

HENRY GEORGE DESERVES BETTER P. R.

By Morgan Harris

The goal of public relations is to create a favorable impression -- on prospects, customers, employees, competitors, and the general public.

Our public relations are the result of what we say about ourselves -- through advertising and publicity; the result of our actions -- the way we treat people; and, in our case, the result of our educational program.

When I mentioned to my Beverly Hills Adult Class in writing that I am helping Bill Newcomb with a script for a one-man movie about Henry George, they asked, "Who's Henry George?"

Our p. r. has not only failed to make a favorable impression, it has failed to make any impression at all. Henry George deserves better.

If we were presenting a balanced educational program, nearly everyone would recognize the name Henry George; a lot of people would know something about him; others would understand that he advocated abolishing taxes one after another; and a few (who had studied in HG classes) would be familiar with his economics.

Our educational program is lopsided. It leaves the vast majority in total ignorance of Henry George. Stan Rubenstein says, "We have paid so much attention to the message, that we have failed to give serious consideration to the vehicle to get the message across."

TWO THINGS CAN CORRECT THIS:

1) A New Course of Study. Each HG School could offer a course in Advertising & Publicity. These are the accepted means of informing and educating the general public.

The difference is: publicity is free; advertising costs money. If we send out a news story which is published or broadcast, it costs us nothing. If we place an ad in the paper, or an announcement on radio, we pay for it.

2) Publicity Chairmen. Each HG School and HG organization could appoint a Publicity Chairman whose job would be to write and send to local newspapers and radio stations, stories about our activities: graduation ceremonies, public meetings, debates, speakers, visitors, parties.

Many of the items that appear in our various journals -- HG Newsletter, Equal Rights, Incentive Taxation, Birthplace Briefs, et al (in which we are just talking to each other) -- could be re-written for the general public and be stories in newspapers.

If the Publicity Chairman has charisma, he/she might well teach the course in Advertising and Publicity. The best way to learn is to teach.

(Cont. on page four.)

May 1984

EDITORIAL (Continued from page two)

The Henry George movement has been likened to a group of wonderful side shows ranged in a circle around the fair grounds, but in the center -- where's the circus? Where's the Big Top? If we had a central organization it could send out each month to these Publicity Chairmen a "clip sheet" with news items and ideas for events and stories.

YOU CAN DO IT

If you can write, you could be a Publicity Chairman. Books can teach you everything you need to know. The book I wrote in collaboration with Patty Karp, How to Make News and Influence People, is out of print, but you might find a copy in your library. Or read some other "how-to" book on publicity from your library.

News stories have to be about events. To list Henry George's birthday (September 2) in Chase's Calendar of Annual Events each year, I made up an event: "Birthday parties at Henry George Schools in major cities." Finally the facts caught up with my listing; in 1983 George Collins did have a birthday party at the Philadelphia School.

If each of our schools will put on a birthday party this year, and send out a news story that it is going to occur, and another that it did occur, this single, simple thing will get Henry George's name to more readers in 1984 -- more than have seen it in the past twenty years.

So -- put on events, create events, make up events if necessary -- but get Henry George's name in the news. Let the people know!

Morgan Harris is a communications consultant based in California who is active in the Los Angeles HG School.
