

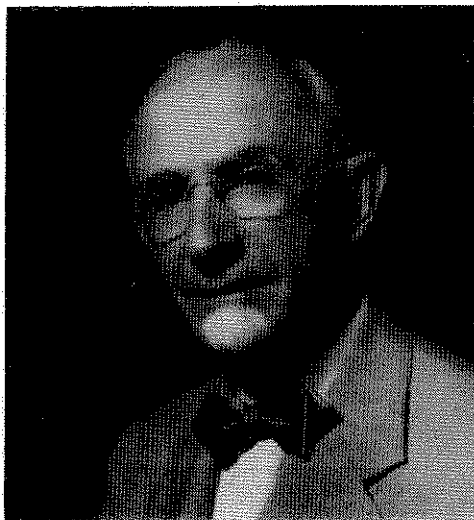
the Henry George News

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*Percy
Application + Tr.
Preston*

O. K.

Dorn



A FAMILIAR and much loved figure will be seen at 50 East Sixty-ninth Street in New York no more. Monday was always Mr. Dorn's day. Walking erectly, smiling pleasantly, always courteous, he would greet members of the staff and make his way to the old roll-top desk which for many years was a symbol of his long service. He has been ill for some time in his home at Bronxville, New York, and he died there in Lawrence Hospital on December 28th. A son, Paul F., and his family, survive—also his gentle wife, Amanda, whom he treasured so dearly, and who was as warm a friend of the Henry George School family as her husband. Our heartfelt sympathy goes to her in these days of sadness.

Otto Karl Dorn, who liked to be called O. K. Dorn, when asked for biographical data some ten years ago, revealed that he was born in Cleveland on March 2, 1875, that he had only a common school education to the seventh grade, and that his first job was in a wholesale rubber house at \$6 a week.

After leaving school he attended night school and in 1896 his attention was called to a course in economics in one of Cleveland's churches by Louis F. Post, then editor of *The Cleveland Recorder*. The tuition was free and the only requirement was a pencil and writing pad, and a fifty-cent copy of *Progress and Poverty*.

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A Word With You

THE tax muddle is still with us, and from the looks of things will be with us for quite a while.

The inequities and iniquities of the income tax are well known. Periodically, Senate committees hold hearings to reform the darned thing — but it's a case of "the more it changes the more it stays the same." The only serious argument put forth in favor of this abomination is, "Well, what else can we do?"

There is something else to do, my friends. Stop the robbery of taxation, stop taking the fruits of our toil, and let the government subsist on its proper revenue, the rent of land.

Local governments, too, need this basic tax reform. Most municipalities today are hard-put to find revenue for needed social services. All sorts of special levies and indirect taxes are imposed, and even city income taxes.

Would it not be vastly better, from every point of view, if the rent of land was the basic revenue for cities? Still, we are confronted with a maze of legal hurdles, vacuous arguments, lethargy, vested interests, the bouncing of responsibility back and forth, and the sheer momentum of a complicated system.

An informed citizenry will eventually overcome these obstacles to land value taxation. Meanwhile, can something practical be done? Yes. The tax system of the United States has one great advantage over the tax system of

many other countries, as pointed out by the Spanish economist, Rogelio Casas Cadilla — and that is, that we do tax land according to its value. It is unfortunate that most of our cities are also required to tax buildings at the same rate (with the notable exception of Pennsylvania), but the land value tax is there.

It is true that there are state constitutional limitations to the degree that land can be taxed. But even if land were fully taxed according to constitutional requirements, it would, in most cases, be more than today.

In nearly all cities, real estate — and especially land — is carelessly assessed. In New York City, for example, real property is supposed to be assessed at 100 per cent of true value, but it seldom is. If land were properly assessed, according to the way the law says it should be, much more land rent would be collected by city governments than is the case today.

Here is something the awakened citizen can do in his own community. Look up land assessments and find out how far the assessed values fall short of what the law requires. In nearly all cases, I am sure they *will* be found to fall short.

Then the citizen can simply propose that the law be observed. No "upsetting of the system," no "utopian dream," just a demand that the current system be made to work.

—Robert Clancy

The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 67th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives value to land, therefore the income from land values (rent of land) belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community — known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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structors. Francis Nicosia will teach the course which follows this, Science of Political Economy, on Wednesday evenings, beginning January 14th.

Economics and Politics is a new advanced course under the direction of Sylvia Wells and Marshall de Angelis. Others are: Comparative Religions with John Gwaltney and guest speakers; Practical Writing by Sydney Mayers; Fundamentals of Political Science with James A. Murphy; India led by Dr. Sant Ram Mandal; and The Wonderful Wealth Machine under the guidance of the author of the book by that name, Phil Grant.

