

Henry George Foundation of America

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September 27, 1985

Dear HGFA/CSE Members, and now Common Grounders,

So much has been happening here lately that my usual summertime informational letter to the membership is coming to you much delayed. It's a fall letter instead.

Speaking engagements have been pouring in, and what with my university teaching, I've been flittering here and there, to and fro. For example, next month I give a talk in the Silverdome where the Detroit Lions play - to various city officials in Detroit and Pontiac. I'm being sponsored by a local environmentalist group and I'll tailor my remarks accordingly (usually such groups like our philosophy of "our-worldism" but not our economics of "pro-development"). I'll let you know what happens.

Of course, all these speaking engagements don't usually result in getting specific localities to take specific land tax action, but you can't turn them down. Who knows when you hit a gusher, or when someone out there catches fire and eventually ACTS.

The Big News for us clearly is the joining of the new organization COMMON GROUND to our two older organizations. All three organizations will share funding and expenses, also office staff - so there'll be no unnecessary proliferation of competing separately organized Georgist organizations, all somewhat sparsely financed. In union there is strength. COMMON GROUND will bring in its funds, which incidentally have been generously augmented by Marion & Stanley Sapiro, among others. So our next combined financial statement will look a lot healthier than in the past, and that will enable us to do even more than before.

COMMON GROUND will have a somewhat different focus than HGFA/CSE. It will try to enlist the support of non-Georgists-not especially politicians (Incentive Taxation is reaching out to them) but activists who we hope will form into local chapters and proselytize on their own. We Georgists can't do the necessary work all by ourselves. We need to enlist the support of non-Georgists who can work with us (and who can slowly be "Georgified," we hope).

Center for the Study of Economics

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The methods ~~COMMON GROUND~~ will employ to accomplish these goals will be two-fold at first: (1) a direct mail campaign à la Common Cause, Sierra Club, etc., (2) a display advertising campaign featuring our Idea and asking readers to buy inexpensive publications we will be offering, and eventually we hope responders would become more active.

All this is easier said than done. It takes much time to do this - but after Jan. 31, 1986, I will be working FULL-TIME for HGFA/CSE/CG!!! I will be retiring from teaching (after 30 years) and will receive two grants from the Henry George School and the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation to supplement my pension. Then I will be in a position to really activate these somewhat grandiose plans.

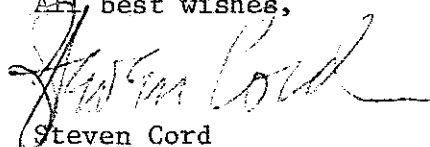
Well, while I'm at it, here's another change: starting February 1986, the headquarters of HGFA/CSE/CG will be moving to: 6077 Loventree Road, Columbia, MD 21044 (301-997-9232)!!! There are various personal reasons for the relocation but one clear advantage will be that I will be only $\frac{1}{2}$ hour away from an airport, not $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours as now. This will enable me to visit many U.S. cities, not just those nearby me, in an effort to get a two-rate property tax introduced. We must not forget that goal. We've produced successes along that line in the past and must continue to try to build momentum.

In any case, the Busy Season for the two-rate expansion is rapidly coming upon us. It lasts to January (huff-puff).

So you can easily see that there are big changes looming ahead for our organizations. Let's keep up the pressure on many fronts and hope for a Breakthrough - i.e., let's hope that we'll get enough two-rate cities, and they'll show spurts in new construction (as in the past), the professionals will be alerted to all this especially by our COMMON GROUND efforts, and then they'll start pushing the transfer of taxes off labor and capital and onto land, quite independent of our efforts. We have to start the Bandwagon, but it will have to be others who will get it to roar forward!

I trust this will find all of you well.

Ah, best wishes,



Steven Cord

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COMMON GROUND

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P.S. I visited the U.S. Postal Service recently to get a stamp for Henry George in their American Biography series (20 million stamps issued - good publicity for our cause). I made some progress; further follow-ups will be needed. But the post cards many of you folks wrote a while ago sure made my initial contact easier! Fran Feldman, our first contact, already has her interest aroused about George because of those cards. I didn't have to make a cold call (always difficult). If any of you wish to write Ms. Feldman, here's her address: U.S. Postal Service, L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, D.C. 20260.