# Henry George Newsletter

published by

Henry George School of Social Science

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### A SURVEY ON WAR

For several months Lindy Davies and myself have noticed much interest among students in discussing the crisis, war, and post-war situation in the Middle East. What (really) caused the war, and (how) can future wars be prevented? We were, implicitly and explicitly, being asked, "What is the Georgist position?" "There isn't one Georgist position, but this is one Georgist's position," is how, in effect, we sometimes prefaced our remarks. But as a school of political economy, do we not owe it to our students to face critical world problems, ask searching questions, and question easy answers? This prompted us to solicit more than one Georgist's opinion for this issue of the Newsletter, by a letter sent in early February to Henry George School teachers, directors, and other Georgist educators. We reproduce here excerpts from all who have replied (except one who wished to remain unpublished). Since the war is officially over, these excerpts will reflect some of the issues that remain. Since the opinions are those of individuals, not organizations, we have not added organizational affiliation after each writer's name.

— The Editor.

From Prof. Jack Schwartzman: If Henry George were alive today, in 1991, he would analyze the current conflict in the Persian Gulf with the same precise and chilling clairvoyance as he did in 1879 in Progress and Poverty (pages 509-511, 1979 Robert Schalkenbach edition). "Man is social in his nature," George began, and man's general bent is to live in peaceful association and harmony with his fellow-humans. However, obstacles arise because of artificially-created shortages of world resources, together with deliberately-induced suspicions of "differences...in language, custom, tradition, religion," and they engender rivalry, fear, and hatred. "With these differences, prejudices grow, animosities spring up, contact easily produces quarrels, aggression begets aggression, and wrong kindles revenge....Warfare becomes the chronic and seemingly natural relation of societies to each other, and the powers of men are expended...in mutual slaughter..."

What are we fighting for in the Persian Gulf? Oil, land, colonization, conquest? They are all summarized in one phrase: control of energy. Is the world "running out" of energy? In his recent book, Population Matters (New Brunswick, USA, Transaction Books, 1990), Prof. Julian Simon unequivocally declared: "There is no reason to believe that the supply of energy is finite, or that the price will not continue it long-run decrease .... The measure of the future oil supply must therefore be at least as large as the sun's seven billion or so years of future life." (p. 80) He supported his contention with unquestionably valid statistics.

This war, therefore, is not only totally destructive and horrifying (and unending, since it will spawn future wars), but, even from a cold-blooded, economic, point of view, totally senseless! Alas for humanity! (survey continues on page four)

## QUESTIONS ON WAR - & ANIMAL RIGHTS - IN L.A.

"War! Is it the lot of humanity?" was the theme of a special March First Friday Dinner sponsored by the HGS-LA at Pickwich Banquet Center in Burbank. Included on the program with familiar "designated hitters" Butler Shaffer, David Byrnes, Bob DeTolve, and Michael Green, were discussion leaders Harry Pollard and Prof. Mason Gaffney.

Tough questions were on the agenda: How can a "new world order" where law is outlawed by the world community be enforced? By a World Police Force? Who will pay the piper? If wars become too costly, won't a draft make it even easier to wage them? Is peace-at-any-price the only rational response? Or is it a cop-out for those avoiding the responsibility of taking proper action?

Harry's presentation also was framed by a series of questions. "Is the franchise important to keeping the peace? Georgists might argue that economic freedom is more important than political freedom; that all you can do with the vote is to limit your existing freedom. But, perhaps the vote has a cosmetic effect on unrest. It hides potential agression. Quite cynically, it might be argued that people should be given the vote to keep them quiet. In an Iraqi democracy, would Iraqis have voted against war if they felt they could influence the decision? Or, would they be like us — influenced by politicians and newspapers?... So, what about the West Bank? Dare the Palestinians be given an Israeli vote? Would it keep them quiet? In any event, the West Bank should obviously be returned to the Palestinians, or back to Jordan which is Palestinian to the core.... Unless you are an Israeli. Israel without the West Bank has the wasp-waisted look of a twenties' flapper. If I was an Israeli, I'd say to heck with giving it back. We stole it fair and square."

