

Bargoble



"A throat, mouthpiece, spout." Opinions expressed 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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"Boondoggle of the Week" - Honors go to Senator Harrison Williams (D-NJ) who called for creation of still another federal agency - The National Institute of Retirement Income. Williams said the agency would "mobilize academicians and others in a systematic exploration of all social and economic forces affecting the income of other Americans." HUMAN EVENTS

How that Congress is working on a truth in lending law, will it set up for itself a truth in spending law?

Growing old is simply a question of mind over matter. If you don't mind it doesn't matter.

Did you ever wonder where the automobile industry finds those empty roads on which to film commercials?

Things to remember when preparing your Federal Income Tax return:

Cost to collect and spend \$1.00 for charitable purposes - Federal Govt. - \$3.00 - private charitable groups 27¢

The U.S. Government expends about \$425 million a year on public information.

Our National Institutes of Health, the 1968 appropriation: \$1,425,700,000.

Six members of a South Side (Chicago) gang, were hired as instructors in a \$972,000 Federal project - each one is awaiting trial on assorted criminal charges. They receive salaries of up to \$6,500. a year (Anti-Poverty Program.

Happy Returns!

GO, get yourself a piece of ground, and hold possession...you need do nothing more. You may sit down and smoke your pipe; you may lie around like the lazzaroni of Naples or the leperos of Mexico (or the landlords of Viet Nam) you may go up in a balloon, or down a hole in the ground; and without doing one stroke of work, without adding one iota to the wealth of the community, in 10 years (or less) you will be rich! In the new city you may have a luxurious mansion; but among its public buildings will be an almshouse (and on its hideous fields of war where the "little deeds" are up for grabs, charnel houses or tents filled with dead and dying and dreadfully torn-up boys).

Henry George - PROGRESS & POVERTY (p 294)

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"We send you this because we have been three years ashamed, concerned and alarmed about the war in Vietnam. We feel that it is a grievous and wrongheaded catastrophe, built upon leftover assumptions that continue to plague and punish not only our country, but the whole of mankind.

"For years our beloved land wakes each morning to the score sheet of deaths on each side, totaled as though in a game. During the day we hear repeated accusations, contradictions, speculations and denials. At bedtime we see pictures of suffering added that makes rest - if it comes at all - troubled indeed.

"We haveno one directly involved in the war, but we have not become habituated. Have you? It has crept up so slowly and imperceptibly over the years that we are in danger of becoming a big, unfeeling blob of humanity! Is our country transforming itself into one large mental hospital for schizophrenics?

"Do you share our heartbreak and are you able to talk about it to your friends? We admit we cannot for bursting into tears.

"From reading, listening and sifting, a few of us comprise a very small minority and perhaps not worthy of recognition except to be blamed for the war's continuance. This example of deliberate twisted thinking prepares our country for 'War as Usual' in 1963.

"Politics is complicated and slippery at best, and we find it increasingly difficult to grasp anything of substantial worth and demonstrated content.

"This we do hold to: This war is - wrong, wrong, WRONG!"

Geoff & Val Esty

HELP WANTED

An appeal has been received from Mr. James L. Palmer, President of the Board of Directors of the Henry George School, San Diego, Calif. He appeals for a Director of the School, or directing couple - "The best possibility it seems would be retired business or professional people, both keenly interested in the work of the school. These persons should have enough or almost enough retirement income to live on. Comfortably furnished living quarters are available and a modest salary will be paid.

The Director should be a competent speaker and able to attend City Council and Board of Supervisors meetings. He should be able to give a word of caution when taxes which are proposed would be detrimental. It is believed

that a tactful person could develop a reputation which would influence officials to seek his advice. We do not want a volunteer looking for a soft spot to settle down here in California. Any candidate should apply directly to the Henry George School, 3627 30th St., San Diego, Calif. 92104. - Pictures would be helpful. Person selected can move in and the sooner the better.

COMPLETE THE SKELETON

In December 1967 GARGOYLE comments were requested on terminology proposed titles for basic course.

Mr. W. W. Gerver, Lancaster, Pa. replies: "I think the terminology is quite appropriate. You have drawn an excellent skeleton. What is needed now is muscular structure and organs (eyes, ears, etc.) Don't forget the feet and to remind students that feet need land to stand on."

