



THE PROVIDENT
PROVIDENT NATIONAL BANK

1700 SANSOM STREET, (215) 585-5000 / REPLY TO P.O. BOX 7648, PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19101

MORTGAGE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT (215) 585-6076

June 29, 1981

Mason Gaffney, Chairman
Department of Economics
University of California
Riverside, CA 92521

Dear Mason:

By now, you probably have surmised that the proposed debate between supporters of the Georgist, Supply-Side and Post-Keynesian economic policies has been shelved insofar as the annual conference is concerned. A panel discussion on Reaganomics is to be held in its place. I am to assume the role of moderator, and the other panelists are David Asman (an advocate of George Gilder's proposals and editor of an economic journal called the "Manhattan Report") and an individual whom you may know named John Burger, who will represent the viewpoints of the "Foundation for Economic Education".

I am still hopeful that a televised debate involving representatives of the Georgist perspective can be developed early in the Fall; however, discussion with a number of people has convinced me that the debate should center on the shortfalls of the administration's economic policies. The producers of "The Advocates" in Boston are still interested in the concept. The major difficulties center around funding of production costs and whether various organizations affiliated with the Georgist movement can be convinced a positive cost/benefit relationship exists in the project to justify contributing to the project.

From the few opportunities we have had to discuss what is happening in the Georgist movement, I believe we are in agreement on the necessity to take advantage of the conservative shift in both the political and economic mood of the nation. I have been working (slowly but surely) within my own organization to develop an interest in examining "site value taxation" and its potential for creating a more stable investment environment in Philadelphia. To that end I have discussed the subject in depth with our bank economist and several other senior investment officers and have given them what I felt to be the most appropriate material for analysis. As a next step I would like to produce something designed to shake them from respectfully listening to me into some level of public support. To that end, I am about to ask that you entertain a substantial imposition on your time and intellectual skills.

Mason Gaffney
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Our institution's Investment Research Department produces periodic analyses of the economy, and this month examined Reagan's economic package. I originally gave thought to responding on my own to several of the conclusions made by the article's author. The weight of my comments could, I realized be easily discounted and taken lightly in view of my lack of academic credentials. A response from you would demand consideration -- and hopefully stimulate discussion.

From the first moment I truly began to understand the economic and social benefits inherent in Henry George's proposals, I have been convinced that corporate America must be won over if proper valuation and taxation of land values is ever to be achieved. There are, in my mind, an endless list of reasons why the banking and lending industries should actively lobby for such legislation. I hope you can find the time in your busy schedule to give me some ammunition with which to force the issue.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Dodson

EJD:js
Enclosure
cc: Robert Clancey