

IU NEWSLETTER

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AN I-YOU CHAT

It was a great day for earthlings when man first stepped on the moon. But he left too many major problems on earth unsolved for very much rejoicing. Chief among these problems is the decay of our cities, the nerve centers of civilization.

Jane Jacobs, in an interview for the New York Times (May 25), discussed current urban problems and proposals. Miss Jacobs is author of The Death and Life of American Cities (1961), which has become a classic in its field and is studied in colleges. However, Miss Jacobs ruefully notes that "it has not made the slightest difference in what is actually done."

Miss Jacobs makes refreshing comments on today's knotty urban problems. She believes that the problems of cities are not insoluble, but that we are simply doing the wrong things about them. "Most of the same mistakes are still being compulsively repeated." And slums, pollution and traffic jams continue to worsen.

Miss Jacobs sees city problems as caused basically by economic stagnation, and she rejects most current measures and proposals. She does not think bigness is the problem, because smaller cities are also decaying. She rejects the current fad of pouring federal money into cities, saying "it can make matters worse."

A lot of smaller enterprises, initiated not by the government but by the people, are needed, she says. More building codes would "stultify development." She does not think a city - such as a "New Town" - can be artificially created but that it must grow. Planners, she complains, do not understand cities.

She believes there is enough vacant and poorly used land in cities now to take care of urban needs, if more building on them could be encouraged. She rejects birth control as a remedy, saying you don't solve the problem of poor people by reducing their numbers. More education by itself is not a solution, she says; it would only create more educated unemployed.

There is much in what Jane Jacobs observes that dovetails with the Henry George philosophy. If her ideas are at least being studied, if not practiced, it will be easier for us to demonstrate the relevance of our ideas. Many of the solutions she rejects are the "insufficient remedies" we have long been criticizing.

Basically it is good sense that cities can be rejuvenated only by the people themselves; and that multiple enterprises on the part of the people are what is needed, rather than master plans by remote bureaucrats. It is precisely this kind of renewal we visualize under land value taxation. Indeed there is very little without LVT that will accomplish the results Miss Jacobs is seeking.

Robert Clancy
Editor

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NEWS OF IU MEMBERS

ARTHUR W. ROEBUCK, revered Canadian Senator, celebrated his 92nd birthday this year and was honored in a feature article in the Toronto Globe and Mail. Senator Roebuck is still active and is chairman of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. He is known as "the most indefatigable member of the Senate."

JAMES L. BUSEY, Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado (Colorado Springs, Color., U.S.A.) has this year published the 12th edition of his annual Latin American Political Guide (price \$1). This yearbook is unique in its field, is gaining in circulation and is increasingly becoming a reference work. Prof. Busey, besides giving political and general information about each Latin American country, analyzed the problems of Latin America in general. Among his chief proposals for these problems is "land distribution, rational taxation of all land values, termination of neo-feudalism, emergence of a large middle class of independent proprietors in agriculture, trade and manufacture."

NOAH D. ALPER, President of the Public Revenue Education Council (708 Olive St., St. Louis, Mo. U.S.A.) has recently issued this organization's 18th annual report. One of its chief projects was a mailing to over 7,000 sociologists offering them free material on LVT for the asking. Over 1,600 requests were received as a result.

PROF. & MRS. HARRY G. BROWN (Columbia, Mo., U.S.A.) had an article in the Spring 1969 issue of The Diary of Alpha Kappa Psi (a fraternity of business students), entitled "Can We Avoid Communized Housing?" LVT was shown to be the way.

JULIAN HICKOK has recently published a large booklet, Land Value Taxation and Land Speculation. This work explains, with charts and mathematical formulas, the effects of land speculation, and how LVT can be applied. Copies are available for \$1 from the Henry George School, 413 S. 10th St., Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A.

We regret to report the deaths of the following IU members: MISS R. BEARCROFT of London, England; D.S. CAMERON of Glasgow, Scotland; and FRED WORKMAN of Pacific Grove, Calif., U.S.A.

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In the message from ASHLEY MITCHELL in IUN No. 8, there was an error in the first three lines of the second paragraph. It should read as follows: "What a different world it would be now if the messages of those eminent men, and hosts of other dedicated Georgists, had been adopted. Even in those countries where the policy has been partially adopted, great benefits have ensued."

