

W. Newcomb

Allocation of the Annual Income, 1977, on the  
Seven Rungs of the Ladder and its two Uprights

IF I HAD \$21,703,000.00...Annual Income figured at 7.6%.....\$1,649,000.00

I	Creativity: Print & Electronic Media	\$ 200,000	
II	Black-Latin Division - Emphasis on Washington, D. C.	250,000	
III	Chairs of LVT in Colleges; Seminars; Capitalizing on People in WHO'S WHO	300,000	
IV	Boring Within	5,000	
V	Litigation Opportunities	70,000	
VI	Social Service Dept. of Churches	24,000	
VII	One-State Educational Crash Program	150,000	
EACH UPRIGHT OF THE LADDER DIVIDED EQUALLY WITHIN THIS SUM: (1) Coordinator for, and (2) National Visible Spokesman for land value taxation.		150,000	
Balance: To present commitments (1977)-		\$ 500,000.00	
		\$1,149,000	\$1,149,000.00

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IF I HAD \$21,703,000.00.....

by

WILLIAM W. NEWCOMB

National Conference of Georgists, Kendall College, Evanston, Illinois  
July 15-18, 1976

Two years ago at Chatham College in Pittsburgh I delivered a paper before this group that was highly critical of the marketing methods of the Georgist Movement. It was 11,000 words in length, and it must have struck a responsive chord, because it was excerpted in almost every Georgist trade journal, and 300 copies were printed amongst several Georgist organizations.

There are five major funded organizations in the Georgist Movement. The figures I give here are as accurate as I have been able to get from officers of these organizations, as of 1976.

Lincoln Foundation	\$15,000,000	(approximate endowment-1976)
Henry George School of New York	3,000,000	(headquarters value not included)
Robert Schalkenbach Foundation	2,850,000	
Basic Economic Education	800,000	
Henry George Foundation	53,000	

Combining these assets gives a total figure of \$21,703,000.

I can well believe there are people in this audience who are in a position to challenge the corporate figures I give of the various organizations listed. Except for the last Corporate statement issued by the Lincoln Foundation, all the other figures were given by at least two people knowledgeable about that individual organization. In the case of the New York Henry George School, I have not included the headquarters building, which was appraised ten years ago at a half million dollars, and if the School could sell it today for that, it would be a sensible thing to do, because it is the most wasteful square footage I have ever seen in my 22 year career as a real estate broker. Whether to buy a smaller building with more utilitarian space or to rent, I offer no judgment.

I haven't the slightest idea what the portfolios of stocks and bonds the above institutions have except the Henry George Foundation of which I am an officer. One foundation is developing a real estate portfolio through a building program, and thus its income at this moment is not its future's potential, and another foundation is still analyzing the assets of a foundation which merged with it.

The portfolios may enjoy an income of from 2% to over 10%. (Most public utilities are allowed 11%.) Using income figures that have been stated in published papers and by officers, I figure that 7.6% on the entire \$21,703,000 is reasonable. This strikes a total presumed annual return of about \$1,649,428.00.

Now this is a whimsical journey into idealism so anyone who wants to challenge either the figures of the corpus or the return, let it rest. My talk is not about what the securities brokers attempt to earn for Georgist institutions, but how I would spend, on an annual basis, the \$1,649,428.00.

The Movement is now 97 years old and a sorrier state of achievement never afflicted any other reformist movement in terms of money mis-spent this past 40 years. From Henry George's two mayoralty campaigns until about 1915 there were all manner of well financed political campaigns. Arthur Nichols Young in "The Single Tax Movement in the United States" (c) 1916 and Jackson H. Ralston in "Confronting the Land Question" (c) 1945 let it be known that Henry George's statement on page 328, 50th Anniversary edition, 1937 of

"Progress and Poverty": "We must make land common property" had more to do with the loss of well-organized and well-financed state legislative campaigns than any other reason.

Consider the early renowned supporters: Albert Einstein, Leo Tolstoi, John Dewey, Helen Keller, George Bernard Shaw, Albert Jay Nock, H. L. Mencken, Tom Johnson, William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., William Jennings Bryan and Joseph Fels.

