

# the Henry George News

PUBLISHED BY HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE • MAY 1963

## Home Study Round - the -World

FOR a number of years I have been connected with the correspondence courses offered by the Henry George School, and I have kept a few personal letters from students. When I showed some of them to a young woman who is a student of the "in person" classes here at New York headquarters, I felt she made an illuminating remark when she said, "I could never understand how people could become friends, and even fall in love through the mails, but looking at these letters shows me how well people can understand each other, even though they have never met."

In the exchange of lessons with my students based on the book *Progress and Poverty* there have been no romantic developments. But there is a great deal of romance for me in the thought that people thousands of miles from 50 East 69th Street, who write and receive answers to basic economics, become for me, individuals with distinct personalities.

A farmer with a stand of timber in Oregon sends his lessons and then takes time out to make notes about the inequities of the tax system in his isolated woodland. An engineer in New Mexico sent in with his lessons, newspaper clippings about the sale of undeveloped

desert areas to older citizens with promises of pleasant vacations on land which was nothing but sand dunes. A young married woman whose second lesson was in almost unreadable handwriting, was expressing her thoughts much better a few lessons farther on, writing and spelling better, and digging out the correct replies from the not-always-easy-to-understand *Progress and Poverty*.

A dear little lady penned a note in an old-world script to say that she had not received much education, but is trying to understand the world she lives in. A student in a state prison, questioning George's remarks on page 133, wondered if the earth would not have a permanent weight loss when space vehicles left for other worlds. And so it goes.

We volunteer teachers are responsible for our particular group of students, no matter where they live. Frankly I enjoy this work and I get a pleasurable bonus in seeing the concepts become clearer and sharper as students become more facile in expressing themselves. I think the home student as a rule works harder than the student in the classroom, and I often notice a strong element of self improve-

(Continued on page 15)

# A Word With You

EACH epoch in human history is given a name, sometimes according to the materials used—like the Stone Age and the Bronze Age; and sometimes according to the mental climate—like the ages of Faith and of Reason.

What, then, to call our present age? We can't call it the Age of Gold, because we're off the gold standard. Not unreasonably, we could call it the Age of Unreason—but that might not be fair, as we haven't completely abolished Reason. And it isn't quite the Age of Hypocrisy, which would be more characteristic of Victorian times. The Age of Anxiety? That was true of the first half of this century, but we're over that, too.

The Age of Phoniness—that's it! Somehow that has a ring of authenticity about it (if such a thing is possible). We're all riding the crest of a wave of phoniness. Instead of metal, wood, rubber, cotton and wool, we've learned to live with plastic substitutes. The food we eat has been denatured beyond recognition. We have Instant this and Instant that, and there is a pill for everything. The new houses we build are marvels of phoniness.

Paper prosperity keeps us happy, and the government guarantees us everything by taxing it all away from us. The price of worthless land keeps climbing, the inflationary spiral goes its merry way, and everybody is seeking a way to live off everybody else.

People's main concern is with the

'image' they project. This is not hypocrisy, because we're all very frank to one another about wanting to create the right image, regardless of what we're really like. That doesn't mean we're opposed to genuine qualities—it's just that that's incidental, the real problem being one of the right image. This trend has reached our taxing authorities. We no longer have a "collector" but a "director" of internal revenue—and it's the Internal Revenue Service, mind you!

Our cultural institutions are promoting a phony renaissance of the arts. If you notice it's phony, they will tell you brightly, "But that expresses the times, doesn't it?" Go to the church of your choice, they keep harping—it doesn't matter at all what you believe, or whether or not you believe it, just be nice and sociable and go to church.

One advantage of the term "Age of Phoniness" is that it is suggestive of another appropriate meaning—for "phony" comes from the word meaning "sound"—not in the sense of "valid," of course, but in the sense of "noise." And this is a noisy age! Besides all the jets and machines, everybody is sounding off, and the yakety-yak is sped around the world with marvelous technology. Hi-fi stereo imitates full orchestras in each household, and little children carry transistor radios.

Wonder what the next Age will be like, when they grow up?

—Robert Clancy

Vol. 26, No. 6

May, 1963

The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

Publication committee: William S. O'Connor, Arnold A. Weinstein and Lancaster M. Greene chairmen. Editor: Alice Elizabeth Davis. Subscriptions \$2 a year; single copies 20c. Second class postage paid at New York N.Y.

# The Irish Famine

by OSCAR B. JOHANSEN

THE Irish potato famine of the 19th Century is recalled in a book entitled *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849*, by Cecil Woodham-Smith, an Englishwoman. This shocking tragedy made its imprint on the United States in many ways, for as a result of it hundreds of thousands of Irish fled Ireland to the more hospitable shores of the United States with results on our nation's economics as well as politics.

To Georgists it is particularly important, for as a result of this famine landlordism became so repugnant to the Irish that Henry George's works made a profound impression on the Irish intellectuals, and George himself became an idol of the Irish people.