Included with the dinner program was "A Middle-Eastern Timeline" stretching back from 1990 AD to 2700 BC when the tower of Babel was built in what is now Iraq, between the present cities of Bazra and Baghdad! [Maybe "Babel" still reigns? - Ed.]

(continued on next page)

### A SURVEY ON WAR

(continued from page two)

From Pat Aller: Who wants war? Who trusts what governments say about the need to fight?

Still, we know Kuwait was conquered and annexed by Iraq, whose leader tortured and murdered Kuwaitis, just as he had his own political opponents, just as he had poisoned thousands of Kurds, his own minority citizens. Iraq threatened chemical and nuclear warfare against Israel, simply because it exists, and against United Nations coalition forces, and has repeatedly fired missiles at Israeli civilians....

More than blood and oil are at issue: the right of nations to exist, the strength of the world's social contract based on deliberations and decisions of its members, and the agreement of nations to forego — if not war — war's vilest methods, nuclear and chemical.

I opposed the US war in Vietnam, which should have stayed a regional political dispute.... Iraq's motive is greed: for land, including sea access. The motive and methods of Hussein's Iraq bring morbid reminders of Hitler's Germany.

All nations, including ours, have armed Iraq. The role of arms superiority in coalition success will be used to argue against disarmament. But the Gulf war is our fierce lesson, our grim reminder that global disarmament must be the priority of each of us. As Georgists, we know that economic justice is both the way and the goal.

President Jimmy Carter once called the energy crisis the "moral equivalent of war" and ordered solar panels installed on top of the White House.... today those panels -- taken down during the Reagan-Bush years -- gather dust in a government warehouse in suburban Virginia. -- David Com,

in The Nation, March 4, 1991

From Pia Francesca DeSilva: As usual, the US has gone off on a "carry a big stick" policy.

Economic sanctions against Iraq were beginning to have an effect towards change. The only problem was, this policy wasn't quick enough for President Bush and his cohorts. Our collective mentality seems to still be: waste billions of dollars on weapons, let the young die for the errors of the old, and to "continue not to learn from the mistakes of the past" (please excuse the paraphrasing of Santayana).

Henry George wrote about the futility of war as an economic fixative in *Protec*tion or *Free Trade*. We still aren't listening. From Craig Cringan: It's over. The Iraqi military machine has been destroyed. What comes next?

Will North Americans do some long hard thinking about the energy future of their own countries? We hope so but there is no sign of it yet. Our dependence upon oil riches is similar to the sixteenth century dependence of Spain on gold riches: it can lead to a similar decadence. At best, plentiful supplies of oil will be ended within the lifetimes of most persons now living. Civilization will have to adapt .... Some countries, notably Japan and the European Community, are far ahead of Canada and the US and their lead seems to be increasing. Our readiness to take the lead in disciplining Saddam Hussein seems to be a sign of lag in perception of energy realities....

Reparations? from whom? In this case the answer is obvious, from anybody who wants to buy oil from OPEC .... From now on the US will be the leading member of OPEC, doing commission on every barrel until its war costs have been recovered. The Europeans and Japanese will pay: the Russians will applaud. Consumers in the United States and Canada will find themselves paying more for oil but they will know that their governments are getting a substantial part of this increased flow of revenue and maybe they will also have the intelligence to insist that taxes against production of other things be reduced. At last there will be a permanent economic incentive to learn and to practice the energy economies which are going to be needed later....

Let's hope that the people of the middle east will see the way clear to replacing their feudal barons with a system which shares the resources for the good of all. It is up to them to make their own arrangements: perhaps we can help by educating their future leaders. But how can we offer even this meagre aid when we haven't learned to teach these principles to our own leaders?

From Dr. Oscar B. Johannsen: The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq was the result of the action of one man, Saddam Hussein, primarily because he desired control of more of that natural resource — oil. In other words, he wanted control of more land.

