



NewsLetter

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL

August
1977

833 Market Street San Francisco, California 94103

JOINT GEORGIST CONFERENCE

The 1977 Joint Georgist Conference took place over the 4th of July weekend at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The Conference was held at an interdenominational church camp overlooking Lake Geneva. The weather was unbearably hot and muggy but it was an inspiring time for Georgists to renew faith and energy in the continuing struggle to have Henry George's ideas heard, appreciated and adopted throughout the land.

The four main sponsors of the conference were the Schaikembach Foundation, Land Equality and Freedom (LEAF), the Henry George Foundation and various Henry George Schools including the Henry George Institute (New York), Henry George School of Chicago, and The Schools of Economic Science (Calgary and Toronto). The Henry George School of New York was not an official sponsor of the event but Paul Mix and Phil Finkelstein, the new president and director of the School attended and participated throughout. The conference was harmonious and there appears to be a renewed commitment for all groups, organizations and individuals to work together. The next conference will be held on July 4, 1978 somewhere in the Philadelphia area.

A few of the developments reported at the conference were: 1.) the start of production of a professionally prepared film by Basic Economic Education (BEE), a foundation which presently underwrites LEAF, 2.) the joint funding by BEE and the Henry George Foundation for research on a new book by David Haggood, author of The Screwing of the Average Man, 3.) the announcement by Morgan Harris of the founding of the Guild of Arladne which will provide literature on fundamental economics, economic justice and land value taxation to newscasters and other opinion makers.

Anyone interested in supporting this effort should contact Morgan Harris 3050 Shedd Terrace, Culver City, CA 90230, 4.) a report by Walter Rybeck of The Urban Land Conservation League of Washington, D.C. on hopeful progress being made in the consideration of LVT as the revenue basis of the new home rule government there, 5.) a report by Steven Cord, president of the Henry George Foundation, on Harrisburg, PA's new advance in its graded tax 6.) a report by Gary Carlson on a recent study by the city of Omaha, Nebraska recommending LVT and 7.) a report by William Oweiller, former Idaho State representative, of his plans for a new campaign for office

based on LVT and the inclusion in the state Democratic Party platform of a recommendation for adoption of LVT by local option. There were many other speakers and items on the agenda but there is not time to repeat them all here. Suffice it to say that the movement is alive and well along many fronts throughout the Nation and Canada.

One final note: Rev. Wylie Young, Presbyterian minister and author of Anti-dote for Madness gave the Sunday church service. Wylie was in rare form preaching the gospel enlightened with the insights of Henry George. Many of the backsliders who had not been to church in years said that if they could have heard good preaching like that they would still be church goers.

Our thanks and appreciation go out to Madine Stoner, Sam Venturella and others for their work in organizing the conference.

SCHOOL ELECTIONS

New officers were elected to the School's Central Board of Directors for fiscal 1977-78. Charles Turner is President. Ed Wachsman is Vice President. Mary Frances Smith is Treasurer and Joe Husar is Secretary. Also elected to the Board were Clay Berling, Mark Schwier and Ward Jamon. The new Branch Council Presidents who will also serve on the Central Board are Ann Reeves-Marin, Gordon Lisher-San Francisco, Joe Casey-East Bay, and Natalie Munk-Sacramento. Congratulations to all.

LAND TRUST SPEECH

As previously announced Jubal Lee and Ann Shumway of the School of Living located in York, PA will be present on August 16 to talk about land trusts. 7:30PM at the Ecology Center, 13 Columbus, San Francisco.

LEAF MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

LEAF will begin a door to door membership drive in San Francisco. Terry Newland, Executive Deputy Director of LEAF is organizing the drive to begin in August. If the drive is successful in San Francisco it will be organized elsewhere. Anyone interested in applying for the job of canvasser can contact Terry at (415) 777-0484.

NEW SECRETARY

April Walton, the HES secretary for more than a year, has moved with her husband, John, to Iowa where he will pursue the study of osteopathic medicine. April

was a hard worker and a joy to work with. We wish her well.

