

CONVERSATION WITH GEORGISTS

The economic policies of such countries as the Soviet Union, Communist China, Latin America and other vital areas of the world are explored in an interesting and informative series this Fall on Station WVHC (88.7 FM). Even though current theory and practice are analyzed, the stress is upon some of the more fundamental problems that beset these regions, problems that outlast regimes, administrations and dictatorships. The name of the program is "Conversation With Georgists". For specifics, may we suggest to contact the Henry George School.

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FROM OUR EDITORIAL DESK

Current opinion polls and surveys indicate that inflation continues to be the major domestic problem. And understandably so! Ask any housewife who does food shopping or husbands who purchase odds and ends for the home. The current cost of buying items over last year is about six per cent. Is there any end in sight or is this an economic fact of life that may last indefinitely?

A cursory examination of economic policies readily reveals that inflation has been government policy for the past several decades. This represents the apparent price that must be paid in order to maintain a high level of employment. Sometimes the policy appears workable and at other times it appears unworkable. Correction after correction occurs when the machinery fails and countless theories are offered to explain why particular policies do and do not work. But when many explanations run counter to reason and common sense, than it is time to seek elsewhere for some answers. One may question policies that call for the abatement of inflation by encouraging unemployment. Maybe the economists in power are looking in the wrong direction for answers.

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Land and Population in India

When discussing population and poverty, one is sure to hear about India as a prime example of poverty caused by overpopulation. Do the facts support this widespread belief? Let us examine the record.

In "Information Please Almanac", page 507, is a list of sixteen highly populated areas, and strangely, India is not on the list. The list includes Monaco with 39,655.2 people per square mile, Singapore with 8,875, Malta with 2,614.8, Netherlands with 981.9, Taiwan with 969.8, Belgium with 816.5, Japan with 708.1, and West Germany with 606. The list does not include China with 197.8, Java with 2000, Hong Kong with 40,000, Russia with 27.5, Brazil with 26.8 and all other Latin-American countries with population densities of the same order as India. Assistant Professor of Sociology of Mount Holyoke College, Thomas E. Dow, Jr., states that "average density measures alone have little discriminatory power; they are, for example, poor indicators of a country's prosperity, 'have' and 'have not' nations being randomly mixed in high and low density groupings."

India is well known to have had grinding poverty throughout the ages. The problem of why India should have been so infamously honored is one of the things that makes India the enigma that it is. Other causes may be listed, such as poor education, occult religions, etc.

India's population has held at about 125,000,000 for at least 2000 years preceding 1920. That was about 100 people per square mile. And yet the people were no better off than today. After all, how economically depressed can people get and still exist? From 1920 to 1970 the population has quadrupled in size, thanks to an extensive curtailment of mortality due to modern medicine without a corresponding reduction in fertility. The death rate fell from 46/1000 in 1911-1921 to 17/1000 in the same period, while the birth rate declined from 48/1000 to 42/1000 in the same period. Note this: The increase in population is

APROPOS

not due to an increased birth rate but a decreased death rate. This condition of imbalance will probably be terminated in the near future as it has in many industrialized countries.

Henry George has shown that high population is not a scourge but a blessing (Taiwan has doubled its population in 20 years and, while doing so, has quadrupled its per capita income.) and that land speculation is the true cause of poverty. Can this also be true of India? 80% of the population live by agriculture and barely sustain life. Share cropping is the predominant form of tenancy in rural India. When 60% of the crop is often paid to the landowner, there can be little incentive to improve. When that improvement entails an investment of capital which must be borrowed from the landowner at usurious rates, one can understand why the Indians are "non-progressive". Land reform legislation has been enacted limiting rent to 25% of the crop, which is still outrageously high, but this reform has not spread very far because it depends on the sharecropper's reporting the landlord to the local authorities. The farmer is so dependent on the latter for his loans and his "privilege" to cultivate the land that he is fearful to report the injustice for correction.

