

## The Henry George School

ADDRESS OF FRANK CHODOROV AT  
HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS

WE who have studied the Single Tax and are satisfied that it is a fundamental truth, based upon justice and fortified by logic, are inclined to believe that therefore this great truth must somehow and at some time prevail. This is an erroneous belief, arising from a fond hope rather than a reasoned conviction.

There is nothing inevitable in an idea. No matter how fundamental a concept might be, it lives only in the minds of men. It dies with them. The transmission of ideas from one generation to another is the result of education, not procreation, and unless this process of education is continuous there is no reason to believe that any truth, no matter how cogent or how intrinsic, will survive.

Nay, error seems to have more vitality than truth, and, like witchgrass in a garden, not only outlives but often crushes it. Twenty centuries of organized teaching of Jesus' ethical precepts have brought them no nearer reality than when first pronounced; in fact, a veritable law of the jungle seems to have completely obliterated the beautiful concept of the Brotherhood of Man. In the field of political economy, instead of the perfectly ordered and truly pragmatic philosophy of Henry George, the world is accepting and putting into practice the impossible, crazily-conceived and soul-destructive notions of Karl Marx. If it is true that "the truth will prevail"—a compensatory shiboleth for those who are too lazy to make it prevail—then it follows that socialism must be true and the Single Tax false, since we find that socialism is being written into the fundamental laws of all nations, including our own, while the principles of economic freedom and human progress find acceptance only in esoteric and inconsequential groups.

The truth does not of itself prevail. To make it prevail, it must be iterated and reiterated, honestly, fiercely and intelligently; it must be constantly sown in the minds of men by every known method of propaganda, and the sowing and re-seeding of that truth must be accompanied by just as careful and continuous plucking of the weeds of error. It is, I believe, because we have not been as diligent in this process as we should have been, that the great truth we so fervently believe in has been submerged in a sea of socialistic falsehood.

The truth may be lost, forgotten for long, long years. As I said, ideas live only in the minds of men, and when in the natural order of things the men pass on, their ideas pass on with them. We know that the effect of the private ownership of land was known to Moses, to the Gracchi brothers, to Spinoza, to Thomas Jefferson, and to many others. Each in his time called the attention of his contemporaries to the inequity of this system; and each

passed on. Even though Henry George gave to the land question the most complete and most convincing expression, what warrant have we that even his treatment of it may not be obliterated by the destructive hands of communism and fascism which are crushing thought throughout the world?

For seventeen years I have been engaged more or less actively in the Single Tax movement. I have attended many Single Tax gatherings. Do you know what impressed me most when I first went to the meetings? It was the fact that the active workers in the movement were mainly old men and women, and I wondered whether I, a young man, had any business with a movement so dominated. Many of these valiant workers have passed on and I am rapidly approaching the same period of old age. As I look about this audience I notice that the average age of this group must be, if you will pardon my frankness, about the half century mark. In the parlance of the insurance actuary, our period of expectancy is probably not over twenty years—a very, very short time.

Unless we start making converts to our cause, and start very quickly, we can look forward to the gradual attrition of our movement, and to the relegation of the philosophy of Henry George to the dust-covered dullness of seminary study. Unless we do this at once we can look forward to the Single Tax becoming within twenty years merely a subject for research workers to comment upon as an oddity of the 19th Century.

It was with some such apprehension that our late, beloved Oscar Geiger started two years ago a school—the Henry George School of Social Science. He started it entirely with his own meagre resources. He was advised by sincere friends to delay this venture because of the almost insurmountable financial difficulties he would encounter. But he could not delay. He knew, as he told me, that his years were numbered, that the need for the work was great, and with a faith born of supreme love he undertook his task of creating Single Taxers through the orderly process of education, thorough education. But the task was too great for his frail body. In two years he laid the groundwork for one of the most necessary steps in our movement, and he did it by taxing his strength to the limit, by depriving himself of necessary relaxation, by living frugally. He died a martyr to our movement.

Geiger is gone. But even in his going he helped the Single Tax cause, for many of us who were not as helpful as we might have been during the two years he slaved for our School, (and a number of his students) have been inspired by the memory of his martyrdom to carry on the work he started. Enough money has been subscribed to enable the School to conduct its work for the ensuing term. We have been fortunate in being able to secure the services of a very excellent director, Mr. Norman C. B. Fowles, who combines with his thorough

knowledge of the philosophy of Henry George a keenly analytical mind, a power of persuasion arising from deep sincerity, and a thorough business training that augurs well for the orderly progress of the institution. Mr. Fowles will be assisted in his work by a group of ardent workers, who, it is interesting to note, are mainly young graduates of the School who have been inspired by the teachings of our great prophet.