In the early part of the century, the Irish peasants were almost entirely dependent upon potatoes for food. The British owned most of the land and rented it out to the people under a particularly vicious system of sharecropping in which almost all such produce as vegetables and grains went to pay the rent. The peasants largely subsisted on potatoes as these could be easily and cheaply grown on small bits of land. However, time and again the potato crop failed. When this happened the peasant was in a desperate situation for he had to pay the rent or lose his land. Thus he starved himself in order to sell all the other produce to pay the rent. In 1845 a blight struck the potato crop resulting in its total failure. It struck Ireland, England, Holland and France but as the Irish were so dependent on potatoes, the loss of their crop was a major disaster.

It is estimated that about £3.5 million worth of potatoes were ruined.

Peasants died by the thousands in their miserable huts or by the roadsides if they were evicted from their postage size plots. And this was going on while practically all the produce raised in Ireland was going to England to pay the rent for the land on which the Irish lived. It is believed that they paid £6 million a year in rents alone when the blight struck. By 1851, 1.5 million out of 8 million Irishmen had starved to death and another million had fled to the United States, Canada and other parts of the world.

This dreadful calamity created a hatred for the British which persists to this day. The British government's handling of the crisis did practically nothing to alleviate conditions.

Those in control of the government believed in the principles of private enterprise and laissez faire to which all Georgists willingly subscribe. However, what they did not know then, and few know today, is that fundamental to laissez faire philosophy, which means a fair field to all with favors to none, is that land be freely available. With land rack-rented by the British, the Irish were at the mercy of speculators in foods. They literally had to sell their very souls to obtain something on which to live, while the British army protected the British landlords in their ownership of land.

This is equivalent to people being on a well provisioned ship but with an armed man guarding the hold against everyone but the speculators, who in turn, then sell the goods to the people who do all the work while the absentee landlords and speculators get all the benefits.

Is it any wonder that private enter-

prise suffered in the eyes of the Irish as well as many sympathetic English? Possibly George Bernard Shaw's acceptance of socialism stems from his knowledge of how his people suffered under this mistaken application of laissez faire. It is difficult to convince anyone that when both land and labor are free, such occurrences are impossible. Shaw read *Progress and Poverty* and owed much of his philosophy to Henry George but did not think George went far enough. He felt the government had to protect the people from exploitation like that which occurred in the potato famine.

Have we learned anything since then? It is doubtful. The reviews of this book indicate little understanding of the fact that the entire system of tenure was at fault. Instead the reviewers seem to attribute it to stupidity and too rigorous an application

of the concepts of laissez faire. Paradoxically, therefore, this book instead of helping focus attention on the land may result in helping to implement socialist doctrine.

This points up the fact that it is not easy for people to grasp the subtleties of the philosophy of Henry George. Either they go too far and become socialists, or they don't go far enough, and become the libertarians of today who can't seem to make up their minds as to just where the government should step in and where it should stay out.

The Georgist walks a tightrope between these two opposing forces. It is exhilarating if he stays on the rope. He can only do this by constantly studying and re-studying his basic concepts, for Georgism is freedom—and freedom is difficult to define.

Reprinted with permission, from  
*The Carnegie, April, 1963*

## ***A Student's Mandate to Georgists At Recent New York Commencement***

Religion teaches us that we are all brothers under the Fatherhood of God. The Christopher Movement gives us a mandate to do something active for our brothers. The Moral Rearmament Movement underscored that mandate to put spiritual ideas to work in social action. The trade unions can become vehicles for such action, and Georgism gives you an economic philosophy that will solve the basic problem of the worker and boss—the problem of a fair wage. Once this problem is solved the distrust and mutual antagonism will be removed, and labor and management can with harmony solve their remaining problems.

The need is great—the laborers are few. Do not be discouraged by the

enormity of the task before you. The light of truth given to you in this school must be shielded by you—must grow within you—must burst forth and enlighten others. Taxes that stifle man's initiative—that encourage a man not to improve his home—that encourage citizens to be liars and cheaters—must indeed be done away with.

Take *Progress and Poverty* home. Read it and re-read it. Argue it and discuss it. Explain it and expand it. Talk about it. Sell it and push it. You have the right to do it—the responsibility to do it—the need to do it. With determination and perseverance you will not fail. Henry George is not a failure. We Georgists have not yet begun to fight.

—John Kennedy



# The Tax Cuts—Their Ultimate Effect

by PETER PATSAKOS

ON January 31st President Kennedy presented his tax bill to Congress, designed to eliminate "the unrealistically heavy drag of federal income taxes." Businessmen and Congressmen agree in general, but not on the specific measures.

What effect would the tax proposals have on the economy if adopted? A tax cut will leave more potential purchasing power in the hands of the taxpayers to be used for spending, investing and/or saving. This should result in a greater demand for goods and services and should increase the supply of wealth to satisfy this demand. But since the government is spending more than it is receiving, the net purchasing power is lessened because the value of the dollar is decreasing.