This illustrates the fact that Georgists must not only understand and educate people on man's relationship to land, but also to that entity known as the organized State. Society consists of individuals voluntarily cooperating for specific purposes—for example, chess clubs. The State, on the other hand, is an organization of a relatively small number of individuals in control of people, with or without their con-

War is the health of the State. It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity for passionate co-operation with the Government.... The machinery of government sets and enforces drastic penalties, the minorities are either intimidated into silence, or brought slowly around by a subtle process of persuasion which may seem to them really to be convincing them.

-Randolph Bourne, The State, (1918)
The health of the people precedes the health of
the state. -Bill Moyers, speaking before the 1991
Democratic Issues Conference, Leesburg VA.

sent, in a particular area. In effect, the State acts as though it owns the individuals in its area, as evidenced by conscription.

The result is that, as long as people permit States to exist, a coterie of individuals can control and direct the lives of masses of people. The coterie can reduce itself, in effect, to one individual as in the case of Hitler, Stalin and Hussein.

How to contain and restrain the State has puzzled philosophical thinkers down through the ages. Georgists may not be able to solve this problem any more than anyone else, but at least they should stress its importance and effect. If a State were to have at its disposal the full economic rent of the space it occupies, the coterie in charge would have greater control than it does now over the individuals in its area.

The distinction between government and state...is in the use to which political coercion is put. When it is used negatively, for the protection of life and property, with which must be included the adjudicating of disputes among citizens, it is a service; when it is used positively, in the interests of one group of citizens, including politicians, against the interests of other groups, it is a disservice. In the one case it makes for harmony, in the other it is the cause of discord.

- Frank Chodorov, Government Contra State (Analysis, February 1946)

From Richard Barbuto: Americans-for-Empire continue to control US militaryindustrial policy. The "new world order" sought by the First World powers is the real reason for the declaration of war on former Third World countries of the Middle East. Restoration of the old "captive nations order" is the reason for Second World complicity in the Middle East. These two power-blocs have decided it's time to upset the respective threats from emerging and neighboring Fourth World nations, peoples with the will and strength to say "no" to the bosses.

The contrived reason for this war, Irag's invasion-annexation of Kuwait, provided the theatrical cover for UN Resolution 678. Iraq was expected to reject the ultimatums.... Consider how these same Coalition Nations stood idly by for the past two decades while Iraq and many other governing cliques did worse to their own and neighboring peoples. Was the United nations convened to liberate these peoples?! No. Human concerns (John Dewey considered moral and human as synonymous) are not the issue for these powers. Hegemony for client-seeking, colony-and satellite-foraging First and Second World powers is the motive for wars against all freedom-seeking peoples in the Middle East.

The Remedy is at hand for Georgists

seeking liberty and justice for all. Georgists must support the Fourth World Movement that envisions thousands upon thousands of free communities; communities that will share their site/location values, their natural resources and the value-added by public debt and taxpayer-funded infrastructure. We need to support a Fourth World movement that is sensitive to the one world we are. We need to support some form of light monitoring of public and private social services by regional and world-wide institutions that are run by people who share the spirit of the anarchist-syndicalists of olde.

From Prof. C. Lowell Harriss: Hostilities in the Gulf provide a dramatic example of the desirability of forthright thinking about use of the fruits of natural resources. A small percentage of the world's population are descendants of persons who lived in certain locations - barren sand above rich deposits of petroleum obtainable at costs far lower than in most of the world.

The people who have been profiting from their fortunate location above oil will quite naturally support continuation of rules that have applied. Others who consume over the world pay. Is this a just arrangement? It does not seem to me to conform to reasonable interpretations of justice. There must be better ways. Whether such could be worked out seems to me far more doubtful than one would wish. Getting any agreement on a different system would be impossible, I believe, in the world as it exists. Even within single

# 1991 NORTH AMERICAN GEORGIST CONFERENCE: June 14-17, Lafayette College

You are cordially invited to attend the 11th Annual Conference of the Council of Georgist Organizations. Conference sessions will be held at the William Simon Center at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania. Options include meals on campus and your choice of accommodations on campus or at the Sheraton Easton Inn, downtown Easton. Shuttle service will be organized by CGO volunteers to and from the Inn and the College.