Thank you Mr. Gerver, we are completing the skeleton and shall most certainly stress "land to stand on".

RESEARCH

Research is important. Would that the Henry George School could have more of it! In reading "My Life in Two Worlds" - Francis Neilson, I came upon references to the early "Henry George movement" about which I have not heard during my 35 years of study and activity in the H.G.S.

That in itself is not too significant, but the fact that more research would probably divulge much that would be of immense value and great help to teachers and students in our cause.

Recently Woodrow W. Williams, Ohio, wrote to me that an article he had written brought a chastisement for neglecting proper research. Williams commented - "I, of course, have no time or facilities to make extensive research."

He asks if we (HGS-NJ) have checked on quotations we have made from the New York Times - (We haven't). Says Williams, "It is always possible that the New York Times could be biased!" In closing Williams states: "I think Mr. Johanssen's THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME pretty well sums things up. My great hope is that there enough Georgists able and willing to present the true remedy to the right people when the time comes, so that we don't plunge headbent down some crazy statism instead!"

Let's get some researchin' done before that happens.

John T. Tetley

THE STATE OF THE UNION

The President's address on the State of the Union has given rise to criticism which is so unanimous in its condemnation that one wonders if the critics in belaboring the President are not unconsciously criticizing themselves or the people. Their condemnation may be similar to the denunciation a patient might make of his physician who seems unable to diagnose the illness properly. The patient instinctively recognizes it is not correct but he does not know the answer and in his annoyance with the doctor he is covering up his own exasperation with himself for not being able to get at the root of his trouble.

The speech probably accurately mirrors the confusion and lack of understanding of the vast majority of the people. Leaders are reflections of the people. If the people are confused, why expect their so-called leaders to be paragons of knowledge and wisdom?

And what are the people confused about? A number of things. First: The Vietnam War. Most don't know how we ever got into it, what we are doing there, and what we really hope to accomplish. Second: The riots in the cities. With greater attempts being made to improve the lot of minority groups than ever before, the people cannot understand why the minorities are revolting now when they did not do so when little was done for them. Third: Why, if we are so prosperous is it that the dollar is under such severe attack that our freedom to travel abroad must be restricted and an onerous tax burden levied on us? And who is getting all this prosperity for most people are well aware that they just manage to get along but only by mortgaging their homes and future earning ability?

What is occurring is the rise of the American empire, much as the Roman empire arose. Just as the Roman legions spread over Europe, gradually the American armies are spreading over the world. We now have them as far away as Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam in the East and in Germany in the West. Why? Well, whenever a nation built on a base of relatively free people on free land prospers, it is not long before the imbalances which result from treating land as private property gives rise to socialistic remedies. To pay for such measures, however, means high taxes, some on unearned increment but mostly on wages. This is so unpopular that only the fear of war, or the threat of war can overcome voter resistance. Thus, a country almost unconsciously becomes involved in world problems. It may sincerely believe it is trying to help those less fortunate but the real reason is its own economic problems.

Foreign adventures thus not only justify the taxation necessary to give bread to the masses in the form of welfarism but at the same time they help reduce unemployment by putting those who would be unemployed in the armies.

Minority groups are, in effect, those laborers forced to work on the margin of production. Wages are determined by what men can make working on the best free land available. For all practical purposes there is no free land in America, so wages tend to a minimum. Thus there is nothing really constructive that can be done to help the minorities as long as the margin is not raised. All efforts as the poverty programs are mere palliatives, and it is not long before the minorities recognize this and show their dissatisfaction in one way or the other.

Our prosperity is not a healthy one. It is fed by repeated injections of "paper-money", which injections must progressively become greater and greater. This means that the "paper-dollars" which is merely a promise to pay a dollar, i.e. 1/35th of an ounce of gold, continually loses its worth. The government feels it cannot adopt the necessary fiscal measures to insure that its debts will be redeemed for that will mean unemployment, poor business and most likely a severe depression. The government recognizes the people will not tolerate such a solution, so it does not offer it. It is in the position of the physician who knows his patient must and will eventually have to undergo radical surgery but at the present time will not, so the doctor merely offers some palliative.

