will achieve our goal of a free society."

Allan Brownfield, The Freedoms Foundation - NEW GUARD

NATURAL RESOURCES AMENDMENT

Concept of natural resources: All material things except human beings and things human beings make.

Ownership of natural resources: All human beings.

Provision for administration of all-ocation and payment for use and/or se-
verance of natural resources.

Suggestion: An amendment to the Constitution of the United States that will provide all natural resources in this country are considered equally owned by all "citizens" living in the United States.

That a non-political Administrative Board be selected of qualified personnel to provide for the payment for the use, and/or severance value of such natural resources. Such payment to go into a fund which is to be distributed on an annual basis, equally to each adult resident citizen.

The effect of such amendment would be to abolish all title deeds to land. Thereafter land would be leased. Other natural resources such as minerals, oil, timber, water, "air rights" etc. may be used under terms that approximate "royalty payment into the fund.

For further details: Gaston Haxo,
The Free Land League, Box 908, 250
58th St. North, St. Petersburg, Fla.
33710.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF NEW JERSEY

P.O. BOX #637 Woodbridge, N.J. 07095

MEANINGFUL TAXATION CHANGE

Too long has "Tax Reform" been
brandied about. Time after time tax
reform has merely meant the substitu-
tion of one form or kind of tax for
another. How much real tax education
has there been? The Public Revenue
Education Council (PREC) St. Louis,
Mo., has for a number of years been
endeavoring to point out that taxes
are not sources of public revenue,
but are simply a means or method of
transferring revenue from source to
user. It stresses the importance of
the source of revenue, rather than
the means devoted to transferring it.

It would seem there is a great need
for tax education of the PREC variety
(which incidentally offers an excellent
opportunity to also divulge the fal-
lacy of the present land tenure sys-
tem)

Some persons prefer to devote their
time, efforts and funds to Land Reform
or more correctly stated, perhaps, Re-
form of administration of Natural Re-
sources as briefly stated in opposite
column.

There are no doubt many persons who
would like to assist financially and
otherwise in assisting in bringing
about a meaningful tax reform, the
opportunity to do so is to communi-
cate with Mr. Noah D. Alper, President
PREC, Rm. 1103, 812 Olive St., St. Louis
Mo. 63101

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

At the Annual Conference sponsored by the Henry George Foundation of America in Chicago last July, Gaston Haxo presented a paper, "Reforming the Georgist Movement" in which he set forth the following, quoting from PROGRESS & POVERTY: New Capital Rents to land may be asserted, but a question of method remains. How shall we do it? We should satisfy the law of justice, by at one stroke abolishing all private titles, declaring all land public property."

Quote from Haxo - "This plan is the one that Henry George should have advocated, but he did not....(Quote-from P & P: "But such a plan, though perfectly feasible, does not seem to me the best, or rather I propose to accomplish the same thing in a simpler, easier, and quieter way. I do not propose to confiscate private property in land. Let the individuals who now hold it still retain possession of what they are pleased to call their land....We may safely leave them the shell if we take the kernel. We already take some rent in taxation. We have only to make some changes in our modes of taxation to take it all. What I, therefore, propose, as the simple, yet sovereign remedy.... is to appropriate rent by taxation."

Haxo feels this method, "by taxation" is responsible for the failure of the land reform advocated by Henry George. Haxo stated this to be the reason that Georgist movement has become a mere tax reform. He points out that "the main purpose of collecting the rent of land, was not to provide public revenue, it was to give equal opportunity to labor. To tax the rent of land into the Public Treasury would defeat this purpose.

Herein, as I see it, there is great opportunity for serious thought by the leaders, as well as others, in the present Georgist movement.

The points set forth by Haxo, "The equalization of economic opportunities requires compensation from those having land advantages above the average to those with advantages below the average. This can be accomplished automatically by collecting the rent into a common fund to be distributed in equal shares, in cash, to all the people. In as much as this rent fund could not possibly be distributed in equal shares in the form of public services. I would favor the creation of an independent body, elected by the people and accountable to them, for the administration of their common heritage.

All citizens having thus been given equal rights in the land and an equal share of the rent, it becomes their duty to pay a direct tax to their government for the services rendered to them. On the other hand, all taxation now levied on improvements; business; goods and services, which increases prices and

the cost of living, should be abolished. In this way we can achieve a just land tenure system and a just tax system to give the people equal rights and opportunities."