Only the first half of the article by PERCY R. WILLIAMS, "How to Understand the Single Tax on Land Rent," appeared in IUN No. 8. His full article appeared in the June issue of the Henry George News.

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NI ADUANAS NI PASAPORTES
¡Impuesto único sobre el valor del suelo!

NEITHER CUSTOMS NOR PASSPORTS
A single tax on the value of land!

Abarata la vida. Estimula el trabajo.
Asegura la paz. Crea la prosperidad.
Anula la especulación. Ampara la vejez
y la niñez. Reduce la burocracia.
Anula el privilegio.

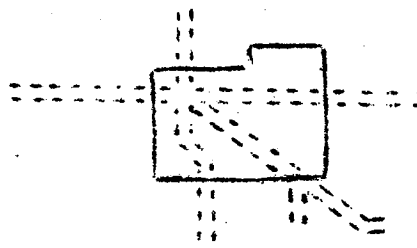
Will lower the cost of living. Stimulate labor. Assure peace. Create prosperity. Abolish land speculation. Protect the old and the young. Reduce bureaucracy. Abolish privilege.

From the pamphlet, Inspirar Confianza
By ROGELIO CASAS CADILLA (Madrid, Spain)

SOUTHFIELD

AT THE

CROSSROADS



SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN is at the hub of important express highways, just north of Detroit. It is also at the crossroads in its future destiny as a city. Here's how it happened...

The City of Southfield was founded in 1958 out of an area that was partly suburban residential and partly farming country. In 1960, it acquired as its second Mayor a dynamic young Georgist, S. James Clarkson, who had been a lawyer and member of the Michigan State legislature. Clarkson was determined to apply as much of land value taxation as possible in Southfield, within the legal limits.

Mayor Clarkson found that much of Southfield land was assessed at a good deal less than the legal rate of 50% of market value. He thereupon pressed for an up-to-date valuation by impartial appraisers. This proposal was strongly opposed by big property owners who knew what it would mean.

But Clarkson was re-elected for his second 2-year term and continued to push for the revaluation. The respected firm of J.A. Cleminshaw Co. of Cleveland was engaged to make the appraisal, and it indeed found much higher land values than previous assessments showed, especially in commercial properties and vacant lots. Homeowners gained from the reappraisal, as their tax rates could be lowered, whereas they had been bearing the brunt of taxes because low assessments and taxes on the other properties.

Although Mayor Clarkson was obliged by law to assess and tax buildings equally, he gave every possible break to homeowners and builders, by generous depreciation allowance, and by exemption of certain types of property improvement. Other reforms were introduced, such as land use and zoning ordinances, and modern methods for keeping up with changes in assessments.

Southfield embarked on an impressive period of growth - really a boom. Mayor Clarkson was re-elected to his third and fourth terms. In 1967 he engaged a new chief assessor - another Georgist, Ted Gwartney, who had been assistant to the Georgist assessor of Sacramento, California, Dr. Irene Hickman.

When the city was 10 years old in 1968, it could look back on a decade of phenomenal progress. Here were some of the developments during that period:

Population more than doubled (from 30,000 to 65,000).

Assessed valuation of property grew from \$75 million to \$374 million.

More and more industries selected Southfield as a new base of operations, in preference to surrounding areas. Many moved there from declining Detroit. Such companies as Standard Oil, Federal-Mogul, Maytag and Bendix built new offices and plants in Southfield. Also, new industries sprang up.

The remarkable "Southfield Story" attracted national, even international, attention. There were articles about it in Time magazine (April 4, 1969), The Wall Street Journal (April 9), Sylvia Porter's nationwide column (March 7), and other media. The Detroit Free Press also cast eyes on its fledgling neighbor to the north and wondered whether a dose of the Southfield medicine might not help ailing Detroit.

But although there was much impressive recognition of Southfield's new tax policies as a chief factor in its boom, there was skepticism too. Some property owners in Southfield grumbled that the city would have grown anyway and Clarkson's tax system actually held back growth.(!) Even some Georgists had doubts about Southfield, presenting objections like these:

"There were other factors in the growth of Southfield and we cannot definitely attribute it to land value taxation."