The tax cut would amount to about \$8.7 billion after certain loopholes had been closed. If this resulted in increased incentive for business, and higher real wages for labor, it might have a beneficial short term effect. However, any increase in the economy's growth would be reflected in higher land values and land rentals, which would tend to negate any benefits to wage and interest earners. The ultimate effect could be to spur land speculation at an even faster pace than the possible increase in production. This would result in more unemployment, decreased production and a "recession."

Part of the President's tax bill concerns tax reform. A suggested reform in the right direction would have been a large deduction in the oil depletion allowance which is presently 27.5 per cent. This means that petroleum producers can deduct this percentage of the value of the crude oil and natural gas they produce from their pre-tax gross. Instead the President recom-

mended a mere 6 per cent reduction in the allowance, along with changes in the complicated methods by which natural resource depletion is computed, which could provide \$280 million in tax revenue. This is a mild measure but is regarded by Congressmen as a "hot potato," indicating that powerful oil interests are applying pressure. The 27.5 per cent is basically land rental, but is privately collected instead of being used as government revenue.

The profits on sales of stock and other assets (this includes land which is erroneously considered capital) are now taxed as ordinary income if sold within six months after purchase—this period would be extended to one year. But the new proposal would also decrease the top rate on long term capital gains, making it 19.5 instead of the present 25 per cent. Hence the profit on land sales, if held for more than a year, would be even greater than now.

Persons inheriting stock or property which had increased in value since it was bought, would, however, have to pay a capital gains tax on the increased worth. At present such gains go untaxed, so this would result in a partial collection of increased land values for public revenue. By the error of considering as capital, both land and improvements, the government is penalizing the production of wealth and making an accurate assessment of land values more difficult.

In fact the net effect of all the reform proposals is not a major closing of the many and devious loopholes, but only a stiffening of collection procedures which applies more to earned than unearned income. This is almost unavoidable since no distinction is made between the income from land rent and that from labor and capital.

*Sydney Mayers*

## VIEWS THE NEWS

The Pan-American Building, New York's magnificent new office skyscraper, which is constructed atop the area already occupied by the Grand Central Railroad Station, thus requiring no ground site of its own, is a remarkable architectural achievement. It is also a tribute to the almost uncanny prescience of Henry George, who insisted many years ago that in political economy the term "land" must include the air as well as the surface of the earth.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hundreds of American companies have established foreign headquarters in Switzerland, whose efficient personnel, excellent banking, stable currency and tax advantages have made it a popular center for the purpose—but the resulting demands on this small nation's resources are so great that the Swiss government is taking steps to restrict any further influx of American firms. It is intriguing to note the difference between Switzerland and certain other countries, where they erect high walls to keep people in.

\* \* \* \* \*

The sharply increasing cost of road building is causing many states either to curtail such projects or to raise gasoline taxes to obtain additional revenue. The primary reason for this situation may be seen in Florida, where land acquisition costs for highway rights-of-way have jumped 12 per cent in two years—except in the Cape Canaveral area, where there has been a 300 per cent rise.

\* \* \* \* \*

In a number of western states, notably New Mexico, Arizona, Oregon and Hawaii, where speculation in pat-

ently marginal land has resulted in a "real estate" boom reminiscent of Florida in the twenties, authorities are trying to curb the activities of the more unscrupulous promoters by taking legal action against them. How much quicker and more effective their efforts would be if they simply adopted land value taxation, thus nipping speculation in the bud!

\* \* \* \* \*

Television sets, radios, refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and other consumer products cost less today than they did five years ago, even though the average wage level in American factories has risen 15 per cent to a record \$2.43 per hour since 1958—which seeming inconsistency is readily explained by the fact that automation and other technological advances have lowered manufacturing costs. Again we point out (as Henry George did in 1879) that wages are drawn only from production—and that real wages consist of economic satisfactions, not dollars-and-cents.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the behest of a constituent, the junior Senator from Connecticut recently took time out from legislating to confer with the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, to ascertain whether the cost of a wig prescribed by a physician as a therapeutic aid might be deductible from the voter's income tax as a medical expense. We are happy to inform our readers that the Commissioner's reply was in the affirmative—so clearly there is a silver lining even in the cloud of taxation that surrounds us.

# Don't Burn Down the House

by HOWARD W. L'HOMMEDIEU

"Collective bargaining"—a process of balancing the pressures, economic and physical, which each of two sides can exert upon the other or upon the public—is the popular hope for the solution to economic problems. It automatically assumes that a trade union will demand a raise in money wages each year, without having produced any more, which means that they will rob other producers, in their capacity as consumers, having to pay higher prices. It is equally automatic that employers, if they "bargain in good faith," will grant at least half of what is asked, and that employees, if they also "bargain in good faith," will accept such an offer.

