

Canadian Georgists have lost one of their leading lights. John Craig Cringan died on Tuesday, May 19, 1992 at 7:30 PM after suffering a massive heart attack. He was sixty-four years old. Craig had suffered from angina over the years and was in the hospital for a month before his death.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Craig's children and to Mary, his wife of forty-four years.

Craig served for many years as the Director of the Toronto branch of the School of Economic Science, a Henry George School affiliate in Canada. He was also active in other Georgist organizations, including Henry George Institute, International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and Council of Georgist Organizations. Craig's family has invited friends to make donations in his memory to the Georgist organization of their choice.

Many of us came to know Craig and Mary by attending Georgist conferences over the years. At one conference Craig presented an intriguing approach to learning economic principles, a computer chessboard game he developed and called *LANDGAME*. The game could be played either with a land value (only) tax, or with a land-and-building tax. The tax used determined the best strategy to follow: to develop or to speculate.

Craig was in many ways an individualist among individualists. His letters and articles reveal an independent mind that valued free inquiry into truth, as these excerpts show.

From a letter to Mark Sullivan, 4-4-91:

...my antipathy for land speculators is exceeded only by my hatred of taxes. I positively detest doing my income tax, comparing it to the sadistic orgies of a certain oriental potentate in old times who would entertain his guests by having one of the slaves commit hari-kari by disemboweling himself in everyone's view. To me the self-assessed income tax amounts to forcing an entire populace

Craig Cringan

to commit a similar indignity to itself. ...I still think that, within any reasonable limits, a shift of taxation from anything else to land values is not going to reduce land prices and it might even increase them...

The way I see it, any shift of taxes from production to land will cause rents to increase by the exact amount of the tax shift.... taking the brakes off production will produce increased business activity and a fairly constant proportion of the increased wealth will go into rent, producing an actual increase in land values.

In this scenario, the only way that land values would fall would be if the government both takes in increasing proportion of total wealth, and if it spends this wealth in ways which society finds to be of lower value than private expenditures.

From The Three Legs of Privilege, 11-90:

In the nineteenth century, the total taxes collected by all levels of government amounted to less than 20% of the economy. Now they amount to around 46% in the United States and 52% in parts of Canada. Cynics will remark, "Thank goodness we are not getting all the government we pay for."

Some government funds get given out to big companies in 50 million dollar chunks as bribes to relocate their plants in locations selected by political rather than economic considerations. Then there are the enormous "research grants" given to companies whose principal talent is being able to get these grants....

The land-tax solution proposed by Henry George is a technique rather than an economic fundamental. The fundamentals here are that privileges are abhorrent and that the resources of Nature are for everybody, for the people and other creatures, in this and in all future generations. When people learn to accept these fundamental truths, they will be ready for the techniques needed to implement a poverty-free society. The principal one of these techniques is a single tax on land.

in society. It is our duty to change... to apply the correct medicine. Henry George, in his masterwork *Progress and Poverty*, has shown the way."



The Editor wishes to thank Susan Klingelhoef of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation for providing some of the conference notes used in this report.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The 1992 Georgist Conference is the general focus of this issue. Lindy Davies and I hope we have been able to capture the essence of the 1992 North American gathering, giving some of the shining details a more in-depth focus. We by no means claim to have covered all facets, and we ask pardon of anyone who was not but should have been mentioned. Readers can get a more complete picture by supplementing our coverage with that in the latest issues of *The Georgist Journal* (Henry George Institute, 121 E. 30th St., New York, NY 10016) and *Groundswell* (Common Ground USA, 2000 Century Plaza #238, Columbia, MD 21044).

We congratulate all associates of *Escuela Ciencias Sociales Henry George* and the Council of Georgist Organizations for binding closer together Spanish and English-speaking students and advocates of Henry George. ¡Muchas gracias!

Dr. Jack Schwartzman continues to speak. Before delivering a thought-provoking talk on Columbus at the Santo Domingo Conference, Jack spoke to The Discussion Club of St. Louis, Missouri on May 21st this year, on "The Omelet and the Eggs: The Sequel." Georgist friend and stalwart Stanley A. Frederiksen, of the Public Revenue Education Council, helped arrange the engagement. Jack also appears in the 1992-93 edition of *Who's Who in American Education*. Latest news: Jack, abetted by Fannie De Noto, Oscar B. Johannsen, and Sydney Mayers (the latter two being HGS trustees and teachers), is planning to revive the individualist review, *Fragments*.

Dr. Oscar B. Johannsen, meanwhile, has had a letter to the editor published in the May 13, 1992 edition of *The Star-Ledger*, his local paper in Roselle Park, New Jersey. Under a cartoon of a skeletal horse-and-rider over flaming Los Angeles ruins, headlined "Opportunity denied breeds unrest," is Oscar's letter:

Over 100 years ago, Henry George in his magnum opus "Progress and Poverty," asked "whence shall come the new barbarians? Go through the squalid quarters of great cities, and you may see, even now, their gathering hordes! How shall learning perish? Men will cease to read, and books will kindle fires and be turned into cartridges!"