"Why should we boast about a new building by Standard Oil? The important thing is wages. What about wages in Southfield?"

"Southfield is not an example of the Georgist proposal in practice and should not be presented as such. Landowners are still reaping rent, and the rest of the population are saddled with the same taxes every one else has."

On the first point, about "other factors," it may be noted that there are many other communities surrounding Detroit, all anxious to join the boom. They have most of the same things Southfield has - zoning, highways, accessibility - except the high land assessments and the tax break to improvers. And they haven't boomed.

On the matter of wages, Southfield has an average (median) annual family income of \$12,050, well above the average for the county it is in, Oakland (\$9,050), and even further above the southeastern Michigan average of \$7,760. This is not conclusive and would have to be investigated further - but it does show something.

As for the objection that Southfield is not Henry George in practice because it is not the full collection of economic rent in lieu of other taxes - this must be conceded. But it is as Georgist as the present legal system allows. True, much land rent remains in private hands - but more is now taken in taxation than before. True, there are other taxes - but there is less of a burden on improvements; and Southfield has no municipal income tax as have many other Michigan cities.

"Two steps forward, one step backward." At the height of this progress, on its 10th anniversary, Southfield lost its Georgist Mayor. James Clarkson stepped down - or perhaps stepped up - in order to take a judgeship. On top of this, assessor Gwartney resigned to rejoin Irene Hickman's staff in Sacramento.

Undoubtedly, Clarkson felt the system was secure enough so that after 8 years as Mayor he could safely relinquish his post. But Southfield's new Mayor, Norman Feder, is not so sympathetic to the land value tax program. He claims not to be opposed to it, but he sees no special merit in it. He shares the skepticism of some others about its efficacy, and in any case says he only wants to observe the law of taxing land and improvements equally. The land taxation division of the city's assessment office has been abolished.

The big property owners may like to keep some of their land idle, but they have not been idle themselves. They have appealed to the State Tax Commission for lower assessments and some of them have succeeded in obtaining a 3-year freeze on the assessment of their properties - which will mean a loss in revenue to the city of millions of dollars.

The Southfield Sun, a weekly newspaper, said (April 17): "Southfield has had a unique answer of its own: tax the land to the ultimate and all else will follow. Will this policy go down the drain with a new city administration at the helm?"

And so Southfield is at the crossroads. The system developed by Clarkson and Gwartney may be followed, even developed. It may be neglected, even sabotaged.

There are great plans for the further development of the city. But plans do not do things, people do. And people have to have the right incentive to do things. Southfield's tax system has provided good incentives to its people up to now.

On its 10th anniversary, city officials and prominent citizens predicted that Southfield will have even more marvellous growth in its second decade.

Will it?

R.C.

Many Georgists feel that the Georgist movement is making satisfactory progress, but many feel it is not. Remembering that any progress made so far could be wiped out if extremes such as fascism or communism became, as they might, more acceptable, I must confess that I feel on the side of the "old school" - which is, lamentably, the pessimistic school.

Obviously, it cannot be claimed that all veteran Georgists are pessimistic and that all new Georgists are optimistic - but for want of better labels, I believe that "old" and "new" will help me make my point.

Some "old" Georgists are pessimistic because they believe that we should aim our propaganda at the masses and not, as the "new" Georgists do, at the leaders, politicians, professors, etc. And the reason why the "new" Georgists are optimistic is because leaders occasionally cast an eye towards LVT.

What the new Georgists forget, I believe, is that much of the interest they produce is very artificial. If the leaders were genuinely impressed with George's ideas, they would say so more often, as we do. They see our proposals as giving marginal benefits rather than as a major reform.

The Liberal Party in Britain is an example of this timidity. It advocates site value rating, but if it ever gained power, I am quite certain that the slightest breeze could wipe it and site value rating from people's minds. In Australia, so I gather, many people believe that site value rating is better than other taxes; but far fewer see that it is much more than a tax.