In Urban areas like Calcutta, the evils of land speculation are more frightfully revealed. Land being so high in price, people have to sleep in the streets.

This is the reason for poverty in India, and not overpopulation. The case is so clearly stated in the writings of economists on land reform in India that it seems incapable. As Henry George stated, "if truth were a dog it would bite them", and yet the same old piece of "logic" called a population explosion is accepted by many as the reason for India's extreme poverty.

Under the heading "New Economics' Won't Work", John C. Davis, a former member of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, offers the following comment:

"The Nixon Administration describes its program for fighting inflation as the "new economics." It is new, all right, since it goes contrary to the most fundamental of economic principles.

"We are supposed to believe that the way to bring prices down is to raise costs; that is, by higher interest rates. We are expected to believe that making goods scarce will make them cheaper. Nixon's economic advisors point to the seven-month decline in industrial production as proof that the anti-inflationary program being followed is working. The mounting unemployment and the recession now being experienced is, they say, no cause for worry.

"The fact is, of course, that prices are high when goods are scarce. The scarcer they become, the higher prices go. The fact is that lower costs work to lower prices. But the Nixon Administration discarded the national wage-price policy which put pressure on industry to increase productivity so that costs would thereby be brought down. Since the guidelines indicating the importance of productivity were discarded there has been almost no increase in productivity. As a result wage increases have greatly added to inflationary pressure.

"So the cost of living still mounts. Unemployment increases. Profits decline. Low income people suffer. Production will finally move upward and productivity will again move forward in spite of the mistaken policies. When that happens, the rise in living costs will be slowed. Unemployment will gradually lessen. But it is tragic that this must happen slowly because of the restrictions now placed upon the economy."

Nassau Cultural Center

Very seldom has a community had the opportunity to acquire a large track of land near its geographical center as Nassau County has had in acquiring a sizable section of Mitchell Field.

There have been many suggestions as to how this land should be developed but ultimately only one plan will be used. The decision, in the final analysis, will grow out of many factors and pressure groups. Nassau County, like many other suburban communities, will be inundated with suggestions that do not have the sole interests of the residents in mind. Only an alert citizenry can prevent an undesirable use.

In a report published earlier in the year, it was clearly pointed out that by 1975 a transportation system other than bus service will be necessary. Also stated was the necessity for the immediate acquisition of land for the right of way. It further stated that a right of way with a maximum width of 114 feet should be obtained as soon as possible throughout the Mitchell Field area. If the action is delayed the cost for the purchase of land will increase considerably.

The President, in his Natural Heritage Message of February 1966 to the Congress, stated that "The spiraling cost of land acquisitions by the Federal Government...is a matter of natural concern". He warned that "land for the use of the general public should not be burdened with the increased price resulting from speculative activities".

An interesting study was prepared by a private contractor in 1964 for the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District, an agency of the State of Mississippi. It shows how a public project can greatly affect land values outside and adjacent to the project. The average price paid per acre of lands adjacent to the project showed an average annual increase of slightly less than 9 per cent prior to announcement of the project in March, 1959. After the project was announced, prices increased 165 per cent the first year, 191 per cent the

Louisiana Purchase

When the American Republic celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1799, peace and tranquility did not reign domestically or internationally. The turn of the century brought an era of turbulence directly connected with the Napoleonic wars that were raging in Europe with many repercussions in the New World. It was in this setting that the largest and most lucrative real estate deal occurred.

Napoleon Bonaparte was busily instituting reforms in France and was soon to embroil Europe in the horrors of war again as he viewed sections of the Western Hemisphere ripe for conquest and settlement. Thomas Jefferson an advocate of peace and a firm believer in a strict interpretation of the Constitution, fully recognized the political implications in this country, of the closing of the port of New Orleans to American traders - a vital outlet to traders along the Mississippi River. The closing of the port of New Orleans was equivalent to the cessation of commercial activity in Boston by the British prior to the American Revolution.

