

## HENRY GEORGE INSTITUTE

Property Discussions A HGI dinner meeting was held in New York on December 29. The theme of the talks was Property Rights. Joseph Jespersen (HGI Treasurer) spoke on "Proudhon and Property", giving a resumé of the ideas of the ideas of the 19th century French philosopher, Pierre Joseph Proudhon. Though he did not clearly distinguish between land and other property, Proudhon did propose a heavy tax on rents and may be considered a precursor of Henry George. Robert Clancy (HGI President) spoke on "Papal Encyclicals on Property", reviewing the social encyclicals on this theme from Pope Leo XIII's "Rerum Novarum" to John Paul II's "Laborem Exercens", showing that there has been a development toward a sense of social responsibility in property; perhaps there ought to be a renewed effort to influence the Vatican toward Georgist principles. Christopher P. Mooney, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Nassau Community College, spoke on "Property Rights in Land." Author of a Ph.D. thesis on his subject, he dwelt on the nature of right and of rights in land, and pointed out that rights involve responsibilities. (Dr. Mooney's thesis, "Property Rights in Land", is available from the Henry George Institute for \$6.00.)

HGI Election Notice to HGI Members: Nominations are open for the 1982 election. Four Directors are to be elected to replace those whose terms expire in June - Neva Bianco, William A. Camargo, C. Lois Jessop and Stanley Rubenstein. Directors may be re-elected and new nominees may be considered. On request, a current list of members will be sent. Nominations close February 28. Write to the Chairman of the Nominations Committee, Mark A. Sullivan, at HGI headquarters.

Correspondence Graduates Gilbert Halverson completed and submitted a project for a master's degree in Public Administration at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. His paper, "A Case for Site Value Taxation in Wisconsin" actually includes much more than Wisconsin. It outlines the theory of Site Value Taxation, points to its application in various places, argues for its benefits, and discusses the attitudes of current economists and politicians toward SVT. There is also a detailed analysis of this measure as applied to Wisconsin, and special mention is made of the city of Beloit where a chapter of the Wisconsin Property Owners League has done much work for SVT.

Robert P. Willis of Des Moines, Iowa, prepared a detailed study on "Property Tax Reform in Iowa" which he submitted to the Iowa Progressive Coalition, a leading reform group. Mr. Willis outlined a comparison, with figures, between the present tax system and the proposed switch to land value taxation, as affecting not only urban land but farm land as well. In his summary he said, "By reforming the local property tax to shift taxes from payroll and investment earnings to unearned income from land rents, Iowa can encourage major increases in productivity, jobs and income, fight inflation and hold down government spending."

Robert Robinson of Jamaica, New York, on graduating from the correspondence course, wrote: "I feel about the book Progress and Poverty the way Al Smith felt about De Tocqueville's book Democracy in America. Al had little education but he made his mark in politics as a man of the people, becoming Governor of New York and running for President. Few people knew that his sharp political insight came mainly from his constant perusal of De Tocqueville's book and he preferred not to let it be known that he referred to this somewhat heavy reading, because it would spoil his image as a common man. When I first heard of this little known fact, I was amazed that a man could base his whole career on a single book. But I realize that such a book could be Progress and Poverty. I intend to go into it more deeply because his brand of economics is more pertinent today - our tax structure is more overwhelming than it was in George's day when the income tax was not in force."

We are gratified to see active continuing interest on the part of graduates of our correspondence course in Progress and Poverty.