There are just as many worthy and well-known people supporting land value taxation in 1976, but their support is not coordinated or publicized toward a common goal. And that is the nub of my paper today.

In the six hours daily that I spend in developing and providing marketing ideas for the Georgist Movement, many are put into execution immediately. Today I want to show a seven-rung ladder which, I believe, if put into coordinated operation, would start a state-by-state legislative acceptance of land value taxation.

I am going to name the seven rungs now, and briefly elaborate on them in the course of this paper:

- I. Creativity: Or the use of the print and electronic media.
- II. Developing a Black-Latin Division, with immediate emphasis on Washington, D.C.
- III. Establishing Chairs of Land Value Taxation in Small Colleges; Developing Seminars and Panels with Organizational Follow-up; Capitalizing on the people listed in WHO'S WHO.
- IV. Boring Within: Using the Postwar I dialectic trick of the Communists.
- V. Finding Litigation Opportunities.
- VI. Using the Social Service Department of the Churches.
- VII. Developing a One-State Educational Crash Program -- for later follow-up in Non-exempt political action.

The above seven rungs are held together by two uprights of a ladder which we will call:

- (1) Coordinator of the land value tax movement through annual income from the corpus of foundations,
- and (2) National Visible Spokesman, which Frank Strunk, Communications Expert, from the Washington, D. C. area, advised was our most urgent need, when he accepted my invitation, and spoke at the Chatham Conference two years ago.

So, to the first rung of the ladder, CREATIVITY: OR USE OF THE PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA. Last winter I had an announcement put in all the Georgist trade journals that I would send a flyer of two pages offering constructive advice to any Georgist writer who hoped to get into newspaper syndication as a socio-economic-political columnist on land economics vs the monetary economists. 24 men and one woman asked for the flyer. Two of the men sent me column efforts that they had been working on, and had small local syndication. Unfortunately, neither of the men tied their theme to events of the current week or month, and they would never be accepted. I checked with the publisher of the "The Road to Syndication", one of the publications I suggested each of the 25 people buy. Believe me, 3/4 of those 25 people would not spend \$3 for that book -- which might have been the start of a \$1000 per week career. However, sooner or later there will be a land economist writing a syndicated column.

The typical high school student does not like economics, and with all due respect to Harry Pollard's marvelous INTERSTUDY Program for students, I offer for your enjoyment SUPERHEROES OF MACROECONOMICS offering MONETARY MAN VS. FISCAL FLASH. In summary.....

"The far-off land of Tartarus is gripped in the world's worse depression. Unemployment has reached 33% and is climbing. The Gross National Product has dropped 50% in the past year; stores are empty, factories are idle, and the breadlines grow longer each day.

"To the rescue come Monetary Man and Fiscal Flash doubling the money-supply, cutting taxes and injecting government funds into the paralyzed economy. Thus, goes the story, an attempt to ku-raaaaash through student boredom with economics."

Follett Publishing Company, 1010 West Washington Boulevard, in Chicago, publishes the comic book. Let's see one of you innovative Georgists living in the Chicago area create a competitor to this book's economics. Get yourself an artist or use a Follett artist, and get into business. If you came up with the right script and the right art work, I believe one of the Georgist foundations would support a start in publication. Mr. Robert Follett, President, told me that he would publish 50,000 copies, 70 pages each, for about \$45,000 guarantee. His book sells to the public schools for \$1.50 each. This is a project that the Henry George School should consider for junior high schools. By financing the project, and aiding in distribution, the Henry George School could earn 50¢ a copy. After all, the public schools have to buy textbooks with our taxes.

I have distributed 5000 copies of this UPTAXING LAND folder, which Robert Schalkenbach Foundation published upon my recommendation. With each folder goes a little white slip on which is written:

"THIS FOLDER GOES WITH EVERY LETTER I WRITE. In five years I have distributed 5000 copies of this folder, many of them to respondents who have heard me on TV. So many have felt the effect of the folder's message, they have written to the organizations overleaf for more information, and now:

Books are being written, foundations are considering grants, colleges are adding courses in land economics to balance their courses in monetary economics, and land economists are submitting sample columns to news syndicates. Local LWV and Common Cause groups are joining with other groups in sponsoring property tax reform seminars. State/ county governments and businessmen are saying, "This might be the answer to stagflation, unemployment, the bloated state/ federal welfare bureaucracy, and the high cost of housing."

and signed with my name, and overleaf is the address of six Georgist organizations. Why don't each of you get 100 of these Uptaxing Land folders, type and Xerox 100 sheets in your own words, and mail out with your letters.