For these reasons, I find myself sympathetic to the old approach of appealing to the masses so that they can influence the leaders. I say, do what Henry George did, and get the masses to understand the importance of land. Make the masses realize that land is as essential as air. Use modern methods and slogans, by all means, but hammer the point home.

The old Georgists remember the days when the masses forced the politicians to take notice. Their pessimism is not due to senility, but is well founded. We owe it to them to be more vociferous.

I reject the cynical view that the masses are too indoctrinated or disinterested to be influenced now. We after all were convinced, and so it is vain to imagine that others cannot be impressed.

Mr. H.R. Lee, from whom I learned about Henry George, says that politicians are like wheelbarrows - they want pushing. He also used to say that a stone thrown into a pond will cause many ripples. I believe Mr. Lee was right.

There have been some excellent suggestions for propaganda in the IU NEWSLETTER. We should follow these up and leave the academic niceties for talk among ourselves.

Semi-socialism is the main reason why George was forgotten, but now - especially in Britain - semi-socialism is coming apart at the seams. If Georgists do not step in, some Hitler or Stalin will. We should not mind scorn; it could be our best ally. This is why film stars say, "Call me good or bad, but don't ignore me."

I am not suggesting entering politics. This, I realize, might not be wise, but we should try to attract more interest. Press and TV may ignore us, but they do not ignore the hippies and students. This does not mean that we have to beat up policemen or take drugs - there must be other, more sensible ways of creating interest.

The "new" Georgists have had a good innings. I believe it is time for the "old" to take the field once more. We have everything to gain, and nothing, as I see it, to lose.

1. LVT as an Inducement to Produce

Peter Schmid wrote about the Khmers of Cambodia in the Swiss weekly, Die Weltwoche (May 2, 1969): "Only efforts keep a nation active. The Khmers became an easy-going, even a lazy lot. A FAO expert told me in despair that the introduction of artificial fertilizers did not result in a bigger harvest, because the peasants, happy about the wonders of chemistry, simply cultivated less land. Result? In commerce, industry and government offices, Chinese and Vietnamese occupied all the posts (i.e., those held before in Cambodia by Khmers)."

The U.S. government, on the other hand, wanted to put some of its own farm land out of cultivation and into the "soil bank," paying the owners handsome compensation for their failure to cultivate the land. The owners, besides taking the money, applied so much fertilizers, better seeds, better machines, that the smaller area they now cultivate produces more than the larger area they cultivated before. They did not become "lazy" like the Khmers, but sold the land at fat prices to speculators. Question: Can LVT in this respect be the appropriate remedy for Cambodia and the U.S.A.? Why - and how?

2. The Price of Gold and Inflation

Suppose we had LVT throughout the world. Then, instead of using gold to back money, we could say: "Let the value of the unimproved land in Ruristan be 100 units. Let the annual value thereof be 5 units. These 5 units are taken by the government of Ruristan, which will issue these same 5 units as money, but not one penny more. The money is a strong currency because it is covered by 20 times its value (the value of the land) and because government will receive this amount annually. If the value of land goes up - as it will if production increases - and a re-assessment shows 100 more units, then the government may issue another 5 units of money corresponding to the rise in land value."

Dr. H. Schacht saved Germany in 1923 when he issued the Rentenmark, based not on gold but on the value of all the land. But he did it without LVT, so he had to convert the Rentenmark into a currency based on gold as soon as they called his bluff. But if we had LVT there would be no bluff! We could then sell all the big hoardings of gold; the price of gold would fall and the selling governments would earn lots of money. Is this scheme not feasible?

* * *

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

By J.J. POT (Slikkerveer, Netherlands)

Frederick Auld (IUN No. 8) doesn't feel happy with the Whitstable valuation and wonders about mines and offshore oil wells. "How will it be valued for Georgist purposes?" he asks. The answer is that it will be valued by the prospective occupier by means of the highest bid in competition for the site privilege. In the North Sea there is keen competition among oil and gas companies for permits, so the state should rent it for an annual fee to the highest bidder.