Replacing April is our new secretary, Judy Curtis. Judy is a very intelligent and competent lady and is having no trouble picking up where April left off. Welcome to the school Judy.

KATHY (COVELL) ORLOFF

Kathy Orloff, our past executive secretary, reports that she and her husband, Ken, have moved to Baltimore, Maryland where Ken will be working with the State Health Department. For those interested in contacting Kathy write St. Agnes Apts. #1009, Coleridge F, Baltimore, Maryland 21229. We expect a few Georgist sparks to be flying from Baltimore very soon.

LIBERTARIAN CONVENTION

Local members of the Henry George School and LEAF personed an informational booth at the Libertarian Party Convention held in San Francisco July 14 through 17.

The Libertarians have recognized that the State is responsible for most of society's problems through its interference with individual liberty and business and they say that government causes more problems than it solves. They call for an end to unnecessary government in the belief that, left alone, all individuals working through the free enterprise economy will be able to provide for themselves.

There are two factions in the Libertarian Party, one of which calls for the absolute abolition of all government whatsoever and the other which admits the necessity of some government confined to limited but appropriate functions.

As Georgists we found it difficult if not impossible to talk to those of the former opinion since we say that government does have a proper function one of which is to collect ground rents. It was possible to talk to the latter group and we had some lively discussions since Libertarians truly love to debate fundamental issues.

Some of us who engaged in these discussions agreed that many Libertarians of whatever kind did not recognize that our present economy does not provide a living or an opportunity to make a living for many people even when it is unregulated. Libertarians see very clearly the faults of the body politic but they have not gone behind it to analyze the faults of the body economic as presently constituted.

In some instances, however, we were successful in pointing out the existence of privilege inherent in private ownership of land which in turn makes for economic inequality and economic injustice. We were even successful in getting

some people to agree that government should collect ground rent in order to place all people in a position of equal opportunity.

In our opinion the Libertarian Party is fertile ground for spreading the concepts of Henry George. The Libertarians have made great progress in seeing that the State cannot solve our problems in the way it has chosen so far. If Libertarians would combine this with a recognition of economic injustice and call for an end to such injustice and the end of unnecessary government they would really have something to say to all people. As it stands now it is doubtful whether they will appeal to anyone outside of a fairly well to do privileged class of people.

PROPERTY TAX REFORM

Continued efforts are being made to bring the message of Senator Albert Rodda's LVT bill (SCA 12) to legislators, other public officials and the public. Greater public knowledge of and support for the measure is one of the chief goals of LEAF's new membership drive announced above. It is hoped that these efforts will produce significant support for LVT when SCA 12 comes up for re-hearing in front of the State Senate's Revenue and Taxation Committee in January.

Meanwhile most of the attention for property tax reform is being focused on two other proposals. The latest development regarding these bills came during a joint meeting of the conference committees drafting the bills. The committees were told by State fiscal and legislative analyst, A. Alan Post, that the measures under consideration were too costly. Post said that the new programs, requiring the State to pay for tax relief given to homeowners and renters, would run the State into the red, forcing substantial cuts in other state services or an increase in state taxes. It was estimated that the combined spending programs would overrun the treasury by \$2.6 billion by 1983. Needless to say the assembled legislators did not like this news.

The supporters of SCA 12 definitely have the advantage on this issue because the measure will not require any state expenditures while giving substantial tax relief to those who are scheduled for relief under the other measures.

STATE URBAN PLANNING PROPOSAL

The office of Planning and Research, a division of the office of the Governor of California has recently prepared a draft proposal regarding urban development strategy in the state. The proposal will be submitted to the state legislature and is currently being discussed in public meetings throughout the state. The report contains 46 recommendations concerning the control and regulation of urban development. Georgists and LEAFers have suggested that additional recommendations be included such as full assessment of land values and greater use of special districts under the state's Wright & Mills Acts whereby state improved land values of assessments on increased land values.