This year's conference follows on the heels of an independently organized scholarly conference on Henry George, being held by Lafayette College on June 13-14. As a bridge between the two conferences, the CGO will begin with a reception on Friday evening 7 PM at the Sheraton Easton Inn, to which participants of both conferences are invited. [See next page for more on program.]

DEADLINE #1: MAY 1st is the deadline to reserve accommodations at the Sheraton Easton Inn. After that date, the Sheraton cannot guarantee vacancy. Rooms being held for the conference are "single" with two beds in each. Prices are \$50 for one person, and \$55 total for two persons. Write or call: Sheraton Easton Inn, South Third & Larry Holmes Drive, Easton, PA 18042 (Telephone 215-253-9131).

DEADLINE #2: If you pay in full by May 15th, you pay only \$15/person/day Conference Fee, instead of \$20.

DEADLINE #3: Register by JUNE 1st for guaranteed room & board on campus, and a place at the Banquet.



LAFAYETTE COLLEGE in Easton, Pennsylvania is located across the Delaware River from Phillipsburg, New Jersey on Route 78. It's less than two hours drive due west of New York City, 90 minutes west of Newark airport, and about an hour and a half due north of Philadelphia. We will have regular shuttle service from the Greyhound bus station in Easton to the campus, which is very close by. Further details will be sent later to registrants.

ACCOMMODATIONS at the College are dormitory style, single and double rooms, without private bathrooms. The College advises those who require a reading lamp to bring one with them. Prices per room are as follows: Single: \$16 first night, \$5 each additional night. Double: \$25 first night, \$10 each additional night (per room, not per person) Key Deposit: \$25 cash (returned when key is returned) (please see next page)

## 1991 GEORGIST CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM -- Side One

PLEASE REGISTER the following in the 1991 Conference:	Name(s)
@\$20/person/day* for (indicate number of persons/day):	Address
Sat, Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed	Zip
*\$15/person/day if you pay in full by May 15, 1991.  Total non-refundable registration fee enclosed: \$	Amount Enclosed \$ Amount Due \$
Friday Reception for persons @ \$5 = \$	DatePhone
** SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR MORE **	Make Checks payable to: Council of Georgist Organizations And send to: 121 East 30th St., New York, NY 10016

SURVEY ON WAR (continued) countries such as the United States

geographical inequalities appear to be accepted as the right and proper way to arrange human affairs.

These are issues of profound human importance. Open discussion ought to yield, first better understanding of possibilities, and then, eventually, perhaps, action. Discussion of the immediate future could usefully draw upon Henry George's thinking and what has grown out of his work a century ago.

From Susan Klingelhoefer: I think we all know what caused the war - a madman, and US dependency on oil. As Georgists and Americans, we must reflect on our abuse of this resource. We have to learn to conserve its use; otherwise we will have

future wars. It is not too farfetched to imagine our planet being a "Mad Max" kind of world in five years time.

In the Middle East, buildings were destroyed, lives were lost, and hearts were broken. And cormorants, fish, and other Gulf wildlife are being smothered to death in oil. The people living on the Gulf coastline now suffer filthy, polluted air, and undrinkable water. While we worry about "our" oil, they worry about their survival. The Hussein oil spill is three times worse than the Exxon Valdez disaster. To put this is perspective, the Valdez is almost as long as the Empire State Building is tall. Meanwhile, hundreds of burning oil wells turn night into day, and day into night. Tragically, those who opposed the war knew that all this would happen, but they were overruled by White House policymakers.

As Georgists concerned with stewardship of the Earth, is it not our responsibility to demand from government legitimate programs for environmental protection? If we must pay taxes, our dollars should be used to develop safe, ecological and efficient non-nuclear alternatives to the fossil fuels we are so heavily dependent upon. And none of our tax money should assist in financing the regimes of any more self-aggrandizing lunatics.