Haxo proposes, and has organized to promote his views, The Free Land League, a Constitutional amendment to declare all land in the United States the common heritage of all its citizens....the rental value to be collected yearly and distributed in equal shares to all U.S. citizens living in this country.

Some may say this is a distinction without a difference. Not so. There is a difference. Haxo is saying, as did George, we need a change, a reform in our Land Tenure system. To bring about equality of opportunity. The difference between natural resources and man-made things must be recognized. Once this is recognized then the need for treating land in a manner different from that presently in effect will pave the way for a truly private-market economy and a limited government with a monetary system to serve rather than hinder the operation of the economy.

Where should our efforts be directed? Toward Land Reform or Tax Reform? If the thought is that by bringing about Land Reform through Tax Reform, then of course the direction of effort will be in that direction.

On the other hand, if the Land Reform we envision is brought about, a tax reform would be almost automatic. Perhaps, and most likely our efforts will continue along both lines. The people in the Georgist movement are extremely individualistic for the most part - some of them will not be at all interested in working in one direction. Likewise, some not in the other. Both education and political action will be required in each field.

Much must, can and should be done with adults. Perhaps, much thought ought be given to ways and means of getting basic economic principles, advantages of limited government, a just public revenue system, a system of purchasing media and credit to promote the economy, in the public schools and colleges, so the young people will understand truth.

It seems to me it is not enough to endeavor to get people to read and study PROGRESS & POVERTY; it is not enough to endeavor to teach basic economics; to advocate removing taxes from improvements and placing them on the land.

It seems we ought to decide which of the two "divisions" we will join with and devote our efforts toward bringing about a change in the Land Tenure system AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

John T. Tetley

GOVERNMENT
AND ECONOMIC ARTERIOSCLEROSIS

During the summer the people of New Jersey had an income tax foisted on them despite the patent fact that they did not want it.

A politically oriented judiciary, obviously working hand in glove with the machine politicians in control of the state, decided that the property tax was not a constitutional means for insuring an "efficient and thorough" education for the children. Implied was the demand that a broad based tax be enacted, which meant an income tax, as the sales tax was already in existence.

That the judiciary exceeded its authority, and was, in effect, legislating or demanding legislation in accordance with its views was bad enough, but it actually had the effrontery when the legislation it wanted was not forthcoming to order the closing of the schools. This gave the legislators the excuse to vote for the tax, which they wanted all the time but were afraid to vote for, fearing the wrath of the voters. Now they could claim that reluctantly they were forced to vote for the income tax.

Powerful pressure groups, as the various teachers' unions were in constant attendance in the halls of the state capitol. These unions' real interest was in salaries rather than the children. The assumption that quality education is a function of the quantity of money expended is too absurd to require refutation, but that is what is implied.

So angered were the people that they resorted to the usual procedure of actually having a rally in Trenton to demand the repeal of the tax. Special interest groups in the past have organized rallies to obtain favors from the politicians. Rarely, however, do the taxpayers go to the lengths they did to demonstrate their frustration. Whether the people will remain sufficient-ly angered and united to obtain the repeal is a question which only the future will answer.

What is apparent is that 200 years after the Declaration of Independence, in which the people declared their independence from arbitrary government and taxation without representation, they now have once again arbitrary government and still taxation without representation. The present legislators do not represent the people but rather the pressure groups which put up the money which helps to elect them to office.

The enactment of this income tax is further proof that government at all levels in America is increasingly becoming more autocratic and less responsive to the will of the people. It

has been obvious for a long time that the federal government is losing contact with the people. So clear is this that the politicos seeking reelection are berating Washington, D.C. for its interference. Unfortunately, while they decry the growing size and interference of the federal government, when they are elected, they proceed to enact more legislation which encourages still greater government.

That the state governments are also becoming increasingly divorced from the people is shown in such enactments as the passage of ever more taxes, such as the New Jersey income tax, increased control over education, and such acts as the environmental control legislation, all of which puts the individual at the mercy of more bureaucracies.

Local government, while closer to the people, and thus not as likely to become too estranged from the people, nonetheless it too, is becoming a power unto itself. Zoning laws inhibit the freedom of the individual to use his property as he wishes. Regulations determine what size his residence may be, what improvements may or may not be made and even often what materials may be used.

Our society is suffering from a situation analogous to arteriosclerosis. Gradually the arteries of free enterprise are being clogged by governmental red tape which threatens to reduce society to an anemic body scarcely resembling the robust and vibrant one of colonial and 19th century days.

