

Henry George School • CENTER FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

December 8, 1982

Dear Friend working for Unitarian support of land value taxation:

Last year as a result of your hard work in circulating petitions, we got our petition, "Ending the Root Cause of Inflation and Poverty" on the tentative agenda of the UUA General Assembly. In this way, our cause was made known to large numbers of religious liberals, many of whom were quite unfamiliar with our ideas. As you know, our petition was defeated 112-85. Several people have told me that they did not understand the petition. This only indicates that we are going to have to make a serious effort to educate our co-religionists in a consistent and ongoing manner.

Fortunately, the Denominational Headquarters here in Boston is leading the way in this. The Unitarian Universalist Economic Justice Task Force has produced a brochure, "A Call To Do Justice" (enclosure) which states: "Equity is also essential to justice. Equity does not require absolute equality in division of goods and services. Rather, there must be a balance between the obligation to provide for the basic needs of all and the necessity of creating incentives to energize individuals and organizations towards a productivity which increases resources for the entire community".

The need is great, our Denomination officially recognizes it, and we Georgist Unitarian Universalists have much to contribute. The UU Economic Justice Field Packet which is scheduled for publication in book form shortly will contain a "Fact Sheet" - compiled by Loretta Williams, the UUA's Director of Social Responsibility, Boston Henry George School Director, Mitch Chanelis, and myself - which embodies the georgist perspective on the relationship between tax policy and human well-being.

A renewed effort is underway to make the whole denomination aware of our perspective and to persuade the members, individually and in concert, to "bear witness, advocate change, and effect transformation" in the arena of public taxation policy.

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At the request of Bill Newcomb, Mitch Chanelis and I have accepted responsibility for coordinating this effort and we earnestly request your cooperation and participation.

A new Resolution entitled, "Establishing Economic Justice" (enclosed) is being submitted for consideration by the 1983 General Assembly. The Resolution has been reformulated to take advantage of the Economic Justice Task Force's statement, and we believe that shifting the emphasis from merely fiscal concerns to moral suasion will prove to be more compelling.

Since, at this late date, there is not enough time available to effectively circulate petitions, I will present the enclosed District Resolution to the Massachusetts Bay District meeting on January 8. If adopted, it will be placed on the tentative agenda and published in the UU World on February 19. The Resolution will be voted on in the Parish Poll by April 12, thereby circumventing the petition process.

You may be able to do the same in your own district. Any one district's approval will insure our resolution a place on the tentative agenda - which will go to the Parish Poll of all churches!

The next step may be to show our film "One Way To Better Cities" and/or give verbal presentations to as many churches in your area as possible to generate discussion, enthusiasm, and support in the Parish Poll. If you can't get the Resolution before your district meeting for the 1983 General Assembly, you can still educate your church's members in preparation for the Parish Poll (assuming our Resolution makes it) or for next year's Resolution/ Petition.

Again, it is important to reiterate that our efforts must be ongoing and not left to last minute rushes to meet deadlines.

For the sake of coordination, continuity, and efficacy I strongly urge that copies of all correspondence related to this endeavor on your part be sent to either myself or Mitch c/o the Henry George School in Boston.

Please feel free to contact either one of us if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions.

Season's Greetings !



Tillman Schafer

TS/mc