

# MOVEMENT ON THE MOVE!

## A Plan for a coherent and cooperative Georgist Movement

"Harry! At the 1952 International Conference for Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade in Denmark - you and I were the 'young Turks'. We are *still* the young Turks." Roy Douglas  
- International Conference for Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade - Isle of Man, 1973.

Roy stated a sobering truth. No progress had been made by Georgists over the two decades. In fact, we had slipped back. Events and time had not been kind to us. As we talked grandly to each other, the world had become less free and other - more virile - groups had donned the mantle of reform.

Why this has happened; why this need not have happened; how we can reverse this discouraging slide; these are the subjects of this paper.

### Resources

Our potential is greater than we realize. At the moment, our annual expenditure could be very close to \$500,000. With some adjustments, our 'war-chest' could be near \$600,000. If this contention doesn't seem credible, it's because we've allowed our monetary resources to dribble away in spurious ventures and repetitive failures. We don't learn from our errors - we embellish them.

That we have failed in any effective way to organize our greatest asset, which is ourselves, is not an indication that it cannot be done. As individuals, Georgists are always at work and they often make waves. Their authority can be multiplied if they cooperate in a common effort, so why do they not? The instant cliché is that *as* they are individuals they won't combine strengths, but only individuals *can* cooperate. Lack of cooperation stems more from common sense than lack of cooperative desire. There are so few Georgists around that finding them wastes time and energy. It's better for a Georgist to do it himself.

### Georgists and Land-Value Taxers

The solution is obvious. We simply produce more Georgists. But, isn't that what we've been trying to do? I suggest that the answer is a resounding - NO! For more than 40 years, the Henry George Schools have bent their energies to the creation - not of Georgists - but of land-value taxers. There's a difference.

A Georgist is someone who understands and espouses the classical concepts of 'liberty and justice'. He is a Georgist *only* because Henry George's books may have been the vehicle that carried him towards his understanding. As a Georgist, he has adopted a certain set of attitudes that pervade his thinking. He may - or may not - be an 'activist', although he certainly will be nagged by that vexatious imperative that accompanies any worthwhile awareness of truth.

A land-value taxpayer is someone who believes that great good will follow a particular change in the taxation system. A land-value taxpayer need not know more than is related to this narrow point of view. The Basic Course of the Henry George Schools teaches (albeit with some pretension) little more than is necessary for a student to arrive at this conclusion. Perhaps, this explains our predilection for free classes. Just as vacuum cleaners are sold, so we peddle our nostrum by offering a 'free demonstration'!

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Confirmation of statements in this analysis, along with supporting material, can be found in an expanded and more detailed presentation of the "New Educational Program". This is obtainable from HGSSS - Los Angeles: Box 655 Tujunga CA 91042  
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## Inadequate Classwork

To level a charge of 'inadequacy' at our classwork is perhaps to be more than kind. Something like 60% of our enrolled students drop out - most of them early in the course. It is likely that they become less than friendly to the School as a result of this contact. Of the 4 in 10 who finish, hardly any take further interest in the School (measured by contribution or re-enrollment). The most successful post-graduate program (San Francisco) achieves no more than modest support from less than 10% of original enrollments. However, the program is itself costly. *It is likely that the cost of obtaining revenue matches the total revenue obtained.*

The apparent improbability of success through classwork has exposed the Schools to constant bombardment from critics who pose tempting alternatives to education. These will be discussed later in this statement, but their experience has shown only that they spend more money for less result than the Schools. Yet, the 'advocates of alternatives' are ever optimistic that through the door will walk someone with the absolutely definitive path to a 'single-tax' society by the end of the year.

Their strength is based on the School's weakness. The most successful School (San Francisco) achieved the following results from its Winter '76 promotion. Some 35 students each paid \$15 for the Basic Course of 10 sessions. After 15 had dropped out, 20 students went on to graduate. Presumably, \$525 helped to pay expenses - including 35 copies of Progress and Poverty. At the end of the ten weeks our strength was increased (one may hope) by 20 land-value taxers. However, the cost of running the School during that period was not less than \$6,000 - of which, two thirds came from the New York Headquarters.

The most sympathetic appraisal of these results can scarcely arouse much confidence in our educational thrust. Yet, we are discussing an experienced, professional Henry George School. Our friends - who believe in alternatives - seem completely justified in their anti-educational obloquies. But.....!

## Let's Look at the Competition

While we engaged in educational dalliance, at Santa Ana, California, a school of free enterprise philosophy (founded by a 1945 graduate of the New York Henry George School) was presenting its basic course - one of several in the Los Angeles area.

More than 350 adults were proceeding through a year-long series of weekly meetings at which they were receiving an intensive *and* extensive training in the fundamentals of a philosophical system. They had paid a fee of \$435 for the 52 sessions (plus 3 workshops). They were *allowed* to join this course *only* because they had already completed the Introductory Course of 18 sessions for which they had paid \$160. From these courses there are few drop-outs.

