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Feb'y 4, 1944.

Mr. O. K. Dorn, Trustee,
Henry George School of Social Science,
30 Teat 29th Street,
New York 16, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Dorn;

Thank you for your letter of January 13th, in reply to mine to Miss Bateman. Was glad to learn of the activities of Mr. Maguire and will appreciate receiving copies of the measures he advocates.

As to the work of Mr. Post, I am inclined to agree with you, that little can be accomplished by working through pressure groups. Have always considered the Veteran of Foreign Wars a reactionary body. To me it seems that depending upon the efforts of a couple of individuals to fight the special interests is as futile as to try to "sweep back the tide with a broom". It is a job for all of us.

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In spite of the apparent progress ~~we~~ we have made in self government in recent years, the selfish interests are more strongly entrenched than ever, and it would be more difficult to bring our cause before the people today than it was in 1897, the last time Henry George ran for mayor of New York City. In my letter to Miss Bateman I did not use an apt choice of words in regard to getting control of our government. The meaning I intended to convey was, that the electorate should get a firmer grip on their election machinery in order that they could SELECT as well as ELECT the men who are to govern them.

Many years ago there was an epidemic of government reform that swept the whole country, and Georgists as individuals were in the thick of the fight. Some of the objects sought were; The Initiative, Referendum and Recall nomination by petition, Commission Form of Municipal Gov. etc. Some progress was made in scattered locations but the political situation throughout the country was not improved very much and now we rarely hear of real improvement being made in our voting machinery. Until the voters themselves find a way to deprive the minorities in control of the political party machines ^{of their power} to nominate candidates for office, and to punish the office holders who refuse to do their bidding, our struggle is nearly hopeless.

Have only to give you a few illustrations to show you what I mean. Look across the river to Frank Hague's Baliwick, where the people have been living under

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a dictator for years. In the January 31, 1944 issue of The New Republic is an item headed "Justice California Style" stating that a number of persons are serving long terms in prison on account of being convicted by very flimsy circumstantial evidence, before a court and jury prejudiced by race hatred.

I mentioned to Miss Bateman some of the failures of the voters of the state of New York and I repeat that it is a disgrace upon the citizenry of that great state to allow ~~xxx~~ the representatives elected by a minority of the voters of the state to make their laws, for the past 20 or 30 years. What have the Georgists done to remedy the condition? My share of the blame consisted in what I felt was allowing "wiser heads than mine" shoulder the responsibility.

As you probably know Calif. has generally gone republican in state but occasionally democratic in National elections. Olson, the first democratic governor in years went out of office the first of 1943. Some years ago the state adopted the method of official primary election and a run-off election to insure a majority vote for the victor. To me it seems a very clever law to perpetuate existing economic and social conditions. The Olson government raised havoc with the republican politicians and the "Ham and Egg" people who supported him split the democratic party wide open. I was in New York during the 1942 elections and read where Governor Warren had secured not only the republican nomination but that of his opponents, the democratic nomination as well. When I arrived ~~here~~ in Jan. 1943, was curious to know how this was possible. I asked three different Georgists how it was possible for an opposing candidate to ~~rad~~ ~~as~~ the other man's primary when their political views were opposite in the extreme. They could not answer me until, one of them said, "Oh I know, we have a secret primary vote. That is both party primaries are held the same day and no matter with what party you are affiliated ~~with~~, you can vote as you like. This is how it worked. The dominant republican machine packed Warren with little opposition within the party, and then they filed a petition and nominated him on the democratic ticket and with a three cornered fight he won the democratic nomination. In other words, in the primary you can either vote for your own candidate or against your opponent. To boil it down, the people vote for men instead of principles. Now there is a movement on foot to make the legislators' term four years, and with the nominating machinery in the hands of selfish interests, it will probably mean life jobs for a number of mediocre law-makers. During the Los Angeles spring election for councilmen, with their no party and run-off system, the daily papers stated that some of the board members were elected by less than 20% of the registered voters. Is this representative government?

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The other evening was ¹ listening to the radio when I accidentally tuned in to fifteen minute talk by a "Ham and Egger" with his phony scheme for curing our troubles by issuing certificates on which a stamp tax is to be applied on every transfer. The next fifteen minutes a Townsendite held forth with his proposal for a government dole to all over 60 years of age. He claimed that they were going to put their scheme before the people by amendment petition this year. Last night (Feb. 4th) while standing in the crowd waiting for the doors to open for the Vice president Wallace meeting was handed a pamphlet on Technocracy. Since the failure of the Ralston amendment it seems that the Single Taxers here are afraid to show their heads and have to work under cover. There seems ~~to be~~ ^{to be} ~~these~~ enough people in this state to bring about much needed reforms, but there ~~seems to be~~ ^{is} no way of uniting the various groups to oust the common enemy. Mr Mason says that under the present laws it would require 300,000 signatures to a petition all obtained in a period of ninety days, in order to get an amendment before the people, and then of course the opposition could always cause delay by taking the matter to the courts on the grounds that some of the signatures were fraudulent. In the meantime California has one of the worst tax systems in the nation. They still retain the personal property tax, a tax on commercial bank deposits above the sum of \$500. and the iniquitous sales tax, reduced from 3 to 2-1/2%, applied to everything you buy. The tax on Real estate is a joke owing to the description of the meaning of full value. Land and improvements are assessed separately, but the full value means the amount of real estate a solvent debtor would be willing to give and his creditor accept, in lieu of cash. One of the state assessors told me that real estate values in Los Angeles county were valued for taxation purposes at 40 to 45% of their actual value. The method of determining the value leaves plenty of room for unjust discrimination. I know of one sale of a home in Los Angeles county for \$3600. that was assessed for slightly more than \$700. but on account of the higher tax rate than that of New York, the taxes on this property were about one fourth of what they would be in New York City.

Without any intention of throwing a wet blanket on the work the school is doing, it is my humble opinion that the cause of good government merits equal attention. What will ^{it} avail us if ~~is~~ while acquainting a sufficient number of people in the philosophy of land value taxation, we lose our liberty. Perhaps you may think that I am, a "lone wolf howling in the wilderness", but ~~at least~~ at least one of the old timers on this coast shares my views. I refer to the talk given by Mr. Pratt at the Los Angeles extension, ^{H. B. School} commencement dinner given last month.

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The School undoubtedly represents through its organization the bulk of the Georgists in the nation and I feel that its leaders ought to formulate a plan of putting into effect real representative government. There is no reason why Georgists should ^{not} take the lead in forming good government leagues entirely separate from the School organization and these should be established in every community in the country, until we have made our governments democratic in fact as well as in name.

Sincerely,

Raymond P. Mansur

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Ps, Please excuse the many mistakes. As you may guess I ma my own typist.
R.P.M.