

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr Robert V. Andelson

Members of the International Union, fellow Georgists, and distinguished guests: I have the honor to greet you, and to declare this conference open.

It is an honor that I thought should more appropriately go to a member of the host committee – someone local. But the decision was made that the president should open the conference.

Well, my wife, Bonny (*a gude Scots name*, which I happen to think becomes her), is a quarter Scottish. Moreover, she was named for her mother's favorite teacher, who had come from Scotland to the mountains of Tennessee. And my first cousin (whose middle name is Malcolm, another *gude Scots name*) is an honorary member of Clan Gregor, the clan of the great Rob Roy. His wife happens to be president of the Great Lakes chapter.

But, you know, maybe I don't have to resort to mentioning my wife or my cousin's wife. Maybe I can establish Scottish credentials in my own right. I say this for three reasons:



First, Robert is also a *gude Scots name*. Scotland had three kings named Robert, including Robert the Bruce.

Second, I didn't sign up for the whisky tasting Wednesday afternoon. That doesn't sound very Scottish, but hear me out. I didn't sign up for it because at the time I was on a medication that doesn't mix with alcohol—not even a drop. I'm off that medication now, and can indulge in spirits, but it's fortunate that I didn't sign up. You see, my presidential address is scheduled for that evening. If I were to take part in the whisky tasting, I'd be in no condition to deliver it. Because, like a true Scotsman, having paid for the whisky, *I'd want to get me fule mooney's werrth*.

The third reason establishes Edinburgh as my spiritual home. It is, perhaps, my favorite city in the world. (Of course, I've never spent a winter here.) But that's not all. When my first book, *Imputed Rights*, came out in the early 1970s, it was reviewed in a learned periodical by a man named Flynn. This was his verdict: "One almost expects to find the copyright, 'Edinburgh, 1860,' at the front of the book." He didn't intend that as a compliment, but I've always taken it as one. I am a spiritual son of Edinburgh, even if it be "Edinburgh, 1860." (Did I happen to mention that Bonny and I attend the Presbyterian Church?)

And so, on behalf of the International Union, on behalf of Scotland, and on behalf of Edinburgh, *I bid ye all a herryty welcome!*

Now, on a more serious note, I have some good (or perhaps I should say *gude*) news to report. The IU had always been primarily an association of individual Georgists when I assumed the presidency in 1997. It had only four corporate members – i.e., organizations that belonged to it. We began our corporate membership drive in May of 1999. As of today, seventy organizations hold IU membership. Of these,



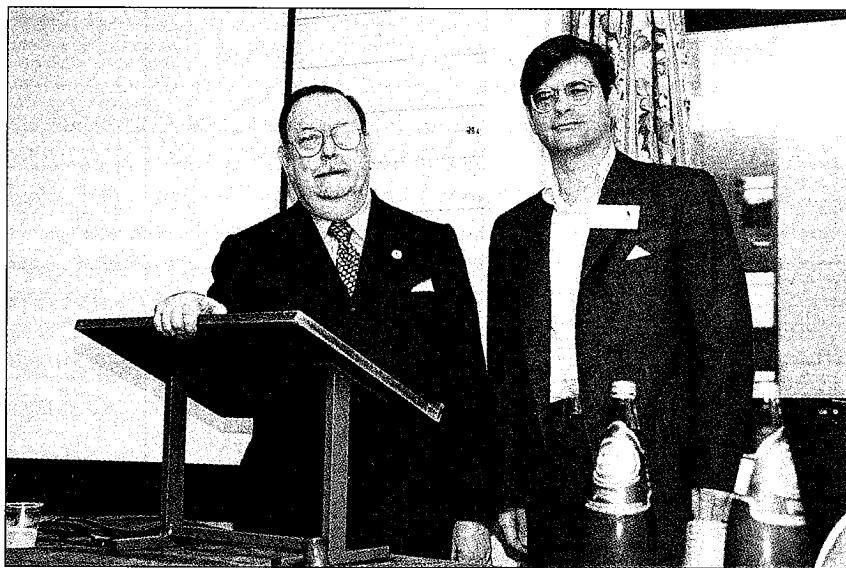
Pat Aller

three fifths are full, dues-paying, voting corporate members; the rest are associate members that pay no dues and have no vote, but have submitted letters endorsing our statement of objectives. We deliberately set the dues for corporate members to be the same as dues for individuals, and, like individuals, each full corporate member has one vote. The purpose of having corporate membership is not to raise money, although, Lord knows, we need it.

The purpose is to help our hard-working United Nations non-governmental organization representatives, Alanna Hartzok and Pat Aller, obtain a respectful hearing in that forum. To say they speak for 250 individuals won't do it; to say they speak for 250 individuals *plus seventy organizations* – well, that makes a difference!

We have an exciting week ahead of us. There are many interesting items on the program, and also some important decisions to be considered.

Now I want to present Christopher Williams, the new executive director of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. Christopher holds a Yale baccalaureate, a master's degree from Oxford, and a jurisdoctorate from the University of Maine. He comes to Schalkenbach from the venerable and prestigious New York Academy of Science, where he was development manager and corporate secretary. He will chair the remainder of this morning's session, and introduce the next speaker.



Robert V. Andelson, Christopher Williams