For those of you who have been raised on the 'new Math', the income to the school *from this one class* must have been in excess of \$200,000. Can we doubt that this financially successful enterprise is not also educationally successful?

You'll note how this compares with our income of some \$500,000. We already have it - and are looking for ways to spend it. Our competitor doesn't have it, but must earn it. It looks as if he does a better job of *living* our philosophy than we do of talking about it!

## Why We Fail

Our educational framework suffers a complete lack of integration - both horizontally and vertically. Henry George Schools operate as separate entities with almost no meaningful cooperation between them. Similarly, the various levels of our teaching and the varied thrusts of our activities are disconnected fragments rather than a whole cloth.

Nowhere is our fragmentation better illustrated than at our conferences. Here we meet - not to measure the advance from last year - but to record our activity. Each conference is a carbon copy of the previous year. Our annual rendezvous is less a triumphal tryst than a tribute to the obstinate persistence of individual Georgists.

It is likely that at both San Francisco and Chicago this year, ideas will be presented and activities chronicled which failed in Cleveland in 1967, failed in Toronto in '61, failed in New York in '58, failed in San Diego in '46, and failed in Chicago in '35. Fathered by incurable optimism and mothered by invincible ignorance, these bicentennial proposals can be expected to end in failure in 1976 and 1977.

But, no fault attaches to the advocates of these unfortunate miscarriages. It rests heavy on an organization that isn't organized and a movement that fails to move. Not the individuals, but the institution, is to be censured.

### Post-Graduate Failure

Our inability to form -as the communists put it - a "steel-hardened cadre" stems from the same basic problem. Struggle as we may, again and again, we are brought to our knees by the weakness of our educational program. Rarely do people become Georgists by paths other than the educational, although they may become land-value taxers. And we have not been producing Gerogists.

The most persistent and knowledgeable attempt to build a post-graduate organization is found in San Francisco. The Branch System was conceived by Bob Tideman to provide for the School continuous and self-renewing help. Its history has been one of constant demands on the School structure. To a large degree, Bob's time and energies were spent merely maintaining the group. As Henry George remarked, there can be no progress until 'maintenance exertion' can be reduced. Keeping the system running seems to have become the overriding concern of the professional staff, the School's resources and the Branches themselves.

### Why?

I would suggest that the difficulty lies not in the Branch plan - which should serve as a model for use in other Henry George Schools - but in the shortage of recruits to the system. No post-graduate School organization can be effective when it is manned by land-value taxers, who can be a burden, rather than Georgists, who can be a strength.

San Francisco suffers not from weakness of planning, but from our perennial problem. And the situation hasn't changed. In the last School year, from an enrollment of 426 was graduated 146. Yet, only 48 completions were recorded from their 13 available advanced courses. Forty-three new members were added (which is more than many other Schools can claim as a *total* membership) but many more were lost by normal attrition.

No amount of courageous tenacity or clever maneuvering by a professional staff can counter a crumbling foundation. To sustain an effective graduate organization under such circumstances strongly resembles the labor of Sisyphus.

However, circumstances can be changed. We already know *proven* methods for producing Georgists, who are simply defined, you will recall, as people committed *with understanding* to active espousal of the principles of liberty and justice. We know how to make promotional campaigns that pay for themselves. We know how to recruit volunteers that strengthen rather than drain a School. We know how graduates can wield great influence while remaining free from political involvement. In fact, we know how to build a powerful movement and then to get it moving!

## EXHIBIT A

### The Broad Educational Program

- a) Secondary Education: If we are to stimulate a revival of classical thinking, it must begin early. The INTERSTUDENT Program has already achieved extraordinary success in the high schools with completions of its Mini-Units now rising above 60,000. The task of this Program is to reintroduce the basic concepts of classical political economy to the classroom so that students may go on to college or adult life with understanding rather than confusion in their minds.
- b) College and University: There is already a return to classical ideas in these institutions. The activities of TRED and similar groups can be very influential particularly when allied to a demand for courses from students who have completed the INTERSTUDENT Program.
- c) Henry George Adult Schools: Effective adult Schools are the crux of the Program. Effectiveness can be measured in no other way than by the 'Georgist' count. Production of land-value taxers will destroy the Schools. The following procedures are not suggested as possible experiments, but as tested methods that work and have worked well over many years in differing locations with several directors. In order to produce Georgists:
  - the *ideas* of Henry George and not the man must be the focus;
  - the 10 session Basic Course must be discontinued;
  - long courses covering our complete philosophy must become our Basic Course, and no short course should be offered except as an 'advanced study' or promotional gimmick;
  - tuition fees should be charged for every course;
  - courses not central to our philosophy should not be offered;
  - no teacher should be allowed to teach who has not completed a basic 30 session 'long course';
  - no teacher should be allowed to teach more than 3 courses.