He pointed out that men "must have liberty to avail themselves of the opportunities and means of life; they must stand on equal terms with reference to the bounty of nature. Either this, or Liberty withdraws (continued on page seven)

initiated in our country five hundred years ago when Christopher Columbus brought men with no mentalities," Lucy commented to the televised session. "We are now Georgists in the Dominican Republic.... In Rio de Janeiro, they said the earth is sick, but it is us, the men and women who are sick, and it is us who have to straighten our minds to cure the illness

WHERE POLITICAL ECONOMY & SPIRITUALITY MEET

One area where students of Henry George can make a positive contribution is that of religious social concern. This was brought out at the Santo Domingo Conference on Sunday morning which began with an ecumenical gathering led by Rev. James W. Dawsey, Professor of Religion at Auburn University. Dr. Dawsey spoke of how the scriptures presented the living Jesus as a suffering servant who called others to follow his way - while Christopher Columbus saw Christ as a ruler with power.

Earlier in the conference, Prof. Jack Schwartzman gave a stirring presentation on Columbus - a "Georgist Appraisal" of his life. Jack presented us with the person whose voyage to the western hemisphere brought death to the native population. Columbus, who returned from his voyage with natives bound and muzzled as slaves, remedied the

meeting reflected a more unified spirit than the previous year.

One all-pervading feature of this year's North American gathering was its bilingual nature. Had the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade not had other plans, this conference would have been the second International Union conference in Spain. The very first International conference was held in Ronda, Spain, May 26-28, 1913. It was the fact of the Ronda conference that had inspired Bob Clancy of the Henry George Institute to propose a Spanish-English conference for the Columbus Quincentennial Year. What the IU rejected, the CGO adapted to fulfill its mandate to hold an annual conference in North America in 1992.

With more Georgist Dominicans than Yankees, the family that gathered felt, to this writer, ever more extended in its embrace. The conference banquet on Saturday evening included, at the beginning, a moment of silence for our departed family members Bob Scrofani of San Francisco and Craig Cringan of Toronto (see page three). It concluded with a moving personal tribute paid to Lucy Silfa by the students and volunteers of the Dominican School. Referring to Henry George as the father of their movement for social justice, they called Dona Lucy their mother. Indeed, one can say Lucy Silfa and the Santo Domingo Gathering has indeed given birth to a new pan-American spirit within the Georgist extended family.



Jack Schwartzman

situation by beginning the importation of African slaves to the Caribbean. The discussion that followed was heated. NY-HGS Assistant Director Lindy Davies asked about the various religious quotes from Columbus adorning the new Columbus monument in Santo Domingo. And New York School Trustee Si Winters expressed strong disagreement with Dr. Schwartzman, stating that one should understand the social forces that led to Columbus's voyages and their aftermath.

At the Sunday ecumenical, it was inspiring to hear Si relate that further discussions with Jack led to a common understanding between them over the Columbus controversy. Si also told of a personal spiritual experience: a response to an immigrant worker whose silent gesture over his dinner spoke louder than scripture - or economics.



Hector Sandler

The relevance of Georgist economics to socially-engaged spirituality goes back, of course, to George himself, whose *Progress and Poverty* and other works are filled with scriptural allusions. Many who took up the Single Tax banner, for example, joined the Anti-Poverty Society, which was founded by Dr. Edward McGlynn, the controversial Roman Catholic priest in New York.

Today, the message to the churches has been proclaimed once again in a new book co-authored by Dr. Dawsey with Dr. Robert V. Andelson, also a professor at Auburn University. *Wasteland to Promised Land: Liberation Theology for a Post-Marxist World* was featured at the conference following the ecumenical. (See Alanna Hartzok's review, on the back page.)

While a local reporter covered the presentation, Dr. Dawsey was joined by two distinguished speakers: Walter Rybeck from the Center for Public Dialogue, in the Washington, DC area; and Dr. Hector Raul Sandler, from the *Instituto Capacitación Económica* in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Dr. Dawsey made the telling point that, in our interdependent world, "my wealth is tied in with others"

EDITOR'S NOTES (from page three)

her light! Either this, or darkness comes on, and the very forces that progress has evolved turn to powers that work destruction."

Today we are reaping the harvest he predicted as we have done nothing to make the opportunities of the land available to all on an equal basis.

The letter, along with George's "Ode to Liberty" and John M. Kelly's "The New Barbarians: The Continuing Relevance of Henry George," was recently mailed out to many by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation.

The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation has just published its latest catalogue, listing several new books of interest to students of Henry George. Contact the Foundation for your copy, at 41 East 72nd Street, New York, NY 10021 (212-988-1680.)



James Dawsey

AIDS & B-2: Did you know that the entire US budget devoted to the AIDS health crisis is less than the cost of one B-2 bomber? And did you know that George Bush wants twenty B-2 bombers, and wants to cut the AIDS budget by 25%?

"Live Rent Free!" So said a flyer someone handed me on the street the other day. "The housing shortage is so severe and the rent is getting so high..." I continued to read. Turns out, according to the flyer, you can live rent free because "Jesus already paid the bill!" The flyer concluded: "Need a place to live? With a life long lease,...and more? Let Y'shua live in your heart and you'll always know that your place in heaven is reserved." But as Henry George pointed out a century ago, this same Y'shua taught us to pray "Thy kingdom come... on earth as it is in heaven." Advocates of what used to be called "pie in the sky when you die" need to read up on the strong current of social justice running throughout the Judeo-Christian tradition. They can start with *From Wasteland to Promised Land*, reviewed in this issue.



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