Reaching an agreement by a balance of unethical pressures resembles an ancient method of solving a legal dispute by having a mounted knight as one's champion, joust with another mounted knight, the dismounted knight automatically proving his client to be in the wrong. Throwing thousands of people out of work and costing other thousands, not involved, millions of dollars by a prolonged strike, is something like the story of the Chinese who accidentally discovered the tastiness of roast pig when his house burned down, and continued to burn down a house when he wanted roast pig. Not to minimize the decided benefits resulting from trade unionism, it nevertheless deprives many persons of their civil liberties and natural right to work.

If many get much more than they earn, many others will get much less than they earn; also, if one of the means of getting unearned income is to hold land out of use for speculative and monopoly purposes—a practice that will prevail throughout the world

so long as the incentive remains—many will not be allowed to produce at all, many will not be educated enough to produce what they otherwise could, and the pressure of the unemployed will hold the basic wage below the subsistence level.

The cost of irrigating farms by the Grand Coulee Dam was estimated at \$700 an acre, while 28 million acres of fertile land was being held out of use—enough to support a million farm families. A large percentage of urban land is similarly held for speculation (or used only slightly, as "taxpayers"), preventing people from engaging, in the usual proportions, in innumerable businesses, and forcing many to live in cramped, dark, noisy, often dangerous, overpriced cell blocks or flats.

Although the facts are ignored in our school histories, Louis XVI strongly supported Turgot, a leading Physiocrat, during his 21 months as Comptroller General, forcing the registration of all his reform edicts, such as lower taxes, elimination of sinecures, balanced budget and freer trade—in spite of strong opposition, until the pressure of the nobility and clergy against the taxation of land value forced Turgot's dismissal. Louis' brother-in-law, Joseph II of Austria-Hungary, was a zealous reformer for the ten years he ruled, but he was likewise successfully resisted in his efforts at land reform. The same was true of Charles III, of Spain, during his 21 year reign, successive ministers instituting many reforms, but finally being forced, by the landholders' opposition, to giving up the main project, of the single tax. It would seem to be an anomaly for leaders of the United States to show less zeal for fundamental reform than a Bourbon or a Habsburg.

# Noah D. Alper's Brief Cases

## THE PLUCKERS AND THE PLUCKED

A. C. Ingersoll, Jr., president of the Federal Barge Lines, in a meeting of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers in St. Louis, predicted that in the next ten years "there will be tremendous pressure for the development of river frontage industrial parks north and south of the city proper," and that values would double in that time. He described the barge lines as the "geese which lay the golden eggs of industrial development," but said nothing of the taxpaying geese that are plucked.

## HOLLYWOOD GLAMOR PAYS OFF

According to an AP dispatch Joel McCrea, an actor, sold, for \$3,000,000, 1000 acres of ranch land to a home developer in Sherman Oaks, California, who planned to build 2500 homes and other buildings worth \$50,000,000 on the site. He retained 650 acres of his land, bought in 1932 "on the advice of the late Will Rogers."

And some people think there are no economic miracles? What will the 650 acres of "ranch" land bring at some future date?

## THE "DOG IN THE MANGER" MULTIPLYING FACTOR

"Highway Building Bills Go Up As Land Prices Rise"—states the headline on a Wall Street Journal article of April 4th by James P. Gannon. "One reason for this is that the federal index doesn't include costs of acquiring rights-of-ways," he says. "Rising land prices have sent these up sharply in many states. The Florida road department estimates its land acquisition costs have jumped 12 per cent in the last two years." John J. Leslie, a county highway engineer of St. Louis County says his guess is that right-of-way costs are running 100 per cent more than was expected.

Of course the reason for this trouble is not "indexes," but taxes, as any Georgist knows, and this shows how we are "educated" to the superficial in taxation matters. This unprogressive type of education is the best friend the communists ever had, for the fact is that EARTHlordism, not CAPITALism, fathered communism. This would be a good place to apply economic "birth control"—taxing land values and untaxing capital values to stop the spawning of communism.

## OUR FRIEND THE LAND SPECULATOR

In an article entitled "Land Speculation" in A Voice for Freedom, published by the Register Division of Freedom Newspapers, Inc., Santa Ana, California in March, the land speculator is presented as one who helps to "equalize the entire market and prevents prices from dropping too low or climbing too high." Here is how the "Freedom" reporter presents his fallacious reasoning:

"The mark of any speculator (all of us) is what we try to buy cheaply and sell at a higher price than we have paid. Thus it follows, especially in the purchase of idle land, that the speculator appears in the market when land prices are considered to be low. The reason the prices are low is because few buyers are on hand to purchase.

"If the speculator is taxed out of existence he will not appear when the market needs him most. And the market always needs him most when there are very few customers and prices are low. So he buys and holds the property, but he is running a risk for it may not rise in desirability and he may be forced to sell at a loss.

"But let us suppose that prices rise. The reason they do is because so many buyers appear compared to the amount of land or other commodity being offered. When the speculator finally does offer his property for sale he does so when a shortage develops. Thus he serves the market very well, both at the point when he buys and at the point when he sells. Does he injure anyone? Not a bit."