Now I will put a question to Mr. Auld and others. Holland and Belgium are considering raising the sand banks in the North Sea so as to become artificial islands for harbors and industry. As long as there is an abundance of sandbanks, every company or contractor who spouts the sand can have a free grant, for up to now there is enough and there is no competition. But if the sea eventually becomes crowded, how will you assess the site privilege? The artificial islands are man-made, so will have a selling price based upon the cost of production of these isles. But how to value the site privilege in that case?

What is the answer?

INERTIA AND VESTED INTERESTS By ASHLEY MITCHELL (Huddersfield, England)

Robert Clancy in his "An I-You Chat" (IUN No. 8) speculates on why the Georgist philosophy has not been more widely accepted.

The principal reason for our lack of progress, except in a few fortunate countries is the power of the vested interests (Clancy's Point 6). They never sleep. Twice this century measures dealing with land value taxation have been enacted in Britain, only to be repealed before they could operate, due to pressure of the interests. Whenever anything is done, like the recent trial valuation at Whitstable, it is denounced and ridiculed. If the land value tax could be passed on, there would have been little objection, as the land sharks would have figured that they could collect a profit on the transfer. That is one of the simplest answers to the question of passing on the tax.

The next important obstacle is inertia (Point 3). Even in Australia, where so much good progress has been made, our friends have to carry out active campaigns in those places that still use the old rotten system. When it is possible for them to see the success of the land value rating just a few miles away, one would think they would be yelling for the change.

In Point 2, Clancy says people are moved by emotion. But Henry George favored appeal to the emotions. See his The Condition of Labor.

Point 4 is rather contradictory. Clancy says it needs a leader to make ideas acceptable, then he adds that leaders are not willing to crusade for unpopular ideas. How do leaders know some new idea would be unpopular if they do not test it?

Another difficulty is the operation of the death rate. After the death of Henry George, there was great support for his policies in many countries. In Britain, the interest created by George during his visits was only waiting for the election of a Liberal Government. When that happened in 1906 and Campbell-Bannerman was Prime Minister, steps were soon taken to implement the policy after struggles with the House of Lords. A measure was enacted, only to be repealed when the Tory majority returned to power after World War I.

Before 1914 there was a majority of solid support, but with the lapse of years a great many of those convinced had passed away, and the political scene had been captured by "planners," the results of which we are seeing today. Thus the fight has got to begin afresh, but there is a growing rejection of planning, so that if a leader would now raise the flag again, he would not be afraid that he might be crying in the wilderness.

SHALL WE EVER GET TO THE OTHER SIDE FOR THE TRUMPETS TO SOUND?

By J. A. CUNNINGTON (Brornley, England)

I fear that Robert Clancy in his "Chat" is rather complacent. We seem to be going so slow sometimes as to be going backwards.

We Georgists must talk to the public in down-to-earth language. We know the greatest fault of present masters is their obsession with results and absolute refusal to examine causes. But we must use our knowledge of causes to show the man in the street, Bill Bloggs, what can be done about present effects.

We should get our senior students and graduates of the Henry George Schools to build lots of models showing the effects of Georgism. Of course, much of it will be purely hypothetical but it will produce some startling figures that should make Bill Bloggs sit up and take notice. It is no good waiting for governments to pay for super-Whitstable surveys. We must do what they do in big business when they strike out into the unknown. The modern cost accountant does his most vital work before the factory is built.

Get some answers ready for the obvious questions. How will LVT affect the present £40,000 a year Managing Director? How will it affect the average family man who has all manner of rackets to counter the effect of land monopoly? How will it affect the docker and automobile worker getting £40 a week in a nice cushy little job?

What could Georgism do for Scotland, which may soon be independent? The Scots will probably make just as much of a hash of their affairs as we have done in England, but what a wonderful opportunity awaits them. What an opportunity for Georgists to sharpen their pencils and get busy building up some studies on the effects of a single tax in Scotland. What would happen to the thinly populated Highlands? What about the dead areas of the Central Lowlands? What would happen to the vast estates of the North?

Perhaps one reason why no prominent person in the United Kingdom has been converted to Georgism is that we have not been dishing out imaginative literature. Maybe lots of people are lost to the Georgist cause because it seems so general and not specific. If the youngsters see no clear future in the movement, they will just shrug their shoulders and get on with the job of dealing with the tragedies of "result economics" in groups like "Shelter", "Save the Children", etc.