The second year of Oscar Geiger's work saw the School firmly established in a home of its own—in a presentable, centrally located New York building, with classroom, library, office—all the appurtenances of a regular institution. More important than its physical progress was the fact that the Board of Regents of the State of New York had recognized the School by granting it a temporary charter—which will become permanent if, within the next three years, enough support is given the institution and enough students attend its courses to assure its permanency. This recognition of the Board of Regents is quite important. It is the first time, I believe, that any governmental educational body has given its stamp of approval to the teachings of Henry George—the first time that "Progress and Poverty," "Protection or Free Trade" and the "Science of Political Economy" have been used as text books in any recognized school in this country. This recognition in New York carries with it a very significant corollary, for teachers in the elementary and high schools in that State are entitled for their attendance at our School to receive "certificates of alertness."

This certificate of alertness is issued only by recognized institutions of learning. It is accepted by the State Board of Regents as an evidence of the teacher's desire to improve herself or himself culturally, and is taken into consideration when this teacher applies for advancement. A knowledge, therefore, of Henry George has a very real, intrinsic value to every New York school teacher. Do you realize how important this is to our movement? We are able to appeal to these teachers to study our philosophy not only because of its great message of human freedom, but also because a knowledge of it will help them in a material way. What finer body could we add to our cause than these men and women who are moulding the minds of the coming generation? While the school work must of necessity be purely educational, without propaganda, I defy anyone to teach "Progress and Poverty" without emphasizing the great change in our social order that must follow the institution of the Single Tax, and I defy anyone who has studied this book to avoid telling others about it. There are 36,000 school teachers in the City of New York. What a wonderful field for us to work on!

The school year is divided into two parts. Part One consists of a study of "Progress and Poverty" and of "Protection or Free Trade." The text books for Part Two are "The Science of Political Economy" and Prof.

Geiger's "Philosophy of Henry George," which is, by the way, the greatest contribution to our literature since Henry George. There are fifteen lessons of two hours each in both parts, making a total of sixty attendance hours. The class room work is, of course, accompanied by home study of at least equal duration. Oscar Geiger left us a detailed teacher's manual, consisting of a series of questions covering every chapter in "Progress and Poverty." These questions the students are required to answer in class, and discussion among the students then ensues. Can you imagine any more thorough method of making converts to our movement? The graduates of this School not only know Single Tax, they are prepared to teach it.

The extra-curricular work of the School consists of monthly forums held in a public hall. As a rule these gatherings are addressed by one of the old guard, but some of the students last year were sufficiently advanced to be able to make speeches of their own; they always engage in the discussions following the main address. Also on Saturday afternoons the School conducts a young folks' discussion group—mainly high school and college students who foregather to discuss topics of the day. While the director helps to keep these youngsters in line economically, they do most of the talking. There are boys and girls in this free-for-all from sixteen years of age to about twenty-one—and it would do your hearts good to hear them talk Single Tax. Tea is served.

The School also conducts a correspondence course. It is significant that one of Geiger's graduates, now a senior at Columbia University majoring in Economics, has been placed in charge of this department by the new director. This course, covering only "Progress and Poverty" so far, was taken by about fifty students last year. I have been studying and reading "Progress and Poverty" for the past twenty years, and I really thought I was thoroughly versed in the subject, until I received from Geiger last year the printed questions which the correspondent students are required to answer. I must confess that there were a number of questions which I could not answer without making reference to the text book. I do not believe there is one in this assemblage who could answer all the questions propounded in this course without doing likewise. Try it. Send for the correspondence course and you will discover how much of "Progress and Poverty" you have forgotten—and you will realize, moreover, how thoroughly grounded in Single Tax are those who take the course. The correspondence course is not divided into terms; it is a continuous performance.

Last year, which was really the first completely organized year for the School, eighty-one students enrolled in Part One. Every one of these students paid ten dollars for the course. More than half of these took Part Two, which also carries a ten dollar fee. Text books are furnished by the School. The majority of those enrolled

were public school teachers, but there were also business men, lawyers, college students, a journalist and others.