# Future Resources—Ever New

**SCARCITY AND GROWTH**, by Harold J. Barnett and Chandler Morse. Published for Resources for the Future, Inc., by the Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 1963.

Reviewed by Robert Clancy

"The Economics of Natural Resource Availability," is the subtitle of this book; and Resources for the Future is a nonprofit corporation for research and education in the development, conservation and use of natural resources.

The authors review different views on natural resource scarcity, with emphasis on the classical economists, Malthus, Ricardo and Mill. Malthus was the most pessimistic, stating that there is a flat limit to natural resources which increasing population will overtake, leading to famine and disastrous shortages. But, say the authors, "the notion of an absolute limit to natural resource availability is untenable when the definition of resources changes drastically and unpredictably over time." They give as an example, Vermont granite, which two decades ago was only building and tombstone material, whereas now it is a potential fuel with a usable energy content 150 times that of coal.

The Ricardian hypothesis, while based on Malthus, is somewhat less pessimistic, stating that increasing population will use progressively inferior natural resources—but Ricardo did not put an end limit to this process as Malthus did.

Mill, while tending to share the classical pessimism on the eventual outcome of increase of population, found a great many mitigating factors, such as the discovery of new re-

sources, increasing productivity, etc.

This book unfortunately does not go on to explain Henry George's view, which, carrying Mill a step further, states positively that increasing population brings its own increase of productive power without diminishing nature's potential.

Credit, is given to George however, for influencing the Conservation Movement, to which special attention is given. "The Conservationists' views of scarcity effect," say the authors, "probably derived more directly from the popular writings of the American political reformer Henry George than from the abstract, long-antecedent economic analyses of Ricardo or Mill."

This interesting statement is not elaborated, except to suggest that owners of choice natural resources "sometimes benefit"; and that conservationists criticize the rampant misuse of resources brought about by unrestrained monopoly. The father of the Conservation Movement, George Perkins Marsh, had several ideas on man and nature reminiscent of Henry George.

The better part of *Scarcity and Growth* is given over to mathematical analyses of such matters as the effects of resource depletion, mitigations of scarcity, and the unit cost of extractive products. It is too bad that nothing is said about artificial scarcity created by land monopoly and land speculation; or about the effects of taxation on resource development—in particular, land value taxation.

But the authors do make the important point that today's major social problem is not the scarcity of natural resources but the achievement of economic growth through improved social and human adjustments.

Henry George expressed it more poetically than mathematically when he

wrote: "It is a well-provisioned ship, this on which we sail through space. If the bread and beef above decks seem to grow scarce, we but open a hatch and there is a new supply, of

which before we never dreamed. And very great command over the services of others comes to those who, as the hatches are opened are permitted to say, 'This is mine!'"



## The "Growing Army"

THE many readers who have been following the career of S. James Clarkson with interest and approval, will be glad to know that he was re-elected Mayor of Southfield, a suburb of Detroit, in a close decision and against the bitter opposition of the well-entrenched President of the City Council.

Mayor Clarkson campaigned on a "Program of Progress" which included a policy of protection against penalty taxation on home improvements, and reduction of taxes on homes and buildings. In a voters' bulletin, which could be read in a minute and 40 seconds, he told "the truth about the new assessment," exposing the fact that those opposed to revaluation of property values were large companies whose holdings have long been under-assessed, whereas the longer list of groups favoring the revised assessment, include many civic home improvement associations. The reappraisals, made by a Cleveland firm and based on fair market values, showed increases in some cases more than a thousand per cent in excess of former figures. The mayor's bulletin made it clear that this under-assessment of large properties is responsible for the burden of taxes on homeowners and the revised

valuation would, in the majority of cases, reduce the assessments on homeowners.

Favorable news comes from The Incentive Taxation Committee of California that "ACA 20"—the amendment to allow cities and counties to reduce or remove taxes on improvements and personal property, and collect public revenue from a tax on land values, is now out of committee.

Sidney G. Evans of San Diego and Hyman Ledeen of Pasadena have organized a homeowners' association to fight excessive taxation through education. "Homeowners are the prey of every new tax scheme, local, state and federal," they observe, "and as taxes increase, our freedoms decrease because of growing government control made possible by bigger and bigger government budgets." Mr. Evans and Mr. Ledeen say they have joined the growing army of businessmen and homeowners who see land speculation as the evil underlying unemployment, low incomes, slums, delinquency and crime. They want to reduce land speculation and give industry and homeowners a break. They expect to collect signatures from at least 200,000 California residents who are in agreement.



# Arizona Springtime

*From a letter by Joseph Zashin*

THE cloak of winter is lifted from this area which fortunately does not know the rigors of bitter cold, heavy snowfall and numbing blizzards. I walk through the arroyos and the washes of this desert and the ground has a new array of blossoms of lovely hues.