* * *

RENT AND PRICE

By RICHARD T. HALL (Boston, Mass., U.S.A.)

I disagree with those (Gaston Haxo, "Rent and Price," IUN No. 8) who say that either rent or wages are a factor in the market price of a product, since market price is determined solely by the law of supply and demand. This would be easily seen if we operated on a barter system.

Gaston Haxo uses an illustration in which Farmer B is a non-rent-paying cabbage grower, while Farmer A is a rent-paying one. Assuming the existence of a barter system, both farmers obtain their livelihood by consuming some of their cabbages and bartering the rest to satisfy their other needs. In the case of Farmer A, part of this bartering is rent in kind, value in production being swapped for value in obligation. So far as the two farmers and the landlord of one of them are concerned, wages and rent are cabbages - they are not the potatoes, eggs, milk or meat for which they may be bartered. And whether these items are distributed as rent or as wages does not affect the exchange ratio of any of them.

By S. TUCKER (London, England)

Does rent enter into the price of products? Gaston Haxo makes heavy weather of finding the answer, which is basically simple. Goods of the same quality, etc., tend to sell at a uniform price irrespective of the rent element. Rent does not enter into the individual price of any marketable commodity.

Coal from a poor mine, quality for quality, sells at the same price as coal from a rich mine. It is the same with oil, wheat or any other commodity - rent does not enter into price. However, if by price is meant total price for all the goods brought to market, then obviously this total price includes the surplus known as rent. "A" produces 100 bushels of wheat from "100" land and "B" can produce only 50 on his inferior land. "A" gets a market price of \$100, say, and "B" \$50. Rent is part of total price. But rent is not part of the price charged per bushel. Or, to put it another way, not part of unit price.

Since by price, economists invariably mean unit price, we can safely conclude that rent does not enter into the price, and the introduction of total price is only confusing the issue.

John T. Tetley uses the term "rent" in two different senses, as different as chalk and cheese. ("A Clarification," IUN No. 6.) He uses it to mean that part of the product which is in excess of what is produced on marginal land (chalk). He also uses it to mean the payment that is made to the title holder of land (cheese).

Land has a differential capacity to subserve the attainment of human satisfactions, of which physical goods are but one variety; a view, a pleasant climate, residential convenience - all of these are, equally validly, satisfactions which can be enjoyed only differentially in relation to the location of land. So it may be seen that RENT is differential income governed by site, and that such income is not necessarily in money terms; so "satisfactions" is the best all-embracing term to use.

For it is the quest for satisfactions that men enter into exchanges in the market, and so it comes about that satisfactions of all kinds may acquire a monetary value when men will make a monetary payment for them in the market. The surplus crop in the more fertile field is RENT in the physical sense, long before it hits the market. But when it does reach the market in a monetary exchange and evaluation, then the sum it fetches transmutes such RENT into ECONOMIC RENT - and the same goes for any other "satisfaction income-stream." (By the same token, goods produced and services rendered are physical or natural WAGES which are transmuted into monetary wages when the process of market exchange gives to such goods and services their monetary value.)

So much for RENT as a function of abundance, the chalk in the situation. Now for the cheese. The differential desirability of locations gives them a market value in the process of men competing to make monetary payment - in order to obtain the exclusive undisturbed possession that will enable the stream of satisfactions designated RENT to be enjoyed. To repeat, a sum of money must be paid. It is a sum paid for the privilege of exclusive possession.

I hark back to Latin. The gerundive form RENTAL is exactly the right word to describe Tetley's second concept. It has the entire connotation of "that which must be paid." It is the monetary analogue of RENT. We cannot ever say what actually constitutes RENT in particulate form within the whole stream-flow of satisfactions. But we can monetarily evaluate it - which, after all, is all that we both need and want in order to apply the "equalizer" in a situation wherein special privilege has to be paid for. How do we evaluate RENT? In the ANNUAL RENTAL VALUE OF LAND.