From Don Hurford: As many if not most American would agree, the Persian Gulf War centers on ownership of land, on oil. (There was no US or UN call to save Tibet when it was taken over by China. Tibet has no oil.) One is reminded of the cartoon entitled "Ronald Reagan's Map of the World," with the Middle East region la-

# 1991 NORTH AMERICAN GEORGIST CONFERENCE: June 14-17, Lafayette College

MEALS at the College will be Breakfast 7:30-8:30 AM, Lunch 12 - 1 PM, and Dinner 5:30-6:30 PM. Meals on campus will be available to those who reserve beginning with Breakfast on Saturday June 15 through Breakfast on Tuesday June 18. Meals will also be provided for Common Ground conferees through Breakfast on: Thursday June 20. (The Banquet at the Sheraton on Monday evening replaces dinner on campus.) Prices are as follows: Breakfast \$3.50, Lunch \$6.00, Dinner \$8.50, Monday Banquet \$25.00.

AMERICAN AIRLINES offers our conferees 5% off their lowest supersaver fares to Philadelphia & Newark Airports (you must reserve 14 days in advance). And 40% off coach fare (reserve 7 days in advance). From Canada, 35% off coach fare only. Call American Airlines Action Desk at 800-433-1790 and refer to "Henry George Conference, Star # SO9618D."

PROGRAM is being developed, and will be sent later to registrants. Here are some general highlights:

FRIDAY EVENING: Hors D'Oeuvres Reception with cash bar at the Sheraton Easton Inn, 7:30 - 9:30 PM. We begin with a convivial gathering to which we also invite Dr. Jerome Heavey and those who attended the preceding Lafayette College Henry George Conference.

SATURDAY: A morning session with scholars who presented papers at the Lafayette College Conference (see accompanying information from Lafayette College). Chaired by Stan Rubenstein. An afternoon devoted to further discussions of Georgist philosophy and analysis. Speakers to include Jack Schwartzman and Ian Lambert.

SUNDAY: "Setting Course for the 21st Century" will include a morning plenary session and afternoon break-out sessions. Speakers will lead workshops in the fields of educational and political action. Chaired by Ed Dodson, Council of Georgist Organizations business meeting. Chaired by Sam Venturella.

MONDAY: Reports from Georgist Organizations. A look at local land tax issues and progress. Chaired by Steve Cord. Henry George Foundation business meeting. Evening Banquet at the Sheraton. Speakers to be announced.

COMMON GROUND U.S.A. meetings from Tuesday morning through Wednesday evening. Check-out after breakfast Thursday.

QUESTIONS? Contact: Mark Sullivan, Sec., Council of Georgist Organizations, 121 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016 Telephone, afternoons and evenings, 212-889-8020

### 1991 GEORGIST CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM -- Side Two

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	MEALS (indicate number of persons for each meal):	ROOMS ON CAMPUS:
	Breakfast @\$3.50: Sat_, Sun_, Mon_, Tue_, Wed_, Thu	Single @\$16 + \$5 each additional night:
	Lunch @\$6.00: Sat_, Sun_, Mon_, Tue_, Wed	Fri_, Sat_, Sun_, Mon_, Tue_, Wed
	Dinner @\$8.50: Sat_, Sun_, Tue_, Wed	Double @\$25 + \$10 each additional night:
	Banquet @\$25.00: Mon	Fri_, Sat_, Sun_, Mon_, Tue_, Wed
	Total for meals: \$	Total Amount for Rooms: \$ Ground floor requested:_
	Vegetarian fare is requested for person(s).	[Rooms at Sheraton must be reserved directly with Sheraton]

beled simply "Our Oil." Clearly that view still prevails....

There is more to the war than this, of course. We have not only the rashness and defiance of Saddam Hussein but also the hard-line philosophy of George Bush, his desire to play the role of forceful leader, his pro-oil outlook, the outlook of a man who made his fortune working for Texas oil companies and as president now continues to act in their interests.