At my approach, young rabbits bound away, their white cottontails disappearing into new refuges in the brush. The birds have been busy nest-building. Now their young join in the chirping. The gophers, in a similar pursuit underground, throw up mounds of earth that mark their exits and entrances. The anthills are a monument to labor. And now are seen the reptiles, dormant during the cool temperatures, the grasshoppers, the butterflies, the beetles and the lizards with their swift, graceful movements.

No calendar is more accurate than this reawakening of nature. All life responds to the same bidding to be fruitful, to multiply and replenish the earth. Sustained through countless eons of the past, for today and for endless tomorrows, there is abundance for all creatures.

Does man learn the lesson of this

unfailing abundance that is implicit in the order of the cosmos? In the capitols of the states and the nations we continue our depressing, dim-sighted wrangling. The best to hope for is an uneasy, contorted respite from selfish striving for dominance. In economic centers, on exchange and bourse, puny men seek to control the rich outpouring of the earth's bounty—to arrogate and to channel its flow. Under myriad names, men reject the concept of benevolent bounty and set up a harsh deity called Scarcity—worshipped with barriers, tariffs, quotas, allotments, cartels and managed economies.

When will we begin to accept the impartial benevolence of Mother Earth and shun the soothsayers of scarcity from whom spring distrust and fear?

Even as we are at our wit's end to devise tax programs, the earth calls to us "tax me!" Tax the earth to provide the revenues for government, for the needs of the community. Tax the earth and free the labor of men, free the products of his toil, free him in the unhampered enjoyment of his fruits. Only the earth has to be taxed to bring forth the sufficiency to meet man's needs.

---

A long and greatly respected French Georgist, A. Daudé-Bancel, editor of *Terre et Liberté* (Land and Liberty), died last month at the age of 92. An appreciation of his life and work will appear in the June HGN.

---

William L. Hall, the professor of economics who participated, with Agnes de Mille, in the radio program mentioned in "Individual Freedom Is the Answer," (April HGN) is teaching at the Nathaniel Hawthorne College in Antrim, New Hampshire, *not* at Sarah Lawrence College, as incorrectly stated. He describes Nathaniel Hawthorne as a liberal arts college, built and operated without federal funds, and says he is teaching economics "sans text."

# The Henry George School in the News

**BOSTON** has leaped into the lime-light with a "live" class before an FM radio station, under the leadership of Mitchell S. Lurio, president of the Walter E. Heller financing company, and director of the Boston Henry George School. A group of students is pursuing the course, lesson by lesson, in a 10-week series, one hour a week, over WBCN.

**DETROIT** students and friends will meet on May 4th at the Whittier Hotel to plan for a series of television programs. The Henry George Television Fund Committee of eight hopes to raise a fund of \$3,000 by July first. Members of the HGTFC are Robert D. Benton, Melvin C. Bergen, Edmund J. Darson, Leonard Huckabone, Adam Kempa, Edward Lawrence, Joseph Pietruska and Harold Tapert.

Edward Lawrence, who appeared in *Wagon Train*, *Cimarron*, and other television series, will be present to discuss methods of arranging panel programs and publicizing school activities. The director of this extension, Robert Benton, was recently nominated to serve on the board of directors of the Adult Education Association of Metropolitan Detroit for a term of three years.

**NEW YORK** Evenings at Eight will conclude this month. "Drama Recitals" will be a feature of May 3rd, presented by the Chamber Drama Group; and Ralph Mortensen, Field Secretary of the American Bible Society will speak on May 17th on "Present-Day Problems of Southeast Asia." Films on May 10th will show "The Moiseyev Dancers" and "The London of William Hogarth." On May 24th there will be a Marcel Marceau film, "In the Park" and one on "The Middle East."

One outcome of the Spanish-language classes at the Henry George School is the formation of a new organization calling itself AGLA—Asociación Georgista para Latino América. This consists of students now taking the third basic course in Spanish, and the purpose is to promote Georgist ideas in Latin America. Members are from various countries—Cuba, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Ecuador, etc. Faculty adviser to the group is William Camargo, and officers are: Rev. Gaspar Delgado, President; Dr. Aurelio Rios, Vice-President; Wilfredo Diaz, Treasurer; Primitivo Cintra, Secretary of Publicity; and Leonidas Panigua, Secretary of Organization.

A periodical, *Noticias del AGLA*, will be published bi-monthly in Spanish, and distributed among Latin American friends. A sample copy of *Noticias* will be sent to HGN readers on request.

## Behind the Iron Curtain, Too!



"Let's put it on the government expense account, since the state is going to wither away in any case."

—From Rohac, a Czech newspaper.



Joseph Thompson gives a good answer to the objection (March HGN) that the public collection of the rent of land constitutes an unjust singling out of one group (land title holders) for taxation. But a better answer is that the public collection of the rent of land and its application for public uses is, from the standpoint of the relation of title holders to non title holders (which is a relation of privilege) a form of redress.