The effect of these directives (as part of a complete program) is to: improve the financial condition of the School; raise the calibre of both the teachers and the teaching; and create able School graduates.

d) Incentive Research Incorporated: The graduate organization should stress *application*, just as the School stresses *theory*. It can be an 'umbrella' with many divisions. Common to them all would be the use of 'encouragement' rather than force to accomplish desirable ends. So, "Incentive Ecology" would examine the desirability of improving the environment through correct motivation, rather than coercive laws. Or "Incentive Taxation" could examine evidence that some taxes destroy, while others may create! "Incentive Transit" might develop the idea of self-supporting transportation systems. "Incentives for Peace" might research the conditions that lead to peace - or war. Or, perhaps, instead of 'incentive' we should use 'motivation'? In any event, there should not be a state or federal committee or commission that does not hear our conclusions. The job for IRI and its assorted tentacles would be to take the pulse of current events and provide its side of every question.

Note: The graduate organization can be an offshoot of the School, or a separately incorporated group. Separately incorporated, it could be funded by BEE or some similar Foundation. It should be founded as a non-profit educational, scientific and research organization whose purpose is the dissemination of information and findings in the area of political economy. The scope of 'political economy' is so broad that it may be expected to be involved in the study of almost anything and thus be prepared to give evidence on almost anything - at the drop of a hat!

## EXHIBIT B

### Alternatives

The Schools have been so hopelessly inefficient in their operation, that inevitably Georgists look for alternative vehicles to carry them to their desired destination. Yet, in the more than 40 years of School activity, no better method of producing Georgists has been found. (Even though the Schools may not so much produce them - as find them!). Here are some of the alternatives.

- a) A Messiah: An institution so strongly influenced by one man is likely to find itself waiting for another like him. At regular intervals, a new 'spellbinder' or 'super-writer' or 'politician' or....whatever arrives on the scene and we think our dreams will be realized. The quest is for a kind of instant Georgism and it fails. When the Messiah fails he is blamed and fired and the search for a replacement is begun. The trouble with Messiahs is that they don't teach - they tell! They do not make Georgists.
- b) Politics: Idealists want to transform their vision into reality within the next little while. The vehicle for this instant meliorism is the politician. So, it follows that to be the politician is best of all. Thus, do Georgists enter the political arena to take the part of the Christians against the lions- to be, predictably, devoured. The Henry George Foundation is resoundingly political (since its tax-exemption was lost) but is fighting a battle which is fixed, against incumbents who are immovable with veteran campaigners of a war that has become history. The 'Single-Tax War' has been lost. Already begun (they didn't wait for our RSVP's) is the battle to save civilization, but where is our army?
- c) Research: Every movement wants facts that buttress its ideas. This is the object of research. However, a movement in trouble - such as our own, finds in research not a means to advance, but a pleasant place to retreat. Inevitably, our research has something to do with taxes, more particularly - property taxes, and most specifically - sales ratio studies of some sort. Unfortunately, it's a waste of time and money. Should the Henry George School (or one of its front-groups) reveal to the world that land is under-assessed and improvements are over-assessed not a leaf in the forest will stir. What would the Henry George School be *expected* to say? The truth is that we are known advocates and are variously discounted by any listeners. A simple test for research results is to try to sell them. If no-one will buy, they are of no value *no matter how well conceived they may be*. But to publish information that nobody wants provides a restful haven for a movement that is no longer moving.
- d) Television, Radio and Public Relations: The media in all its forms has achieved a special mystique which seems mostly unearned. The best any of them can do is reflect what is being done. If nothing is happening, they will show it. Achievement by the Georgists can be amplified by the media; but, be careful, so can non-achievement!

### John Nagy

As President of Statewide Homeowners, John Nagy ranged California and was known to every legislator, bureaucrat and newsman. He didn't teach - he told! And he did it better than anyone else. His tremendous ability, intelligence and energy took him into all the above areas: Messiah; Politics; Research; and the Media. He failed. He then turned to research more and more and, typically, produced some of the very finest computerized sales ratio studies extant. Then, the 'Messiah' was turned out to pasture.

John went into real-estate research and soon, knowing more about San Diego land than anybody, built an expanding business that will be exploding into more and more cities. If the School needs information about *any* city's real estate, before long, perhaps John will sell it to us at a discount!

Which makes the final point. Almost *anything* is being researched somewhere, by someone. A little know-how and very little money can pick up virtually any information we may need and *because it's at arms length* we'll be able to use it.

