

PROGRESS OF THE INSTITUTE

The first annual meeting of the Henry George Institute was held June 24 at Freedom House in New York, attended by 33 members who heard reports of progress and joined in plans for the future.

Members of the Board of Directors addressed the meeting. Robert Clancy spoke on the aims and goals of the Institute. Laurence Kobak told of a successful class in Progress and Poverty in Jackson Heights, organized by distributing circulars in the street; and he said more classes are planned in the Fall. William Camargo reported on the Institute's first dinner meeting held June 4, attended by 39 persons and addressed by Bradford Lyttle of the War Tax Resisters, and Abraham Ellis, author of The Social Security Fraud.

Mario Cordero, who has moved to Washington, told of contacts he has made with persons and groups there, including Ralph Nader's Public Interest Research Group. Gilbert Herman outlined plans for revision of the manual, The Application of Land Value Taxation. Bolivar Rodriguez gave a report on the progress of work in the Spanish language, with lessons being translated and classes planned.

Joseph Jespersen gave a Treasurer's report, announcing that nearly 100 persons have become members. (It is now over 100.) Sydney Mayers reviewed HGI's organizational status and expressed his views on the timeliness of the Institute.

(The above eight Directors were members of the Board at the time of the meeting. Since then, Dorothy Sara has become the ninth Director.)

Clyde Reeves, Professor of Speech at Monmouth College, was present and outlined a plan for a speech contest among high school students based on the Georgist philosophy. His plan was endorsed and is proceeding under the sponsorship of the Institute.

The importance of wide participation by members was stressed, as everybody is working as a volunteer.

The first general election will be held in 1972.

(For information about joining, contact the Henry George Institute, Room 462-A, 55 West 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036.)

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THE STORY OF THE HENRY GEORGE INSTITUTE

This is the first issue of HGI JOURNAL, organ of the Henry George Institute.

In February of this year the Henry George Institute was incorporated not for profit under the laws of the State of New York, its formation having been approved by the Commissioner of Education. Its aims and purpose are primarily to foster, promulgate and promote the economic principles and the social philosophy of Henry George, America's foremost economist.

Why the Institute was brought into being at this time must be evident to those who sadly observe the declining state of this country's and the world's economy, and recognize the need for energetically striving to reveal a logical and valid remedy for the prevailing ills - chief among them, of course, being the problem of poverty.

Those who have organized HGI propose to pursue every possible avenue toward the accomplishment of its aims, most of them having spent many years in the movement to publicize Georgist principles and to educate the public in the social benefits to be enjoyed through their widespread application. Their heartfelt hope is that they will be joined by many others who as members and supporters of HGI will help to disseminate the great message.

(See back page for further news of HGI.)

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Robert Clancy
Sydney Mayers
Dorothy Sara

A STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Henry George Institute is dedicated to the conviction that economic prosperity, productive abundance, social justice and individual happiness derive primarily from a free economy, free trade, a free society and personal liberty. Believing that these are best exemplified and promulgated in the economic principles of Henry George, it is the purpose of this Institute to disseminate and publicize George's teachings, writings and proposals through all educational means available, and to invite like-minded people to join with it in this task.

There is no moment that is not the right moment to promulgate the teachings of Henry George. But every so often comes an especially propitious time, when the potential audience for this philosophy is particularly receptive.

It may be a time of recession, of unusually burdensome taxation, or of war or other unrest. It is then that people are economically and socially disturbed, seeking answers and solutions.

We think the present era is just such a time. Wars and near-wars are raging; taxes are high and going higher; rent and land costs are rising, while inflation is a growing menace, raising prices and lowering real wages.

A bewildered public helplessly watches a declining economy and a deteriorating social structure, fretfully asking why it is happening and how it can be corrected. What better time for supplying the answers?

We must apply all we know in doing this job - and also learn new ways of doing it more effectively.

Let us who are educated in Georgist thought seize this opportunity now!

"THE NEW PROSPERITY"

By SYDNEY MAYERS

Mr. Nixon's dramatic broadcast of August 15, outlining a "comprehensive new economic policy," caused many a raised eye-brow. The President dropped a series of fiscal bombshells, reforms he believes will lead to "new prosperity." Some are plausible, others dubious; others, in the light of experience, are doomed at the start.

But whatever the merits of his proposals, and whatever their chances of success, clearly strong domestic and international pressures prompted them. Despite earlier optimism, he astutely felt compelled to face the realities of a declining economy within the country and increasing monetary attacks from abroad.

Freezing wages cannot be effective, chiefly because it involves not real wages, but merely amounts of currency. Freezing prices just will not work. It never has, even under severe totalitarian controls. Only in a free market can a true balance be attained. Further inhibiting world trade, considering the retaliation that will ensue, ultimately must harm us all. Hopefully, the cutting of taxes and the freeing of the dollar should bring salutary if obviously limited results.

The important aspect of the Administration package is the evident realization that growing inflation, burdensome taxation, excessive government spending, and dollar-shaking hanky-panky add up to economic disaster. To face the facts is a great step forward.

Perhaps when all else has failed, we will (in desperation?) try the real remedy, the principles of Henry George.