Land is, in justice, common property—therefore, the individual or corporation having exclusive control of any portion of it is in debt to all of us. If this debt is satisfied through the public collection of rent and applied to the reduction or abolition of the present taxes which do not constitute a public collection of rent, then we should say simply that taxation is partially or wholly eliminated—not that any group is being singled out for taxation.

The buyer of labor products as such pays no rent—he simply pays for what he gets from the seller or producer. Any producer, whether he produces on inherited, bought, or hired land is a payer (not a receiver) of rent. If the value of his output does not cover the rent of the land he is using (before wages and interest), he will not continue to produce on the land, although if he is the owner he may continue his ownership, hoping to receive its rent from another producer.

Prices of labor products contain no element of rent—they represent what the market place values them at, as so much stored-up labor. Rent is paid for, and represents, the advantage of a particular location or natural resource for the purpose of producing wealth.

It is a share of the value of total output—not of the value of one unit of output.

RICHARD T. HALL  
Boston, Massachusetts

I am sorry to find myself in disagreement with Oscar Johannsen, because I know him well from his articles in the HGN, and generally approve what he has to say. But I take exception when he says that George goes too far in his vision of publicly owned social services (*Georgism versus Socialism*, March HGN).

George's argument was that in all those forms of business that permit of it, competition between businessmen will set fair and just prices and that in all those forms of business that are natural monopolies, that is, where competition is not possible, the state should own and operate the business under civil service regulations.

I agree with George's stand, and I think we carry our enthusiasm for private enterprise too far when we object to the state building the roads and post offices and operating the schools. I haven't heard of anybody advocating that private enterprise ought to take over the armed forces and the White House. Armies, navies and governments were privately owned and operated in the Middle Ages, and to me it makes just as much sense as for governments to give exclusive franchises to electrical companies or railroads.

A government, rightly considered, is a cooperative enterprise, owned and controlled by the citizens. If private enterprise had ample scope to develop

in its proper field—if it were not constantly bedeviled and exploited by the landowners and the tax collectors and if we had free trade and the single tax—making a living would be so simple that public servants would not be constantly tempted to betray their trusts. Then government would serve the people instead of conspiring with vested interests to exploit them, and the public ownership and operation of public services would solve the monopoly problem.

URQUHART ADAMS  
Peace River, Alberta

Many Georgists would agree with Noah D. Alper that there are three direct taxes: land-value, inheritance and income. But this is not quite true, since the corporation income tax is a "cost of production" and must be recovered in prices.

Furthermore, a little analysis will show that in the long run a considerable part of our personal income tax finds its way into prices. For all taxes increase the pressures for higher salaries and wages, and all labor costs must be passed on into prices.

As to economic rent and taxes on

it—although competition prevents a tax on rent from being passed on, nevertheless all economic rent is a cost of production (just as labor and capital expenses are) and is an integral part of price. Oscar Geiger and other Georgist theoreticians have denied this and reached an unrealistic conclusion; for regardless of whether the rent is taken or shared by the government or the landowner, all of it enters into the value of the product.

HOWARD L. BUCK  
2309 32nd Street  
National City, Calif.

Money used to fight the causes of poverty is better used than that given to charity. Since the Henry George School is the leader in the war against the causes of poverty, I am enclosing herewith a contribution in memory of Benjamin F. Butler, Jr.

ROBERT SAGE  
Brooklyn, New York

[Other friends of the Henry George School have also kindly contributed funds in memory of departed friends and relatives. This is a very thoughtful way both of memorializing a person and helping the school.]

---

Readers of HGN will learn with interest that Dr. Rolland O'Regan of Wellington, New Zealand is lecturing in the United States under the auspices of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. His talks are built around New Zealand's experience with land value taxation, a subject on which he is expert. In use for half a century, a majority of New Zealand's cities, towns and shires now benefit from this method of raising local tax revenue.

Mrs. O'Regan is accompanying her husband. They left Wellington on April 2nd, made a brief stop in Honolulu, and arrived in San Francisco on the sixth. Dr. O'Regan's West Coast itinerary has taken him to Portland, Oregon, and, in California, to San Francisco, Fresno, Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego and Claremont. In these cities he has spoken to college faculties and students, and has addressed other substantial audiences. The good reception he has been accorded is most encouraging.

On April 22nd the O'Regans headed for Washington, D. C. when, on the 24th, Dr. O'Regan addressed 500 members of the National Homebuilders Association of America. Engagements in Erie, Pennsylvania, Chicago, St. Louis and New York followed. On May 13th Dr. O'Regan's speaking tour will end with a return to Washington, D. C. for a seminar and lecture at George Washington University and a talk entitled "Property Taxes and Housing" before members of the National Association of Mutual Savings Banks. His address at the annual banquet of the Henry George School in New York on May 8th will be covered in the June HGN.

(Continued from page 1)

ment co-incident with the process of learning the principles of *Progress and Poverty*.

