

## Abandon Failed Strategies!

by William Pitt

In 1884, Henry George "disconsolately tailed the Noes" to vote against proposals to call the movement "The Single Tax" and to start at the municipal level (R. Hellman, *Henry George Reconsidered*)

Decades of effort and expense were lost in allegedly "winning" Pittsburgh and Scranton and then in the municipalities here and there in new Zealand. Those "wins" left power and poverty untouched and cut no ice against the Socialist demand for total and immediate reform.

Power and poverty are still rampant in Pittsburgh — and here too. All that happened was to charge a bit more against the vacant blocks and give the benefit to those with the better buildings. The poor merely got better bridges to sleep beneath. We delude ourselves, the Socialists still despise us and the Mellon family saves \$13,000,000 annually!

Our need is to thoroughly differentiate between the task of the propagandist — who must continually demand "The Lot, and by tomorrow morning!" — and that of the politician. The latter should grab and keep every

bit of site-rent that he can, all the while clamoring for the Lot and abusing his opponents for their diversionary and delaying tactics.

Together, we must sell the public that the poor will remain poor and the rich remain powerful until every last cent of site-rent is collected for government. Forget land price, and forget taxes. Shout that monetary interest and all other unearned profits are akin to privately retained site-rent and will vanish without reform, whereupon true earnings will go to the workers — who of course will include the risk-takers.

*Progress and Poverty* was wonderfully evocative, but used old-fashioned language and uncommercial terminology. Site-rent is a fully commercial term — and the Hare/Clark system for electoral reform is easy to comprehend. Each is needed, for practicality and to attract public support.

Some adherents call themselves Georgists — yet advocate programs that have demonstrably failed and should be put aside.

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