FROM THE NATION'S CAPITAL

By MARIO CORDERO

In 1967, President Johnson created a National Commission on Urban Problems. I quote here excerpts from a chapter of the Commission's report entitled "Problems of Land Value Taxation":

"Between 1956 and 1966, the market value of privately owned land in the U.S. approximately doubled... from \$269 billion to approximately \$523 billion... more than \$5000 per American family..."

"The value of land results from its present prospective use for any of various productive purposes. Economists of the 18th and 19th centuries analyzed differences in value of various pieces of agricultural land by reference to their relative fertility. But they also observed that equally fertile plots differed in value because of their locations... The added worth of the better-located plots... was recognized as 'rental value'... It is evident that the value of particular pieces of land is tremendously influenced by their locations..."

"Since such values result largely from social and governmental factors, rather than from actions by property owners, it is entirely proper for government to capture through taxation a significant part of the economic benefits that flow... to private landowners."

Much more could be quoted from the Report, but I conclude with the concluding remark of the Commissioners: "We wish to raise our voices, feeble as they may be, to speak to the intelligence and conscience of mankind."

THE NEW SUBURBS By ROBERT CLANCY

A series of four articles on New York's suburbs appeared in the New York Times, August 16 - 19. Here are some quotes:

"Land is the coin and the treasure of the suburbs around New York City and that land - some of which has risen in value in 20 years from \$700 to \$90,000 an acre - is the prize in a continuing battle for control of the 775 municipalities that make up the world's largest suburban area."

"Every graceful multilane ribbon of asphalt that skirts a small town and winds through farmland is like the touch of Midas, transforming old pastures and woods into precious real estate ripe for the developer who wants land for an office building, a shopping mall, a tract of houses."

"...At least 80% of New York families are now priced out of the new housing market entirely."

"Land is more than wealth and power... A team of New York Times reporters... found that the economics of land use was the prime factor in the growth of two closely related components of the suburbs' economic health: jobs and housing."

Thus we see it's still the land question. And the problems arising in the suburbs are directly answered by the Georgist philosophy.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN LVT By GILBERT HERMAN

"Henry George's single tax idea might have been good 100 years ago, but today land is an insignificant factor in our economy. You couldn't collect enough revenue to govern our complex society, much less apply it effectively."

Georgists have heard this kind of argument many times, even from people who understand Land Value Taxation and appreciate its justice. It raises two valid questions: How much revenue could be expected? How could LVT be best applied?

The Research Committee of the Henry George Institute has been formed to study the application of LVT, so that such questions may be answered factually. Those familiar with the COLT manual on The Application of Land Value Taxation know these problems are not easily solved. For example, land in the economic sense includes more than land as commonly defined, since also included are natural resources like oil, minerals, air rights, air waves (radio and TV), etc.

The Research Committee is now preparing a revised and updated second edition of the COLT manual for publication by HGI. In addition to the basic topics previously covered, which consider ways and means of implementing LVT, the new edition will contain new material, criticisms and suggestions received from readers, and a bibliography of pertinent books and pamphlets.

The HGI also plans to conduct other studies relating to the Georgist philosophy.

A WORD FROM MACHIAVELLI
By JOSEPH JESPERSEN

Recently, reading Machiavelli's The Prince, I came across this statement:

"It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries who have the laws in their favor, and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it."

We may disagree with much of Machiavelli's thinking, but this shrewd observation seems to fit our situation. Nevertheless, if the task being attempted by the Henry George Institute is difficult that is all the more reason to apply ourselves to it.

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"Successful founders of tyranny have understood... that great changes can best be brought about under old forms. We who would free men should heed the same truth." - Henry George

HENRY GEORGE TO ME
By DOROTHY SARA

Sometimes I ask myself what Henry George does for me. In addition to trying to teach others his principles, what is my personal compensation? The rewards are many.

George's philosophy teaches me the pride and dignity of my own self, encouraging me to think and express myself as an individual.

It helps in my relationships with others, because I know they too are individuals, each having the right to be treated as an integral person. This makes life more interesting, for every individual I meet becomes a new experience.

The study and teaching of the philosophy of Henry George challenges my mind and is a never ending source of knowledge.

The application of Georgist principles also aids me in earning a living, enabling me to go with courage into the market place. I do not feel "exploited" when I know my professional endeavors are subject to the law of supply and demand.

Philosophically, I consider myself lucky to have found Henry George.

REVELLIE FOR JUSTICE
By MABEL L. REES

As tumult and the flames of passion grow,
All laws that human rights deny must go;
For world-wide JUSTICE let the trumpets blow!

The history of proud nations shows the way,
Once great, they met disaster and decay
As poverty and crime the masses sway.

No longer will the man with just a hoe
Remain contented with a lot so low,
And straight'ning up will turn against his foe.

Though all men seek to satisfy desire,
But few possess the means this would require
When legal minds 'gainst nature's laws conspire.

While man is more, he's part of nature too,
And when denied her many gifts, 'tis true
Life wanes for all except the lucky few.

Each man his own man aspires to be
With right of self-employment or be free
To work for others at a higher fee.

Technology production can increase
But if unfair division does not cease
There still will be no economic peace.

Communities could pay their way, you'd find,
If to a change of taxes they inclined,
With funds on hand for needs of every kind.

If land were taxed to end monopoly,
Less tax on all of labor there would be
With growing hope of equal liberty.

"A wrong cannot become a right," pray note,
('Twas thus a man of wisdom often spoke)
"For only JUSTICE can the wrong revoke."