For myself, and I think for the other correspondence teachers also, there is indeed a suggestion of romance (agapé and philo) in our correspondence department, when persons separated by many miles use the classes-by-mail to come to know each other, and learn

more about the fundamental principles of economics.

In San Francisco, in March of 1879, George inscribed the first edition of his now famous book "to those who, seeing the vice and misery that spring from the unequal distribution of wealth and privilege, feel the possibility of a higher social state and would strive for its attainment." We also strive for that attainment.

—Paul S. Hershey

## More on Economics by Mail

IT is not unlikely that someone may be reading about Henry George in some part of the world every one of the twenty-four hours. The school's Correspondence Division has students in all the 50 states and many foreign countries, and the mail is a treasure trove for stamp collectors.

The three basic courses: Fundamental Economics, Applied Economics and Science of Political Economy; are the most popular. There are four supplementary courses: Philosophy of Oscar Geiger, Philosophy of Henry George, Democracy versus Socialism and Human Rights.

The Henry George School is an accredited member of the National Home Study Council and is listed in their Directory of Private Home Study Schools. About 250 English language students receive certificates on completion of the fundamental course every year, and this is now being augmented by the graduates of the course in four other languages: French, Spanish, Italian and German.

A great deal of interest is shown, and a variety of ages and backgrounds are reflected, among those who enroll. Some students begin in a critical mood but become enthusiastic proponents when later lessons are reached. Edgar Trier, who is associated with a French

newspaper in New York, has pupils in France, Germany, Belgium and Haiti. As an indication that interest in the courses continues, one Haitian pupil expounded George's theory at an international conference where he was present as a delegate from his country.

Some of the students write of their personal problems, asking for advice, some write long reports on local incidents illustrating George's theory, a few have sent poetry. The home study method is preferred by many busy people because it eliminates the travel time required in regular attendance at classes. But the most gratifying letters come from those who for reasons of health or geographic remoteness could never undertake this study if it were not available free by mail.

In the November 1962 HGN we introduced Daisy McNeill, deaf from birth and physically handicapped, who was denied an education, yet is self-supporting. She expressed her warm gratitude to her teacher and the school for the priceless opportunity to study at home free of charge.

And from Ghana a student wrote recently to say he too was grateful for the lessons, and proud of the torch that had been passed on to him by the Henry George School. Convinced that the study of the nature of wealth and

the natural laws governing its production and distribution should be studied by all thinking persons, he said: "We must adopt the method of abolition of land speculation and monopoly. If we followed this remedy the way would be open to great progress."

An enthusiastic French graduate wrote to inquire whether he could receive his certificate in New York and if his transportation would be paid.

The volunteer correspondence faculty for English language courses includes: Roma Bianco, Thornton Brown, Adele Buckalter, Elizabeth Bukofski, Alfred Cadavero, Evelyn Evans, Anthony Grieco, Gilbert Herman, Paul S. Hershey, Salvatore Manganaro, Kaldes Nicholas, Edith Pesetzner, Mabel Rees, Isobel Restall, Martha Sherr, Wilfred Smith, Paul Tugender and Harold Zerdin.

In addition there is a growing faculty to serve the increasing number of foreign language students. William Camargo and Lionel Gonzales correct the lessons in Spanish; Ilse Harder and Manfred Richardson in German; Frances Soriero and Henry Gieffers in Italian; and Henri Bellande and Madeleine de Roince in French. Versatile teachers

handling two, three, four and even five languages (with English), are James Murphy, Edgar Trier, Charles Stern, Edney Huckleman and Leo Eitingon.

Staff members serving the Correspondence Division are: C. Matthew Ossias, Head of the Division; Marian Wolf, Secretary; and Peter Patsakos, International Secretary. Laurence Kobak, Assistant to the Director, also participates. Special volunteers include Cleto Hernandez, Helen Lader, Fryda Ossias and Leonard Weisenfeld.

For those in search of a new way to support the Henry George School, we can suggest placing advertisements of the correspondence courses in their local papers. This was done recently by Walter Gerver in Lancaster, Pennsylvania; by Alex Duris in Hendersonville, North Carolina; also by S. Sevenson in various periodicals in Holland. Very welcome responses are received from such notices. If you contribute an advertisement of this kind to your community newspaper, you may be surprised at the interest it will arouse. For further suggestions write to the Henry George School, 50 East 69th Street, New York 21, N. Y.

---

Georgists will again gather on a university campus, this time at the University of Toronto, from July 3rd to 7th, for the 19th annual conference of the Henry George School.

Among the speakers will be Senator Arthur W. Roebuck; C. H. Bubeck of the University of Toronto; and S. James Clarkson, newly re-elected Mayor of Southfield, Michigan (see p. 10). There will also be discussions by school directors, a sight-seeing trip, a Fourth of July observance, and a close look at the unique tutorial system adopted by Toronto's School of Economic Science.

Mr. Robert Clancy,  
33-53 82nd St.,  
Jackson Heights, L.I., N.Y.