One never knows who will respond to the folder. A famous expose author, David Hapgood, was one respondent. His latest book, "The Screwing of the Average Man", has sold a half million copies, his sequel to that book will have a land value tax chapter in it; his third book will be all on land value taxation.

We have a very important message to deliver to the city/ county commissioners, tax assessors and other local government officials, and larger funding for the newsletter to these people should be granted to INCENTIVE TAXATION, produced by Professor Steven Cord.

In every Georgist trade journal there is usually one piece of landmark news in site value taxation. But the only people who learn about it are those in that neighborhood, through their local paper.

Can you believe it? The Georgist Movement has no one issuing press releases to the 48 columnists dealing in socio-economic-political commentary.

All of you know the success of the film, ONE WAY TO BETTER CITIES, which cost \$50,000 plus another \$30,000 for distribution. Despite its over-orientation to New York, it has made a great impact on millions of people via service club audiences and on TV. The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation should produce more films. Rep. Bill Onweiler has adapted the film to Idaho; and LEAF is spending \$1700 cutting out some New York scenes, and inserting San Diego into a revision of ONE WAY TO BETTER CITIES.

This film and future films should be promoted by public service announcements on TV. Before this year is out, I hope to have some taped public service announcements made by our Community College Audio-Visual Department -- free.

But something the Schalkenbach Foundation now is encouraging costs peanuts compared with a film. These are slide-and-tape projects orientated to the community in which the Georgist sponsor lives. Rep. Bill Onweiler of Idaho made his 86 slides-and-tape for less than \$100 and will tell you about it tonight. Our out-of-pocket cost on the Florida slides-and-tape will run under \$200. Camera work, story and tape synchronization are all being donated. Schalkenbach will finance out-of-pocket costs anywhere in the United States.

From the \$1,649,000.00 income, I believe CREATIVITY should be allocated \$200,000.

The second rung of the ladder I consider of most immediate importance: DEVELOPING A BLACK-LATIN DIVISION, WITH IMMEDIATE EMPHASIS ON WASHINGTON, D.C.

The lack of innovativeness in the Georgist movement, the lack of youth in the movement, the lack of black activists in the movement, and the entrenchment of old graybeards on the foundations and Henry George School Board of Trustees -- some of whose ages run in the 80s and 90s, has pointed up something endemic to the Movement: Its leadership is tired. This is repeatedly shown by the difficulty of getting a quorum to regular and special board meetings and to annual meetings.

The Movement has too many people in leadership roles who are so affluent they don't need or care about the salutary effects of land value taxation, and won't put a personal drive into building a success in the organization on which they have been a board member of 50 years or more.

What this Movement needs are some people in leadership roles who represent the poor blacks and other minorities, men high in the echelons of the NAACP, the Urban League and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, now that Prentice has made a breakthrough with his speech at Southern Christian Leadership Conference in July, 1975.

The Harry Pollards of the educational front should be developing the INTERSTUDENT Program for qualified black students, with the help and guidance of public and private administrators. Colleges that have a majority of blacks or other minority students should be funded in the economic courses by Georgist foundations. The above three black national organizations are highly successful, in raising foundation money. Limited Georgist funding plus the other foundation monies could start a new wave of the future.

But most immediately, the League for Urban Land Conservation, under the direction of Walter Rybeck, and ably assisted by the hardest working Black in the United States, Wilbur

Johnson, should have intensified funding. Washington, D. C., is 70% Black. It probably has the highest quotient of educated blacks in the entire United States. The League for Urban Land Conservation should be working closely with the NAACP, Urban League and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to get the land value tax referendum passed.

This project should have the second largest funding of the seven rungs of the ladder: \$250,000. Right now I am working on marketing for the organization at Rybeck's request.