## EXHIBIT C

### The School Adult Program

The Adult Program produces Georgists. Every endeavor must be bent toward recruiting students to the Basic Course (the long course). Speeches, seminars, film shows, radio and television programs are of little use if they do not result in students. Once recruited, the students can be lost by a poor School. Necessary to effective operation is the establishment of simple - but clearly defined - goals for each part of the operation.

### Goals

- a) Financial: We can spend our \$500,000 in two ways. As do the socialists, which is to count what we have, then 'allocate' it according to criteria which may be real or imaginary. Or, as Georgists, which is to use it to top off the (assumed) inevitable loss that occurs in educational work. In other words, the \$500,000 can pay for \$500,000 worth of education; or it can plug the difference between \$5 million outgo and \$4.5 million earned income. However, the inevitability of loss should not be too quickly accepted. I suggest the following interim goals:
  - i) Our academic spearhead is promotion: We must do what is necessary to avoid financial loss *specifically* in our advertising. When promotional money runs out, our academic program comes to a grinding halt. If it is recovered our academic program is continuous.
  - ii) No program is begun without cost analysis, which means a hard-nosed look at the program's chance of recovering its investment. This is not to suggest that far-out prospects are automatically dismissed, but that the advocates of the 'far-out' suffer some financial discipline.
- b) Members: Membership does not provide an automatic 'good'. Too often, a Henry George School membership is a drain on resources rather than an aid to the work of the School. A membership which is composed - not of land-value taxers - but of Georgists, appears to offer most to the School. This is because such a membership is most likely to teach and to give financial and other assistance. A membership 'that comes to meetings' is unlikely to belong to a successful School. As an interim - and perhaps a final - goal, membership should be profitable or it should be abandoned.
- c) Academic: The purpose of our work is to provide education. The goal of our educational work is the creation of Georgists. My provisional description of a Georgist is someone who understands *and* espouses the concepts of 'liberty' and 'justice'. The provision of understanding may take considerable time. The time should be taken. However, all the preliminary formal work can be completed within a School year. That this may be prelude to a life-long study is not immediately our concern. The second part of the description 'espousal' is. This word means "taking up the cause of". It is likely that 'espousal' will follow 'understanding'.
- d) Graduates: Two directions are possible for new Georgists. They may turn inward toward the School, or outward to other organisations. Our first goal for graduates is that they teach. To this end, we must provide them with students and classes. When they are no longer allowed to teach, other duties within the School operation are available. For those who prefer to face outward, a completely different kind of educational format is required. If the thrust of the School's formal program is the teaching of the basic concepts of political economy, then the graduate program can concentrate on the practical application of these basic concepts. In this fashion we may summarily divide the functions:
  - i) The priority for all graduates is that they teach. Should their interests remain with the School, there are a variety of tasks that need doing. However, of primary importance is research and experiment both in *what* we teach and *how* we teach it;

- ii) Those more interested in practice than theory should have an outlet for their energies. An agency of the School *or a separately incorporated body* should be charged with the duty of carrying out research and experiment into the practical applications of the basic concepts of classical political economy and with disseminating the results to interested parties. As much classical analysis concerns itself with the motivations of free people living in uncoercive cooperation, a valuable directive to the 'practical' group would be to investigate incentives and disincentives and report on their findings.

#### EXHIBIT D

##### Pertinent Biography of Harry Pollard

For fourteen years a Henry George School volunteer;  
For fifteen years a Henry George School professional.

1948 -	Became a Georgist at the London Henry George School;
1949 - 1954	<u>Politics</u> : London Young Liberals: West London Organiser;
	" " " : Organising Secretary;
	" " " : Chairman (1952-54)
	Parliamentary Candidate - Ilford North (1950-52)
	Liberal Party - National Council (1952-54)
	Founding Member - Cheap Food League (1950)
1955 - 1961	<u>Toronto</u> : Volunteer Director - Free classes; two teachers (1955-58)
	" " - Tuition fee; 6 teachers (1959)
	" " - Higher Fee; 14 teachers (1960)
	" " - Fee \$29-30 sess.; 26 teachers (1961)
1961	<u>Pittsburgh</u> : " " - Fee classes; about 70 grads.
1962 - 1963	<u>San Diego &amp; Los Angeles</u> : - Part-time Director in each city
1963 - 1976	<u>Los Angeles</u> : - Director
	- President of Los Angeles HGS (1970)
	Founder - INTERSTUDENT High School Program (1970)

High Spots!: Most publicity for a School meeting - 309" in one day (Toronto-1960)  
 : Most radio and television time - 185 hours locally: ) (L.A.- 1967)  
 (121 graduate appearances) - 650 hours syndicated:)

For more detailed personal information, see "Who's Who in the West" - 1976 edition.

Note: This is not a resume, but merely  
 ::: an indication of wide experience  
 ::: with volunteers, the media, and  
 ::: with the Henry George Schools.  
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