I stated that the concept of RENT is a concept of abundance. But the concept of RENTAL is the very opposite; for in nature it is a PRICE expressed, albeit periodically. It is the monetary measure of the difficulty in obtaining exclusive possession of some particular moiety of the satisfaction stream. It is therefore in nature a VALUE, for VALUE is bound up with difficulty in supply. RENTAL is a function of scarcity in supply of desired locations.

What Georgists need to be talking about at the practical level is RENTAL, not RENT. We have got to see to it that, for community purposes, government collects that which must be paid, the land RENTALS due to be paid for the exclusive opportunity to partake of the abundance of RENT. RENT, the theoretical concept, can only be actualized in RENTAL, the practical and measurable reality that is daily determined in the market. Other readers may have a better name for it. I don't mind, so long as they get the concepts clear and as separate as chalk and cheese.

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I like the short clear statement of J.J. Pot ("What's in a Name?" IUN No. 8). He says "single tax is not taxation at all." Single tax is really tenantship in Henry George's meaning. Thus Mr. Pot's suggestions for a new name are appropriate: "World Movement for Revenue from Royalties" or "World Movement for Common Property of Terrestrial Bounty." But whatever the name - there must be doers!

BETH CRAFOORD-LUNDSTROM (Upsala, Sweden).

DISCOVERY

GRADY FOWLER of LaGrange, Georgia, U.S.A., writes to the International Union:

"About forty years ago, in the little town which now is a shrine to the late Franklin D. Roosevelt called Warm Springs, Georgia, and very soon after the books of Henry George had begun to be distributed by a Foundation in New York City, I came across a copy of Progress and Poverty in the local library. I read it at intervals until finished. Lacking maturity, I could not comprehend its message. However, there were certain things that made an indelible impression on me and I never forgot it.

"Through the years after reading Progress and Poverty, I continued to be a free-lance student of social affairs. I have always yearned for understanding of what is real and what is error in the realm of mankind. To learn how to tap reality in the midst of confusion is all but an obsession with me even until this day.

"In the latter part of October 1968 I came across a copy of Progress and Poverty in the LaGrange Memorial Library of which I am a Trustee, and suddenly had a burning zeal to read it at my present age 62. When I opened the cover of the book there appeared a list of all the works of Henry George available from the Foundation in New York. I ordered them all but was sorely disappointed when my letter was returned from 11 Park Place marked, "moved, no forwarding address."

"I have a son in a suburb of San Francisco, California. Having learned that Henry George lived in San Francisco, I determined to see what I could find. During the Christmas season of 1968, on our annual visit to our son, I found at 833 Market Street an institution known as the Henry George School of Social Science. I could make no contact during the holidays, so upon returning home I sent an airmail letter for information. A prompt reply was received, resulting in the good and glorious news that I could obtain the books I wanted through them. When I learned that these schools are being organized all over the world, and that the Foundation is continuing to function from 69th Street in New York, it was as if I had experienced a new birth of hope for understanding. Since then, I have given a thoughtful reading to all of George's books...

"It appears to me that Henry George possessed the most profound understanding of reality I have ever encountered from any citizen of our country in all of its history. He has in many places in his writings, expressed the deepest secrets of my inner desires to comprehend what, prior to now, I could sense but could not express for lack of understanding... Even though my study of his books up to now cannot be thorough, I was by nature so much in agreement with his understanding, it seems that I have always known the things I have learned from his writings. I now want to be sure that I am not under a delusion. It is for this reason that I now want to read everything I can find that opposes his views."

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ANTHONY ARCESE of Newtonville, Mass., U.S.A., came upon Progress and Poverty indirectly. Bruno Eichert of Jackson Heights, N.Y. had given a copy to a relative to read. The relative had as a guest Mr. Arcese who expressed interest in it, and the book was passed on to him. Mr. Arcese, author of a book, The Conservative Conscience (a reply to Barry Goldwater's The Conscience of a Conservative) found P&P "absolutely superb." He wrote, in part: "Read Progress and Poverty and see to it that more people with conscience will also read it. It will burn out a lot of fog that obstructs clear vision of the socio-economic problems which confront us. Possibly it will place within vision and understanding the reminder of the Stoic Emperor: 'We are made for cooperation - like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth.' And the maxim that 'that alone is wise which is just; that alone is enduring which is right.'"