RUNG III. ESTABLISH CHAIRS OF LAND VALUE TAXATION IN SMALL COLLEGES. Note I specifically said, "small colleges." Small colleges must watch their payrolls very carefully. Many big universities have been approached by the larger Georgist foundations, and these larger centers of education want some gravy along with the Chair to be financed. But in the small college there is an approach proviso we must insist on: Scholarships may be offered to any student who meets a special test in taking a course in these classes provided that the student, upon graduating, gives at least one year of service to the Georgist Movement. This is comparable to medical and dental scholarships requiring an MD or DDS to serve an area of special need. This is similar in context to those who register for ROTC, and must put some time in the military service.

Develop Seminars on a continuing basis. Perry Prentice did a magnificent job this past ten years in organizing panels of influential men in business, civic life, universities, government, builders-developers and other prominent organizations. NATIONS CITIES MAGAZINE has reprinted the discussions. This should be continued by younger men trained by Mr. Prentice. But there must be developed a follow-up formula so prominent seminarians create what I call "An Association to Promote Land Value Taxation Related to Our Professions." This means that as these Seminars are held, land value taxers on a foundation payroll must serve as follow-through men.

As a corollary to the Seminars, there should be developed a Country Retreat Program to which selected men and women from WHO'S WHO are invited for a special study into our social system. Louis Weitzman proposed at last year's Conference at Harcum College that the elitists in WHO'S WHO be cultivated as a contrast to the little old ladies in tennis shoes who went to the Henry George Schools all this 40 years. This project could be similar to that conducted by the Foundation for Economic Education - but with our economics. The registration alone for the FEE retreats usually cost over \$200, paid for by the elitist student. Funding for the above three related projects: \$300,000.

Let us go on to RUNG IV: BORING WITHIN. There are all kinds of politically activist organizations which we should be a part of: Common Cause, League of Women Voters and Nader's Tax Reform Research Group, to name some.

In Florida, both Common Cause (with 9000 Florida members) and League of Women Voters (with 4000 Florida members) have Task Force Committees. The former State President of Common Cause saw ONE WAY TO BETTER CITIES on June 24, and the State Lobbyist will be seeing it before summer is over. Our Georgist friend, Bruno Eichert, living in Fort Lauderdale, is working on this project. My good friend, Cynthia Brubaker, who was on the Committee of Eight Civic Groups to bring Perry Prentice to Melbourne, Florida, on March 20, 1975, and is also a State Board member of the Florida League of Women Voters, will be helping to develop land value tax projects in her organization. But what we need to have are some top Common Cause members who are Georgist run for election to the national board of Common Cause. This can be done best by a Petition that needs only 20 signatures for running in the 1977 Common Cause Board election.

At the moment I don't see any big cost factor, other than some limited travel expense. It being strictly political, the Henry George Foundation should handle this. Say, \$5,000.

RUNG V. FIND LITIGATION OPPORTUNITIES. In every state in the union there is under-assessment of real estate. Tax Assessor Irene Hickman in California was unable to assess according to the law. She took the matter to the California Supreme Court. She lost. But there are 49 other states -- and most of these states have assessors who favor big land-owners such as Delaware's assessors do with DuPont properties. The Ralph Nader organization, THE TAX REFORM RESEARCH GROUP, has done yeoman research in this field. This would be an opportunity for a Special Georgist Litigant Team to work closely with the Nader people, who have a good stable of lawyers. Another group we should work with is Americans United for Separation of Church and State. They have done the best research job on church ownership of big corporations. Their books detail the loss to the United States of huge tax revenues on the national scale; and the loss of property taxes to the local tax collector. Funding \$70,000.

RUNG VI. SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCHES. Related to the above is a project I am working on: The film ONE WAY TO BETTER CITIES has been shown in Unitarian churches all over Florida. Our Melbourne Unitarian Fellowship is composed of almost a 100% adherence to land value taxation, and the Southeast Director of the national office of the Unitarian Universalist Association (at Atlanta) is being primed for national espousal. Why the Unitarians? Because it is a small church body: 1/4 million. It has a 150-year reputation for responsiveness to social problems. We assume it has less big land speculators in its membership. Funding \$24,000.