At the completion of the first school year a commencement dinner was held, which was attended by one hundred and fifty-one persons. That the School, which is conducted purely as an educational institution, where knowledge rather than propaganda is emphasized, really produces Single Taxers, was shown by the fact that the graduates organized themselves into a students' council for the purpose of increasing attendance at the School, raising funds for this purpose, and for considering ways and means for advancing a knowledge of the Henry George philosophy. I will refer to this work again later. There are no Single Taxers in this room more ardent than those who have taken the course at the School.

(Here follows a summary of the enrollment for this year's course:)

#### STATEMENT OF DIRECTOR N. C. B. FOWLES

We are about to enter our third week of class work at the Henry George School of Social Science. We have nearly 140 young people enrolled in our classes and are hoping to tax our maximum capacity at an early date. Of this 140 there are less than five who have ever had real contact with the writings of Henry George. These young people are as fine a lot of young people as the most meticulous Single Taxer could possibly desire. Eager, energetic and anxious to learn that ails the world and to do their part in producing order out of chaos if it is left to them.

There are twenty-two teachers from the New York City Educational System here to gain "Alertness Credits;" sixteen of the more capable students from Universities and High Schools in this vicinity; twenty-six from business offices comprising executives, secretaries, stenographers and clerks; thirteen from the professions exclusive of teachers. The balance consists of salesmen, housewives, tradesmen, etc. There are five young clergymen enrolled. Surely groups such as these are what we need.

The classes are conducted by such representative believers in Henry George as Stephen Bell, Otto K. Dorn, Walter Fairchild, Will Lissner and the Director. Mr. Lissner took both courses under the late Oscar H. Geiger last year and is conducting Part Two this term. He is a young man and a staff writer on the *New York Times*.

All of the instructors came forward without personal consideration to do their part in serving the School—moved by the knowledge that at last a practical plan had been developed of securing the necessary new blood in our movement to carry George's proposals into all walks of life.

Thirty-seven of the students now enrolled came to us through former students now members of the Student-Alumni Council—an evidence of how the School can be made to perpetuate itself, that should justify much to those who "care."

An evidence of the splendid inspiration of the late Oscar H. Geiger is exemplified in the person of William W. Moore, a young Columbia student who, after taking the course under Mr. Geiger last year, handles the Correspondence Courses in connection with the Henry George School of Social Science. Much more could be said about all this but enough has been told to indicate that our late founder at last hit upon a most effective plan whereby we, whose hair has grown gray in this movement, can enlist the energies and intelligence of our young people in the "Great Solution" which George and Geiger both gave their lives to advance.

This School, a memorial to the genius of its founder, affords a plan whereby a constant stream of our young people may pass through our class rooms, receiving in their passage a thorough knowledge of our great philosophy and take their place in a con-

stantly growing Student-Alumni Council to insist upon Reason and Justice as necessary view-points in the economic councils of men.

And now, let me ask a pertinent question. Why are we gathered here? Why have we come from all parts of the country to attend this conference? Surely not from selfish motives, nor even for a desire to meet other Single Taxers for mere social intercourse. We come to these gatherings because we hope that out of them somehow a practical programme for the advancement of our cause will be discovered and put into practice. We want the Single Tax. But we know that until there is a substantial number of people in this country who are of the same conviction as we are, the hope of enacting this fundamental change in our laws can hardly be thought of. In other words, the first requirement of a successful Single Tax movement is—more Single Taxers—many, many more than we have now.

I dare say that every one in this room became converted to this cause after reading "Progress and Poverty." You may have been influenced to read the book by some friend, or by hearing someone talk on Single Tax. But you really were not a full-fledged convert until after you had read the book. Now then, if that is how you became one of the elect, it would seem to me that the one method of proselyting which should suggest itself to you most readily would be any scheme whereby others would be brought to study the book. No matter what form our movement eventually takes, right now the practical thing to do is to make more converts to our cause by teaching the gospel at the fountain head where all of us have studied. And there is no more direct and thorough method of doing this than by the school method as evolved by Oscar Geiger.

Schools should be started everywhere in the country. They need not be pretentious affairs such as the one in New York. Everybody in this room can start a school in his or her living room. One New York business man conducts a class in his office at night; he has eighteen students this fall, mostly business associates. If every Single Taxer here were to make it his or her task to teach "Progress and Poverty" to a half dozen people once a week, beginning next month, just as it is done in the Henry George School, do you realize that by February 1, we should have several thousand more Single Taxers? What a lot of pleasure it would be to every one of us to do this! What satisfaction it would give us to know that we have done a bit of really constructive work?