What, if anything can be done to reverse this alarming trend? What must be done is to change the philosophy of the people. Today, they still look to government to rectify wrong, forgetting or not knowing that most of the wrongs have been perpetrated by government. Because the government has a monopoly on the production of money, it has increased our prices are almost constantly rising. This has led to people demanding price controls instead of demanding that the government get out of the business of money-creation.

How do you convince people not to look to government to solve problems but rather to demand government to divest itself of the maze of laws and regulations creating this condition of economic arteriosclerosis? First you have to educate yourself. Then you try to educate your friends, and neighbors and relatives. If each one, in turn, becomes educated the area of informed and economically literate people grows. This is the formula which many libertarians have adopted.

It is a good one, but unfortunately most libertarians do not understand

man's relationship to the land. The result is that their understanding of government is deficient. They assume, often without adequate investigation that government's sole purpose is protection of life and property and keeping the peace. This leads them up into the difficulty of determining what are the limits of protection of life and property. It is difficult to argue that the government should protect the individual from physical violence and not from drugs and food which is detrimental to his health.

The fact is that the only real purpose of government is to divide up the unequal opportunities of the earth among the equal claimants to them. If that fact is hammered home and understood, the rest of the libertarian philosophy falls into place.

Since people do not understand this, government keeps growing bigger and bigger, the people become increasingly frustrated and disgusted, and taxes grow ever more onerous. Possibly the passage of taxes as the income tax in New Jersey may annoy the people so much that they will start to inquire what are the limits of government and how to achieve the gradual reduction of the power of government. Unless they do, it is fairly certain that America will gradually become just another power, such as exists in Europe, with an individual or coterie of individuals acting as a dictator. Because of our heritage of freedom, the individual or group may not be called the dictators. Some fancy euphemism may be adopted to gloss over reality. The dictator may be named "The People's Servant" and those associated with him "Freedom's Leaders".

No matter what the nomenclature used, the end result will be the same--the loss of the freedom of the individual and the growing impoverishment of all.

OSCAR B. JOHANNSSEN

The Henry George School of New Jersey will offer a basic course in Economics & Taxation at the Main Library, Woodbridge on Monday evenings starting October 11th at 8 p.m. Inform your friends. This is an excellent opportunity to discuss the N.J. Income Tax!

A course in Money & Credit will be offered at the Roselle Park Library to start this Fall. For information write P.O. Box 637 Woodbridge, N.J. 07095, or telephone 634 2404.

At meeting of Board of Trustees of the New Jersey school held on Sept. 23rd Louis Weitzman reported on the three Georgist conferences held in July, at which he spoke, those of the HGSSS and LEAF in San Francisco, and that sponsored by the Henry George Foundation of America, held at Kendall College, Evanston, Ill., near Chicago.

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Henry George School of New Jersey

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"Not worth a Continental"

In this year of 1976, when the U.S. is celebrating its Bicentennial, is there much publicity given to the continental currency? The expression, "Not worth a Continental" is, of course, widely known, but how many people understand what is behind the expression? And there was also an expression - "Sound as a Dollar"! What about that? Wonder what "a Continental is worth today?"

THE RENT SONG

Tune: Auld Lang Syne

Disaster strikes the ignorant,
Whatever their intent,
But social knowledge blesses all,
Our revenue is rent.

Chorus:

Then telescope the taxes out
Replacing them with rent.
Let's make our country prosperous
Tax-free, at peace, content.

The rent of land is nature's art
Superb, benign, efficient,
Taxation need not be imposed,
The rent will be sufficient.

Good news to all who live by toil
Though taxes are well meant
They cut down wages, cause hard times
Let's kill them now with rent.

Taxation wages must reduce,
As greedy as an ogre,
But rent is nature's public fund,
Produced by social progress.

The more we earn the more they take
When taxes on us fall
What could they cause but poverty?
But rent enriches all.

W.A. Dowd

Sydney, Australia 1970

Published in PROGRESS - April 1976

Congratulations to Dr. Steven Cord,
elected President of the Henry George
Foundation of America.

It is reported that LEAF and the Henry George School of Social Science will cooperate with the Henry George Foundation of America in conducting the Annual Georgist Conference 1977. Lake Geneva, Wisconsin has been suggested as the location and the time, around the fourth of July.

This should provide an opportunity to bring representatives from all the Georgist organizations in the USA together-plus, of course, any and all individuals interested in the Georgist movement.