Another factor is the cultural hiatus between the American and Iraqi presidents. Why not negotiate the conflict? Why not leave Hussein a face-saving out? Why so unmoving on the January 15th deadline? As a US-educated Iraqi commented to a reporter, "Arabs do not understand that "'yes' means 'yes' and 'no' means 'no.' To us this kind of talk is rude." Did George Bush try to understand Hussein's language?

It is likely that, given sufficient time, the blockade on trade would have worked. Henry George wrote and spoke eloquently on trade as essential to material economic well being. Today, a hundred years later, trade is more vital than ever. Iraq, whose economy hinges on oil export, is extremely vulnerable to boycott or blockade. Unfortunately, this less-drastic alternative to war was not given a fair trial.

One can only hope...that the legacy of US responsibility in the Persian Gulf is not burdensome, that war-incurred Arab hatred of Americans is mild and shortlived. The Georgist analysis of the conflict is clear enough. The Georgist solution remains to be spelled out and tried.

Obviously a wide spectrum of views exists among adherents and teachers of the Georgist philosophy. There is no monolithic "Georgist Position" on the Persian Gulf crisis, and this is probably as it should be. Nevertheless, each writer here is concerned with natural laws, underlying causes, and truly just and workable long-term solutions. That orientation virtually ensures that the responses of Georgists to the issues of the day will be worth hearing. For we all recognize that there are very few issues that do not bear on political economy. As George wrote, the body economic is the "Greater Leviathan" that forms and directs the body politic. So we hope that this forum will accomplish its goal of stimulating constructive discussion -- and we thank all who contributed their views. -- Mark Sullivan, Editor

-Lindy Davies, Assistant Director

## FIRST LAFAYETTE COLLEGE CONFERENCE ON HENRY GEORGE: June 13 - 14

On June 13th-14th, 1991, Lafayette College will host a conference on the works and impact of Henry George. Its purpose is to provide a forum for the scholarly examination of George's works and their influence in economics, and in other fields of learning.

The annual conference of the Council of Georgist Organizations will follow immediately, beginning on Saturday, June 15th. All sessions will be held in the air-conditioned William E. Simon Center for Economics and Business, on the campus of Lafayette College. Lodging will be available in college residence halls and meals will be provided in the Marquis Dining Hall.



Among the papers to be presented at the conference are:

Robert Andelson: Henry George and the Theory of Interest Evaluations of Henry George in Social Herbert Barry:

Science Publications

Henry George Revisited: What is His Proper Steven Cord:

Place in the History of Ideas?

Henry George and Liberation Theology James Dawsey: Fred Foldvary: Real Estate and the Business Cycle: Analysis

of Henry George's Theory of the Trade Cycle Neoclassical Economics as a Defense Against

Henry George

C. Lowell Harriss: Henry George's Theory of International

Trade

Mason Gaffney:

Ian Lambert: Henry George's Theory of Value

Will Lissner: Democracy for the Twenty-First Century

Persons wishing to attend both meetings should register separately for each conference. The registration form for the Lafayette College conference appears below. Please complete the form and mail it to:

Professor Jerome Heavey, Department of Economics Lafayette College, Easton, PA 18402 [Tel: 215-250-5300]

## LAFAYETTE COLLEGE \*\* HENRY GEORGE CONFERENCE \*\* REGISTRATION FORM

3	General Registration Fee\$70.00
	Registration fee includes conference, lodging for Thursday
	evening, lunch and dinner of Thursday, breakfast, lunch,
	and dinner on Friday, refreshments at breaks,
	and conference materials.
-	Additional fee for Wednesday night lodging, and
	breakfast on Thursday morning\$7.25
į	Registration fee for those attending conference
Ť	but not requiring dining or lodging\$15.00
	Total Enclosed
	A Outs Enteroses

Make checks payable to: Lafayette College - Henry George

lame(s)		
Address		
ZipPhone		
If two persons are registering, should they be lodged in single rooms or a double room?		
Do you wish to have a vegetarian menu?		
Send to: Professor Jerome Heavey, Department of Economics, Lafayette College, Easton, PA 18402		