

The Annual Dinner and Meeting of the Henry George Institute was held June 20 at the City University Graduate School, New York. Results of the HGI annual election were announced: For the Board of Directors, Robert Clancy, Gilbert Herman and Sydney A. Mayers were re-elected for a 3-year term; and replacing Judge Jerome S. Medowar, not available for re-election, Edward J. Dodson was elected. For the Nominations Committee for 1985, George Collins and Steven Cord were the Board members elected, and non-Board members were Pat Aller, William A. Camargo and Alice E. Davis.

Guest speakers were two distinguished journalists who have written supporting land value taxation: Gurney Breckenfeld, retired editor of Fortune magazine, and Roger Starr, editorial writer of the New York Times. They addressed themselves to the theme, "The Press and the Georgist Philosophy."

GURNEY BRECKENFELD started his journalism career in California, later joined the staff of House & Home (a Time-Life publication), and learned about the Georgist philosophy from its editor and publisher, P.I. Prentice. Mr. Prentice edited a special issue of House & Home on "Land", August 1960, which Mr. Breckenfeld described as the greatest issue of that magazine. Later, Mr. Breckenfeld became editor of Fortune, and he wrote an article for the August 8, 1983 issue on "Higher Taxes that Promote Development," working on it right up to the last day of duty before retiring. Mr. Breckenfeld gave the following advice to Georgists who want to influence the press:

1. Be an optimist. There is a "slow contagion of good ideas."
2. Have patience. Mr. Breckenfeld had to wait a long time before writing his piece.
3. Don't claim too much. It won't be understood.
4. Words matter a lot. Phrase your arguments carefully.
5. Educate. Editors will listen to a reasoned argument that is low key.

ROGER STARR (who is featured in the May-June issue of Land and Liberty) first learned of Henry George from Margaret de Mille, granddaughter of Henry George, whose husband was a friend of Mr. Starr's. He was later impressed by a Russian emigré who said he wished he had learned earlier how to augment his fortune through land speculation. Mr. Starr became Administrator and Commissioner of Housing and Development Administration for New York City and saw further verification of the Georgist thesis. Now, as editorial writer of the New York Times, he is endeavoring to promote land value taxation in context with issues of the day. The editorials are a collegial matter and his associates work with him on them.

A spurious Georgism is in practice in New York City today, Mr. Starr said, and it includes bargaining with developers for tax concessions. Rent control is further distorting the picture, making it difficult to introduce land value taxation. Fooling with assessments is wrong; there should be a straight tax on the assessed value of land.

Following these talks, George Collins, on behalf of the Media Foundation for Land Economics, presented to both guests the Newcomb Incentive Award, plaques with their names on, honoring them for their outstanding service in journalism to the Georgist philosophy.

A reprint of Mr. Breckenfeld's Fortune article has been widely distributed by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation; and a collection of six editorials by Mr. Starr has been prepared by the Henry George Institute. Both items are still available and may be obtained by writing to the Georgist Journal. (Send 50¢ for postage and handling.)*

Coming programs of the HGI include distribution of new literature, and exploration of further development of correspondence course work.

*One dollar will bring you both reprints plus the Council brochure noted on p. 7.