

NOTES FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

A potluck picnic on June 30th at the home of Gayle Voeller was the setting for a discussion with Robert Tideman on Henry George's philosophy and its practical application today. Mr. Tideman served as Director of the Northern California HGS from 1949 to 1973, and now serves as Administrator of the Big City Montessori School of San Francisco.

The Spring 1989 issue of *The Mercury*, newsletter of the Northern California School, featured several items of interest, including a report that the San Francisco Greens have endorsed a resolution urging the reduction of urban sprawl through land value taxation. The resolution was sponsored by Paul Johnson, a Green who recently attended a Progress and Poverty class taught by Wendell Fitzgerald. The resolution calls for an action plan to educate the public by making the land value tax part of the political agenda at local, state, and federal levels. Another article, by Fred Foldvary, chronicles the life of Ralph Borsodi (1883-1977), founder of the School of Living and proponent of the community land trust and other reforms along Georgist, individualist, and decentralist lines.

Fred Foldvary, a past President of the Northern California School now doing graduate studies in economics at George Mason University, also reports: "Everything only confirms the wisdom of Henry George. I was delighted to learn that such great thinkers as Lysander Spooner, 19th century American natural law writer and Knut Wicksell, turn of the century Swedish economist and father of public finance theory knew about the land question. Spooner wrote about how in Medieval England, freemen had a right to land, conditional on payment of rent, as a source of state revenues. Wicksell advocated a tax on land values to capture windfall gains. Modern avante garde economic public choice rent-seeking theory derives from Wicksell!"

Another recent letter to *The Mercury* is from Robert Gilman, Editor of *In Context* (PO Box 11470, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110): "I would be delighted for (my) articles (on land ownership) to be better known among Georgists. It is an issue I care deeply about, and I appreciate the work that you and others in the Georgist movement are doing." Xerox copies of these excellent articles are available for \$3.50 from *In Context*.

One final note: Alanna Hartzok recently gave a ninety-minute slide presentation on Ricardo's "Law of Rent" to fifteen Fremont high school teachers "to indicate the immediacy and the current dimensions of the problems that Henry George was addressing." This was one in a series of workshops to introduce Bay Area teachers to George's ideas and to improve the quality of the teaching with regard to land issues. Reactions ranged from "interesting" and "clear" to "scary" and "thank goodness I have my home." Other contrasts included: "a way to provide alternatives to students" and "over the heads of most high school students." Several echoed sentiments of one teacher: "important to the curriculum." Our favorite: "George deserves a place in our traditional economics courses."

Henry George School of Social Science
121 East 30th Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

Address correction requested

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID New York, N.Y. Permit No. 7759
--