The President's speech, then, was probably no more or less than what the people could take. They're not satisfied, of course, for they know it doesn't really solve any problems, but they do not want any radical cures. They do not understand the cancer which is destroying our society--the system of land tenure--so even if the President knew, which he obviously doesn't, he could not give such an answer to them.

The people will not tolerate the only alternative which is a reduction of their standard of living through deflation, so the only thing he can give them is what he is giving them. More of the same. More palliatives of one sort or another until such time as the people are ready for radical economic surgery.

Oscar B. Johansen

"Uncertainty is the worst enemy of confidence."

THE GARGOYLE - Henry George School of New Jersey - Issue #119, Feb. 1968

"The Miracle is Dead", so says the headline of the article commenting on the economic decline now being experienced by West Germany.

At present there are over 600,000 unemployed; the rate of growth is declining and business generally is apprehensive.

This has been puzzling to most people for it was assumed that the economic reforms adopted by the Germans under the aegis of the Austrian School of Economics had insured that Germany would be a more or less constantly prospering society. But instituting the usual forms of economic freedom, permitting the marketplace to flourish thru the elimination of controls over prices and wages was a necessary ingredient for Germany's post-war recovery. But it was not sufficient.

What was also necessary was the adopting of a system of land tenure which would insure that only normal economic rent would be levied for the loan of land. Germany did not disturb its old system of the private ownership of land. However, what happened was that as a result of the war and the tremendous destruction caused by it, land values dropped to a point where labor could produce and make a good living. Only the Georgists recognized that importance of this point and freely predicted that once land values rose, as they surely would with prosperous conditions, the old problems which have plagued western society would recur. Cycles of good and bad business with increasing unemployment, and the rise of dissension among minority groups.

Such apparently is occurring in Germany now with the result that a "grand coalition" of Christian and Social Democrats is attempting to solve Germany's problems. And what are their solutions? In spite of the experience with Nazism, they are adopting the typical socialistic programs of economic planning and welfarism. It didn't work in the case of Nazi Germany. It won't work today.

Just another sad instance of the old adage that men learn nothing from history, particularly when they do not understand economic fundamentals.

Want to get to the top? Get to the bottom of things.

Social Security taxes are coming in to their own. The base on which the taxes are computed is now \$7,800 up from \$6,600 last year. Thus at the rate of 4.4% those earning \$7,800 or more pay \$343.20 as a payroll tax, which is matched by an equal sum by the employer.

Today, a family of four with an income of \$5,027 will pay more in social security taxes than income taxes. It works out that those with the least income pay a greater proportion of their income than the wealthier members of our society. It is the proportional income tax in reverse. As such it is one of the worst types of regressive taxes and slowly people are beginning to recognize it for what it is - a payroll tax with no deductions for dependents, contributions, medical bills or property taxes.

Not only does it impinge most unfairly on the poorer sections of society but it is encouraging unemployment for it is forcing business to scan labor saving machinery with greater care than ever. A company employing 20 people would have to earn \$26,154 before its income taxes are greater than its social security taxes, so the fewer employees it can get along with the better.

And worse, yet, is the moral effect. The young are increasingly looking upon the aged as drains on income, particularly those young men and women who have few illusions about inflation. They recognize that any young person starting to work today is hardly likely to receive in social security benefits the amount of purchasing power which his contributions in social security taxes. Inflation will either abolish social security in another generation or so, or reduce it to an almost meaningless form of welfarism. Social security leads not to security but insecurity in the long run, particularly for the young.

I wonder, will the taxpayer become America's first natural resource to become exhausted?

SALT OF THE EARTH

Daffynitions:

Instution: What enables a woman to contradict her husband before he says anything.

Teenagers: People who work their fingers to the phone.

Conscience: That still, small voice which after many years is still small.

Small Town: A place where the lights on the street dim when you plug in your electric razor.

Rush hour: That time of day when traffic moves at a snail's pace.

Isn't it the truth that after the Government takes enough to balance the budget, you have the job of budgeting the balance?

The young are indeed blessed for they shall inherit the national debt.

Be smart. Always forgive your enemies -- nothing annoys them more.