

Katimavik in Montreal

MONTREAL, city of lights, politeness and charm, was a perfect host to the 1967 annual conference of the Henry George School. From the first glimpse of EXPO 67 as the plane circled over at night, to the last cordial handclasp, the time was spent in pleasant ways and places. More Georgists responded to this conference call than to any preceding one—the estimated attendance was 178.

The Eskimo word for a gathering is Katimavik, and this year it was at the College Jean de Brebeuf, which sounds best when properly pronounced in French. Until the arrival of English speaking HG visitors, French was clearly the predominating language. Laurie Mannett, Toronto director, was the one who stayed up latest to welcome pre-conference midnight arrivals, although others who willingly forfeited hours of sleep were our beloved Strehel Walton of Montreal, and the helpful conference "computers," the Bianco sisters—Roma and Neva, of New York, who are graceful and skillful specialists.

Most visitors lived in the college dormitory and came down to the conference for a recommended BIG breakfast (good for getting through the day at EXPO). In the program arrangement there was the informality that freedom loving Georgists prefer—and much sharing of ideas was accomplished in small groups rather than in lengthy meetings. Congratulations to the planners for condensing these into a shorter time.

Registration took place on the eve of July 26th and a preview of Canadian hospitality was indicated in pleasing films from the Province of Alberta. "Arch" McColl entertained also with a provocative discourse on Canada. Other Montreal leaders and representatives who received visitors and an-

swered the questions everyone wanted to ask about EXPO, were Harry Payne, president; Ben Sevak, Al Wells, Anne M. Wylie, Ruth Hilling and Chris Markland.

Thursday and Saturday were purposeful days, with meetings that clicked off pretty much on schedule. First, on July 27th, HGS extension directors discussed the problems which engage their good humored interest each year, with Philip Wallace of Jamaica, W.I. presiding.

After lunch chairman George Collins, Philadelphia director, introduced (John) Ted Gwartney, the youngest chief assessor of a metropolitan area, Southfield, Michigan (page 3). This was his first appearance at an annual HGS conference and we hope there will be many more. From New York, to tell of their very worthwhile "hobby," were Gerald Schleicher and Dr. Samuel Scheck (page 9), and welcome as always was Mitchell S. Lurio, Boston director, whose new and original method for determining the amount of groundrent was a feature of the August HGN.

A buffet supper was served at the college for convenience, and there followed a splendid report by Dr. Geoffrey W. Esty which you read in capsule form last month. Dr. Esty is president of the New Jersey extension at Newark, and Alexander M. Goldfinger, who spoke next, is the dean of the same extension (page 7). Then all were invited out into the gentle summer evening to see the beautiful City of Montreal, especially the Cathedral of Notre Dame—impressive and awesome.

What is variously called rain, showers, or mist, was present at dawn on Friday, our greatly anticipated EXPO day. "Never mind," said the radio commentators, "don't let a little shower

keep you away from the fair—take your bumbershoot.” EXPO is alluring and well organized. Native Canadians conspire to make visitors at ease in the city and at the fair. There are few guards or controls, for none are needed. What one sees at EXPO are long unprotesting lines, symptomatic no doubt of man’s docility. People stand, sit, chat and shuffle along in a curvy maze that may not terminate for hours. Was it worth it, someone may call out later. Usually the answer is yes.

Film making reaches a new dimension at EXPO. There are screens of all sizes and shapes. One popular pavilion shows simple images exploding to an enormous height and repeated on a vast floor screen far below—the subject is the doleful and tangled web of man’s labyrinthian existence. You also hear music produced electronically and see kaleidoscopic color with hallucinatory effects. Is this the message of “Man and his World?” The “blow-up” with blurry outlines, exaggerated out of all proportion, accompanied by a-tonal sounds, suggests, according to one pavilion theme, that “we are at once the freest and the most fettered people of all time.” Most unforgettably however the great continent of Canada emerges soaring and singing, in a spectacle produced by Walt Disney, whose greatness will not soon be repeated.

International Expansion

Saturday: all back together again in a round-table discussion with HGS directors, refereed by William Buhr, Assistant to the Director, Robert Clancy, at New York headquarters. Later there were Reports of Progress, with Harry Payne as chairman paying generous compliments to speakers who outlined the international activities. Ilse Harder, International Secretary of

the New York HGS announced that *Protection or Free Trade and Social Problems* in German, long out of print, are being republished by the Schalkenbach Foundation, to serve the growing number of German *Progress and Poverty* graduates. A German newsletter has been started for the purpose of drawing together the various students in New York and abroad who take the course in German.

Matthew Ossias, also of the New York International Division, said 1200 inquiries had been received for the correspondence course in the present year after a small notice appeared in a newspaper in Haiti. Though the course is offered in many countries, in French, Italian and Hebrew, the small country of Haiti seems to have responded more eagerly than any other. The course is free, but a small charge is made for those who wish to correspond by airmail. A newsletter is published in French and there is also one in Italian. Advertisements appear in the most prominent newspapers in Rome and other European centers. A new modern translation of *Progress and Poverty* in Italian will be ready in a year or so, and the condensed version in Hebrew is in constant demand.

William Camargo, Head of the Spanish Division at New York, named several persons who had studied Henry George and been trained at headquarters, who had returned to South or Latin America to become teachers. Volunteers are also very helpful in promoting the correspondence course abroad. Extracurricular activities include a newsletter and gay social events. Schools in San Juan, Santo Domingo and Colombia continue to attract interested students. New extensions are planned in San José, Costa Rica; Guayaquil, Ecuador; and Arequipa, Peru.