Ezra Cohen, trustee of the Henry George School, will be the first speaker on the Fridays at Eight pro-

gram, January 9th, and will show slides made on a recent visit to Japan, Hong Kong and Thailand. Mr. Tore Hakansson will present "Tribal Dances of India" January 23rd, and will display textiles from a primitive region of India. A film discussion program conducted by Arleigh Chute, the new assistant to the director, will be held on January 16th and 30th.

Mrs. Robert Baker, widow of the former Georgist Congressman from Brooklyn, died November 26th. Mrs. Baker had donated several items from her husband's library to the Henry George School. Another important acquisition to this growing school library was a collection of Georgist periodicals, pamphlets and press items from the estate of the late Gertrude Colles.

PLAN NOW, PAY LATER

Reservations are being made now on the steamer which will carry the good Georgists to Europe for the Tenth International Conference on Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade on the 25th of July in Hanover, Germany. If you've been thinking that you'd like to go abroad in the summer of 1959, this is definitely the way to do it — there's nothing like having congenial company for a voyage, with the promise of social and intellectual delight just ahead.

For particulars write or telephone the Bankers and Merchants Travel Service, 511 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.

Those who will have to wait a while longer for their overseas visit, can console themselves pleasantly by coming to the Annual Conference of the Henry George School to be held this year at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey in July, just before the international conference (for the convenience of those who wish to join both groups).

GREEN BELT AROUND LONDON?

According to The Appraiser, a newsletter originating in Chicago, a proposal is being considered to offset congestion in London and its suburbs. This would be the establishment of a green belt around the city at the present perimeter, which would be 15 to 20 miles from the center of London and 5 to 7 miles in width. Beyond the green belt, new towns, to be limited in population, would be set up at a radius of 20 to 30 miles from downtown London. This is a serious proposal to limit the expansion of further industry in London proper and its shires, so that if an industry proposes to expand in the metropolitan district, it will not be permitted to do so. If its growth and program so dictate, then the industry will have no alternative but to move to one of the satellite towns, leaving its own industrial site for the use or development by a smaller industry, and the possibility that that industrial site may later be changed in its use so as to become utilized for a lesser use or even for a park or public areas.

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Otto Dorn attended every one of the ten sessions, and stubbornly resisted acceptance of the theories expounded. But he was suddenly made aware of their impact when the minister of the church took issue publicly with the views expressed in the course. Said Mr. Dorn, "in the light of what we had been studying, the pastor's remarks seemed to be absolutely silly and unfounded, so I jumped up on my juvenile feet and rushed to the defense of Henry George. This seems to have allied me to him ever since."

Mr. Dorn believed that was the greatest single factor in determining the future course of his life. In public affairs as well as in private business he made it a point to look for the underlying causes of every phenomenon. Tracing effects to their causes, as Henry George did, enabled him to find answers to problems before they became apparent to others. This gave him an advantage in business and enabled him to make progress in several business ventures.

Following his first job he worked in a retail shoe store in Cleveland, and from that small beginning he became head of the Dorn Shoe Company. In 1920, as head of the Ground Gripper chain of retail stores, he moved the business headquarters to New York.

While Mr. Dorn was active in the Tom Johnson campaigns in Ohio, and

took an active part in bringing about fundamental changes in the Ohio State constitution in 1910, and in 1914 served on the Cleveland Board of Education — he never had any political ambitions.

In New York he was active in the Manhattan Single Tax Club; and when the Henry George School was founded, he helped from the beginning. After its founder, Oscar H. Geiger, died, he became acting director and later a trustee and vice president.

He was named a director of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, and in 1941 became president of The American Journal of Economics and Sociology. In 1943 when The Henry George News came into existence he served as a valued member of its Publication Committee.

A notice of Mr. Dorn's death, with a two-column headline, appeared in the first issue of The New York Times published after a nineteen-day strike. This was a significant tribute.

We say, by way of consoling ourselves over these final farewells, that every beginning must have an end. But for a friend, truly noble, understanding, cheerful, uncomplaining, encouraging, generous, warm hearted and wise, we cannot leave it there. We must believe that every end is also a beginning. Let the doors swing open to reveal for him a realm of justice in which he believed and to which he directed a lifetime of sustained effort.

Ezra Cohen has accepted membership on the Publication Committee, a replacement which Mr. Dorn would have heartily endorsed. The new statement of purpose which appears in the masthead on page two is the result of a discussion begun in The Henry George News last May.

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