The School has prepared a Teachers' Manual for just this work. It consists of a series of questions on each chapter of "Progress and Poverty" which your pupils must be prepared to answer. It also gives suggestions on how to conduct classes and to direct discussions. The School will have this manual ready for distribution very shortly. It will be sent on receipt of one dollar, which barely covers the cost of production. The trustees of the

School hope that a thousand classes will be started in all parts of the country this fall, and have optimistically ordered that many manuals.

I mentioned the fact that the graduates have organized themselves into a Students Council for the purpose of increasing attendance at the School. Their first step was to found an Oscar Geiger Memorial—which consists of a fund of money to be used only to buy scholarships for those who desire to take the course but are unable to pay the tuition fee. Already two thousand dollars have been subscribed to this fund, which means that two hundred will thereby be enabled to take the course. Scholarships have been extended to unemployed school teachers who are anxious to secure certificates of alertness for later advancement, to social service workers, to college students and others. A Thursday night class of business men has been augmented by the use of scholarships on the assumption that these business men will pay for their tuition after they have attended the classes and have learned that our method is the only sane, logical, practical one for the solution of the problems of business.

The School Council has requested me to ask you to subscribe to the Oscar Geiger Memorial so that more scholarships can be given, more converts to the Single Tax cause made. It is the hope of the Council that one thousand students can be enrolled in the class starting after the Christmas holidays. If that hope is realized, it is evident that a body of Single Taxers will have been created by graduation time next May that will be a sufficient guarantee for the continued operation of the School without any necessary appeal to old time Single Taxers—to say nothing of securing a permanent charter from the New York State Board of Regents. If the School can teach the Single Tax to one thousand men and women each term, it is quite evident that within a few years there will be enough Single Taxers in the City of New York to make possible a really effective campaign for the enactment of the Single Tax.

Many of you will remember the campaign conducted during the war to secure adoption of French and Belgian orphans by Americans. The foster-parents and the foster-children rarely ever met, of course, but correspondence between them was encouraged. Now, the School Council comes to you with a request that you adopt a Single Tax orphan—somebody in the vicinity of the School to whom a scholarship can be offered. If you know someone in New York to whom you desire to offer the course, that person shall be told of your offer and urged to accept it. If you have no choice, the council will see to it that your scholarship will be well placed. And at the end of the school term your orphan will write you that he or she has completed the course which your generosity has provided. Thus you will have the satisfaction and pleasure of knowing that your ten dollars have actually produced a new Single Taxer. You will not have contributed to paying for rent, or a secretary, or postage,

or printing, or railroad fare—your money will make a Single Taxer. And you will receive a receipt at the end of the term from the convert you have made.

Nor are you limited to one orphan. Every ten dollars subscribed to this Geiger Memorial Fund will provide one scholarship, every hundred dollars will provide ten scholarships. You can have an entire orphanage of your own. Or, if you cannot afford ten dollars send what you can; your contribution will be added to others to make the necessary tuition fee for one scholarship. This is a sure-fire way of making converts; it has been tested and proven effective. It is the way you and I became Single Taxers. Think of all the money that has been spent on Single Tax efforts that have been so meagre in results when this method should have suggested itself to us years ago. It is so obvious, so simple, that it has escaped our attention. Oscar Geiger has shown the way. Let each of us follow along this right path and adopt at least one Single Tax orphan today. Perhaps the orphan you adopt will be the great political genius, the realist who will inject into our movement that measure of practicability which it has always lacked, and will lead a future generation of Pharaoh-ridden slaves to the Land of Promise.

## Untax the Forgotten Man —The Consumer

ADDRESS OF DR. C. J. LAVERY  
AT HENRY GEORGE CONGRESS

**F**ORTY-ONE years ago it was my privilege to meet Henry George here in Chicago and hear him expound his philosophy of the more abundant life. He was a prophet and foretold the social and economic mess in which we have been floundering the last five years. His method is so simple that legislators of the nation and the States should understand it. I believe many of them do but are restrained from adopting it through force of habit.

### HABIT

Habit is a powerful thing. It makes legislators levy processing taxes, sales taxes, gross income taxes and net income taxes on industry when they should know that they reduce purchasing power and continue the vicious cycle that might be interrupted by taking the public product, land rent, for public expenses. They change the name but not the nature of the tax that they impose because of habit. Instead of taking the load off the overburdened farmers, railroads, gasoline and motor vehicles they apply another tax with a new name, because of habit.

### SLOGAN

Last year, Mr. Thomas Rhodus, in a speech which was published in *LAND AND FREEDOM*, gave us a slogan "Take Taxes Out of Prices." That, I believe, is an im-