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Freedom — The Only End, by F. McEachran, has been translated into Swedish (*Frihet—det enda Målet*), and published by Natur och Kultur, Stockholm. The original edition, in English, is available at \$3 a copy from the Henry George School, 50 East 69th Street, New York, N. Y. 10021.

PREC

Noah D. Alper of St. Louis, founder and president of the Public Revenue Education Council and popular HGN columnist of Brief Cases, brought a message such as we have come to expect from this long-time worker in the cause to which he is dedicated. He wants to bring about a change in the teaching of taxation, in and out of schools, from a study of taxes enacted by legislatures, to a study of sources as revealed by economic science.

In its program of education, PREC points out that few people are confused as to the difference between a pump and a source. The question is then raised as to whether a tax is a pump or a source. Many economists and public officials refer to taxes as sources of public revenue — whereas taxes are in the nature of pumps. When people are forced to consider which pumps (taxes) to use instead of which sources, a confusing situation arises.

From a study of public revenue we know that if we take more rent for public use the price of land goes down, and if we take less rent the price of land goes up. On the other hand, if we tax products and services more we make them scarce and the price goes up, whereas if we tax these less their price goes down. By use of this knowledge we can show people that they have the power to make the price of land, products and services, higher or lower. It follows that we can make it easier or harder for people to make a living.

When it becomes clear to labor and capital that we can increase productivity and raise both the wages of labor and the rewards to those who provide capital, there is no longer any doubt that what is good for one is good for the other.

Miss V. G. Peterson, Executive Secretary of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, has promised

a written report for a later issue of HGN. Dr. Edith McBrady, President of the Henry George Woman's Club in Chicago, brought news of what this solidly set up club accomplished during the year, and this always leaves us wondering why there could not be more women's groups affiliated with the HGS. The Chicago club has now become departmentalized and offers a varied program, much of it being directed toward the school. Contributions to worthwhile causes totaled \$422.

The banquet on Saturday evening was at the Queen's Hotel where the annual conference was held 15 years ago. A fair number from that conference were present for the 1967 visit. A warm and heartfelt tribute was paid to Strethel Walton, for many years director of the Montreal extension and now its dean.

Joseph Thompson of San Francisco the school's president, was the well loved toastmaster. He introduced Robert V. Andelson, Ph.D. of Auburn University, Alabama, whose provocative address was condensed in last month's HGN. It was a rare privilege to hear next that public figure whose presence in the Henry George movement has meant so much to its followers on both sides of the border, Arthur W. Roebuck, Q.C. (page 1). Although both the Senator and the Chairman boldly confessed to being 89, they endowed this memorable evening with a quality of greatness that we love and respect and shall long cherish.

Sunday was evaluation time and also checking-out time. Those who joined the post-conference session under direction of John T. Tetley of Newark, expressed their pleasure and a few suggestions for the future.

An unscheduled panel of three speakers then brought views mainly touching on the disastrous riots that were mentioned many times each day in Canadian news reports. Robert Tide-man of San Francisco said that local

governments can be used to solve problems of the slums, although much education is needed. Just as school and irrigation districts were formed, why not form local districts under state law for residents of slum areas? A special assessment district could levy taxes on the land and use the revenue for recreation, job training and other essentials. This would be a stimulus to the use of land and there would be more employment. If we keep using federal money, he said, land prices will remain high.

Benjamin F. Smith of Grand Rapids also wants to get the land prices down but he says local government has lost control and he insists on a federal land tax with uniform assessments and strong-arm assessors. On an individual basis he advocates friendships that may help to obliterate the boundaries which he believes are rigidly drawn between neighborhoods.

Robert Benton said, "we couldn't believe it when we heard the news Sunday morning." Everyone thought Detroit unions, schools, offices and factories were well integrated. His earnest words carried conviction when he said, "we must do all we can to try to avoid

such a thing in the future." He says high city and state officials know a good deal about the land value tax which has been proposed as a remedy, but they do not want to have it discussed. He suggests bringing this to the attention of "lower men on the totem pole" such as councilmen or assessors. Perhaps eventually LVT will be tried if only because everything else has failed. He visits friends in poor neighborhoods and finds some persons with no jobs living next door to colored factory workers with \$8000 yearly incomes, and this is one part of the problem. He advises more people to get acquainted with the living conditions in the areas which through fear and terror are rapidly becoming "ghettos."

Good to remember is the Sunday afternoon visit to the home of Strethel Walton, 4278 Dorchester Street, West, which is also the address of the Montreal extension. From there most enthusiasts departed for another look at EXPO 67 and Man's World. But in the terminology of well seasoned Georgists we seem to recall that "the earth is the Lord's."

SAVE THE SCHOOLS WITH LVT

The United States Commissioner of Education, Howard Howe II, told members of a conference on Urban School Planning at Stanford University on July 10th, it was time for them to "dream a bit, not about what kind of city school we want, but about what kind of city we want." City schools have not been able to adjust to the population problems. Now they must pay attention to neglected matters like the tax policy and multiple use of land and buildings. As a start the state legislatures would have to cooperate by allowing cities to alter the present structure of property taxes, he said. The present system discourages improvement of valuable land and the city loses tax revenue which good housing would bring. He quoted as an authority for this view a feature by P. I. Prentice of New York in the April 1967 "Nation's Cities." The Commissioner made a plea for multiple use such as a school in a building combined with business and/or residence facilities, and one which would be in use both day and night.

Raymond Moley also referred to "three-dimensional building" and the report in Nation's Cities when he said (Newsweek, August 21), "private investment for urban rebuilding can be attracted by modifying our tax system to encourage new construction and higher land use . . . this emphasis on a change in assessments is being accepted by planners, architects, public authorities and economists."