When information seeped out that France had gained control of the Louisiana Territory from Spain in 1800, and that the right of transit at New Orleans had been withdrawn, Jefferson instructed James Monroe and Robert Livingston to purchase New Orleans and West Florida from the French government. To their astonishment and the amazement of the President, Napoleon offered to sell the entire territory from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains for the approximate sum of \$15 million. The final sale was "legally" consummated with the approval of the United States Senate via a treaty. The title was defective in several important aspects however - not an unusual occurrence where land titles and tenure were concerned. Napoleon, according to the French Constitution,

Louisiana Purchase cont.

could not dispose of national territory without a vote of approval of the legislative body, and that vote was not forthcoming. Furthermore, Napoleon had previously promised Spain that this territory would never be disposed to a third power. Finally, according to Jefferson and the advocates of strict interpretation of the document, the treaty was unconstitutional because power to increase the national domain by treaty, not to mention incorporation in the Union of people outside its original limits, is not stated in the Constitution.

According to the purchase agreement in 1803, the inhabitants were given "all rights, advantages and immunities of citizens"- and in the meantime they were to be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and the religion which they professed.

All land titles and land grants recognized by the French and Spanish received recognition in the Louisiana territory. This ushered in a period of subterfuge with questions of squatters' rights and a new phenomenon in land manipulation called antedating. This referred to a practice of predating claims before 1800, when the area was still under Spanish control, so they would be recognized by the United States government. Congress and the courts were inundated with claims concerning land titles and the names of some of the most prominent early American families may be found in the history of this period.

GEORGE SAID IT

How can a man be said to have a country when he has no right to a square inch of it?

There are those who say that women are less intelligent than men; but who will say that they are less influential?

NOTABLE QUOTES

If a body's ever took charity, it makes a burn that don't come out.

----John Steinbeck

Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed.

----Abraham Lincoln

Every man has by the law of nature a right to such a waste portion of the earth as is necessary for his subsistence.

----Sir Thomas More

To be poor and independent is very nearly an impossibility.

----William Cobbett

We labour soon, we labour late,
To feed the titled knave, man;
And a' the comfort we're to get
Is that ayont the grave, man

----Robert Burns

Men of England, wherefore plough
For'the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

----Shelley

If ever I marry a wife,
I'll marry a landlord's daughter
For then I may sit in the bar,
And drink cold brandy and water.

----Charles Lamb

The whole science of economics can be summed up in four short words: "There's no free lunch."

----Anonymous

FALL CLASSES

The Long Island Extension of the Henry George School continues to offer "Economics Unlimited" to more residents on Long Island. New classes have been formed in western Nassau and Suffolk County. Below are the exact locations and starting dates:

Commack	High School North	Tuesday	Sept.22
Valley Stream	Memorial Jr. High	Monday	Sept.21
Franklin Sq.	Sewanhaka High School	Monday	Sept.14
North Merrick Library	Meadowbrook Road	Monday	Sept.21
Freeport Library	Merrick Road	Tuesday	Sept.22
East Northport	Northport High School	Monday	Sept.21
Baldwin	High School	Monday	Sept.21
Plainview	Plainview Jr. High	Monday	Sept.28
Bethpage	High School	Monday	Oct. 5

Classes begin either at 7:45 or 8:00 P. M.

Of particular interest to teachers may be the in-service courses offered by the School. Two school districts on Long Island are offering this Fall a special course for teachers. May we suggest to contact the Henry George School for further information.

WORLD LAND PROBLEMS cont. from Page 6

second year, 216 per cent the third year, 236 per cent the fourth year, and 258 per cent for the first half of the fifth year. There can be little doubt that there is an increase in land prices occurring at the present time and the longer the wait, the higher the price.

Land values increase for several reasons, one being the proposals by government agencies to acquire such land. The price is artificially increased, due to demand and the limited amount of land. As long as land speculation is profitable, land prices will increase, especially if the customer is local government. And one does not have to be a tax expert to realize who pays for this added cost in land acquisition.



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