

## OPEN FORUM 2

# IF YOU REALLY WANT PROGRESS THEN VOTE FOR IT!

John Loveless

You're a Georgist, but you've lost your faith in our ability to succeed. Oh, you *want* us to succeed, sure enough, but you're demoralised. All this writing, all this paperwork - a hundred years of it - and no *progress* in getting our message widely understood and debated in society. All this arguing amongst ourselves - it seems to never end. And what does it achieve, but division, animosity and impoverishment? You're fed up; you've thought about leaving the movement altogether; throwing in the towel; joining some other more friendly, better organised outfit; a group with a future!

But you can't. You can't forget that thrill you had when the understanding of the key to socio-economic progress and the banishment of poverty first entered your mind. You can't forget or banish that joy from your mind. A joy which has grown steadily with the years as every experience of the world around you has confirmed you in your view that you are one of only a tiny minority of people that has discovered the truth that is the most essential socio-economic truth for man.

Then came the sorrow and the fear: when you realised that, honoured with this precious knowledge, you now had an awesome moral responsibility to those around you. So you looked for Georgists with whom you could co-operate in this grand design and what did you find? An international movement about as effective as a headless chicken. A national movement as stubborn as a donkey, as agile as an elephant and as co-operative as a herd of rhinos! You hoped it was all just a bad dream, but finally the terrible truth sank in - it was all true - a real Shakespearean tragedy, and you had been cast as one of the witches! What a nightmare!

What you really wanted to be was the fairy godmother in Cinderella! Henry George has been so ill used by his ugly step-sisters (Socialism and Capitalism)

for so long and he does so deserve to go to the ball (the election) and marry Prince Charming (the people). As quick as a flash you would turn this pumpkin (the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade) into a glorious carriage fit for his ideas. You would turn these mice (the national organisations) into six courageous horses to pull the carriage. You would...

Okay, quit dreaming, because you *can* make your dream come true. You *can* play the fairy godmother. Here's how. You can demand, wherever you are (assuming that you are a member of a Georgist organisation in your own country or region) that your local Georgist leadership supports the following resolutions which we will put to the IU Conference in Brighton next July. Surely it is obvious to every one of us that the worldwide Georgist movement is hopelessly divided and confused. For any organisation, division is the deepest disaster and unity the greatest good. Therefore we should be concentrating all our efforts on the unification of the movement under one banner. Then we will succeed without even trying.

We believe that these resolutions, taken together, would totally transform the hit rate of the Georgist movement in winning adherents to its cause.

First, by way of introduction, we commend the following statements to all Georgists which we hold as self-evident facts.

1. The Georgist movement is a very, very poorly organised movement. *There is no procedure whereby the movement can take even the most trivial decision to co-operate and co-ordinate its activities. There is no professionally staffed headquarters; no effective branch organisation (except, to some extent, in Common Ground); no common image; no common standard.*

2. Because there is no young, professional, energetic team of well-paid specialists which can be brought together in one place, the hundreds of small autonomous units are usually run by part-time old age pensioners with minimal resources who, not surprisingly, are not interested in radical reorganisation. The young and the energetic are looked upon with suspicion and eventually are turned away, while the movement ossifies.

3. Any movement that can unite a hundred smaller organisations in a federal union can improve its quality, unity, image, vision, efficiency, recruitment and resources enormously. **Together Everyone Achieves More.**

4. With the demise of Socialism as a credible alternative political philosophy to Capitalism, the people of the world are searching for a new political philosophy. *We must* seize the opportunity to fill this vacuum now or we will be marginalised for another 100 years.

5. Georgists divide, generally speaking, into two main camps: those that would like to see political action *now* (the activists) and those that emphasise the need for education, research and reflection (the analysts). The way to avoid conflict between these two types is to create a bi-polar organisational structure from the start.

6. The USA is the country with the largest Georgist movement, the longest Georgist history and the greatest Georgist resources. The greatest concentration of Georgists is to be found in north-east USA it therefore stands out as the obvious place to locate both professional centres, say, with the think-tank in New York and the political movement in the Washington area.