

greatly from such a reform. So would all those who use valuable land wisely and well.

Only those who profit from urban deterioration, suburban sprawl, and real estate speculation would bear a heavier burden. We need no legislation to protect them.

Postscript:

The Assembly has since passed the Fink Bill, but the Senate has not. The Governor has proposed legislation that would allow exemptions only on homestead improvements, leaving a full value assessment on land. No final action is now expected until after Election Day.

The following correspondence resulted from the above exchange:

To the Editor:

That was a great letter by Philip Finkelstein in the *Times* of May 17 on providing "a homestead exemption to help balance the shift altogether, so long as we assess and tax the value of land." I have recently moved to New York from Pittsburgh, the city which has gone farther than any other in America—though several in Pennsylvania have gone a long way—toward shifting the tax burden from buildings to land. The ratio is now five on locations to one on improvements. Pittsburgh is never mentioned among the cities needing outside aid to avoid bankruptcy.

John C. Weaver
New York, N.Y.

May 27, 1980

Dear Mr. Finkelstein:

I read with interest your letter in the *New York Times*, of May 17, 1980. I would very much appreciate if you could send my any report you have regarding the proposal set forth in your letter.

Sincerely,

Franz S. Leichter
New York State Senator

June 6, 1980

To the Editor:

It isn't that Dan Sullivan's article in the latest newsletter isn't interesting. It's just that some of his statements are questionable. For instance, that George's "first major book, *Progress and Poverty* became the best selling economics book of all time." I would need to see some statistics on that. I find it hard to believe that George beat out Marx though I don't know how many copies of "Das Kapital" have been sold.

Similarly, the unsubstantiated claim that George's run for mayor of New York "was the greatest case of election fraud in American History." With all the crooked elections this country has known, some

research and figures should back up a claim like that. Otherwise a casual reader would think we weren't serious theorists.

Oddly enough, the day I read the *Henry George News* I came home to find a sheaf of papers under my door that brought some George theories unpleasantly home to me. I live in a co-op. There are a hundred apartments in the building and we maintain it well, making the West Side community a better and safer place to live. There is a proposal to increase the real estate taxes on co-ops only (not condos or other buildings) to reflect the sale price of the individual apartments. This would drive our maintenance up to thousands of dollars a month. Few in our building are rich people. Although our apartment prices might be driven down, all the moderate income people living in the house would be driven out. Would George have condoned that? Of course he lived in a time before people lived in a community like this and shared maintenance costs. A hundred years ago, people in a position to sell property for profit were wealthy.

Yours truly,
Nancy Lang

Note:

This letter was sent to Robert Scrofani pertaining to the letter he sent to Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, which was printed in the May issue of the Henry George News.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D.C. 20520

April 18, 1980

Mr. E. Robert Scrofani
Executive Vice President
Henry George School of Social Science
833 Market St.
San Francisco, Ca.
94103

Dear Mr. Scrofani:

I have read with interest your letter to Mrs. Carter concerning agrarian reform.

I was heartened to see that perhaps the Government of El Salvador has learned some of the lessons that you have pointed out from the Asian experience. Of course, the verdict on El Salvador is not in yet, but we are optimistic. Perhaps the greatest problem at the moment is that the extreme left sees the success of the agrarian reform as denying them the popular support that they need as a vehicle to power. The left is using violent tactics in an effort to provoke the failure of the reform effect.

Sincerely,

Arlen R. Wilson
Country Officer for
El Salvador