I come to the seventh and last rung of the ladder: DEVELOPING A CRASH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN THE STATE MOST READY FOR LEGISLATIVE IMPLEMENTATION. There are people on this three-day program at Kendall College representing Wisconsin, Nebraska, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, New Hampshire, Illinois, Florida and California. Perry Prentice, with a strong rapport for all of you, feels that IDAHO is closest to realization of land value taxation, because of the excellent job done by Rep. Bill Onweiler, and if this is so, massive educational funds should be directed to Idaho, followed by a non-exempt campaign conducted by Common Cause, League of Women Voters, People's Lobby -- and newly created groups. We must get one state for setting an example.

Thus, I propose at least \$150,000 for a tax-exempt campaign.

\$100,000 (at least) of non-exempt money -- that is outside the foundation field.

(Note: Since this paper was read, Prentice has advised that Nebraska is closer to being ready. And Russell Conklin, long-time political activist, stated at the conference that \$5000 paid to a lobbyist he knows would get land value taxation passed in the legislature of Montana. That is a pretty low figure compared to the hundreds of thousands spent by Joseph Fels on many state-wide political campaigns.)

I have listed the seven rungs of the ladder to bring land value taxation to the United States, with concentration on a single state for implementation.

We now come to the two uprights to which the rungs of the ladder are attached.

Upright I -- National Coordinator for the land value tax movement. Such a man or woman finds the way to get the best expenditure by each foundation for reaching the final goal.

Upright II -- National Visible spokesman for the land value tax movement. This man or woman is the front-person for the Movement. He knows how to raise money from Non-Georgist foundations, he becomes the Chief Spokesman in press releases, he is usually the one to be interviewed by the press.

Between the Coordinator and the National Visible Spokesman, the land value tax movement becomes a viable institution in the eyes of the press, the government, big and small business, and the little man who is trying to make ends meet.

\$150,000 funding in the beginning.

I keep asking myself the following questions:

Why isn't a vast direct mail campaign instituted in the land value tax movement? Put a man like Frank Coble, a Georgist, with expertise in management and motivation, President of Thomas Jefferson Research Center, Pasadena; or Frank Strunk, Communications expert, Rockville, MD, outside of Washington, DC, onto a sales Promotion Campaign. Strunk spoke to us at Chatham two years ago, as I stated above.

I REPEAT, the two areas in the United States in which we Georgists and tens of thousands of other people should be making contributions (under the sales guidance of either a Coble or a Strunk) are: (1) League for Urban Land Conservation, headed by Walter Rybeck, in Washington, DC. (2) To whatever local Citizen Group is backing Rep. Bill Onweiler, in his efforts to get a local option bill passed in Idaho, or Everett Gross in Nebraska.

In the early part of this paper I said I was going to take you on a whimsical journey into idealism. Those who control the purse strings of the Georgist foundations and the Henry George School will tell me that I have not allowed for general administrative costs, commitments already planned for years to come, the nuts and bolts of building rents, maintenance and taxes.

At 7.6%, the income of the presumed total assets of the Movement, rounded out, is \$1,649,000. Totaling the appropriations I have arbitrarily assigned to each of the seven rungs of the ladder, we have a 1977 cost of \$1,149,000.

The half million dollar surplus you can assign wherever you wish.

There are many reform organizations in the U. S. with far less assets than the \$21,703,000 in the Henry George movement. These organizations draw considerable monies from the 25,000 foundations in the U. S., through using fund raising skills that are taught in seminars for less than \$500. They are effective in putting their money and manpower to work, because youthful people with vigor and aggressiveness are at their helm. These people know how their money is spent, because their organizations are democratically controlled.

Cathi Covell, Executive Director of the San Francisco Henry George School, spoke movingly at the 1976 HGS Conference, University of San Francisco, for more openness in financial matters. Are the bequests of the dead and the donations of the living being spent to get the most for the dollar? With Miss Covell's strong feeling for financial disclosure making an impact on the audience, a resolution was passed asking for this disclosure.

With \$1½ million dollars presumably available annually, why do we have so little visual results? Say you, the Georgist reader of this paper, had this \$1½ million this year? How would you spend it?

NOTE: This paper edited and new material added. A portion of the paper was read (by request) at the LEAF Conference, San Francisco, July 4, 1976.