

June 8, 1983

Mr. Edward Dodson,
206 Pearlcroft Road,
Cherry Hill, N.J. 08034

Dear Ed,

You will think that we in Colorado are awful clods. I just returned from three weeks away from here, including ten days in the Dominican Republic, and found your letter of May 11 upon my return. It is only now that I have been able to wade through even more pressing mail and cut my grass (with a sickle yet), so that I can do something halfway decent about your letter.

First off, let me say that Carl McGuire is incredibly busy with university duties. As a member of the Colorado Incentive Tax Association he helps us by letting us use his name on our letterhead; but has said he can do nothing else. Though we are very good friends, I know this and leave him strictly alone. Also, I have told him he should have the wit to get out of useless university work, as I did, but he pays no attention.

I agree that if Georgist experts could put their oar or oars into a prominent issues-oriented discussion such as the symposium at the Wharton School, and that there could be prominent publicity about such discussion(s), this could be quite good for getting our point across in an effective manner. Of course I would be prepared to do whatever I can to support such an effort, but at this stage am not sure just what my rôle should be. I am a political scientist, not an economist, and my knowledge about economics is pretty much limited to the Georgist side of it and to areas normally known to educated people. I can certainly put forward position papers in political science, but would be foolish to pose as any kind of an expert in economics. Also, you should know that my realm of "expertise" in political science is pretty much limited to international relations and foreign governments and politics, with stress on Latin America. Finally, I should add that right now Marian and I are doing quite a bit of travelling, so will be away from June 22 to July 17, then all of December, and probably during February-March-April of 1984, plus I don't know what all else.

It would be appropriate for me to add that because of our next trip (to the Pacific), I'll not attend the California conference; and after the previous one, where various parties tried to take it over to convey their own, non-Georgist, messages, am not sure what good it does to attend any conference.

My general support for your proposal is unqualified. If you want me to write letters or make contacts in ways that will help to put it across, I shall be glad to do so--insofar as it is possible within the framework of other responsibilities.

A major reason that I favor your proposal is that I feel most strongly that a major problem among Georgists is that they mostly talk among themselves. Their books are read by Georgists. They read their own publications. Even Land and Liberty, I am told on good authority, is read primarily by Georgists only. We Georgists go to conferences and talk to each other--or else invite in Marxists, peaceniks or labor union leaders to try to convince us of their views.

To get ideas adopted, one must put them forward in the form of legislation. To accomplish this, one must persuade the voting public, the newspapers, and influential figures in business, politics, and the professions--but especially in politics. To accomplish this, one establishes pressure groups, which are so influential outside the so-called Georgist movement--e.g., the Wilderness Society, the various taxpayer groups, the National Rifle Association, the American Dairymen's Association, the AFL-CIO (in addition to its labor activities), the National Association of Manufacturers, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Sierra Club, National Education Association, National Council of Churches, the Friends of Wine, Handgun Control, Inc., etc., etc., etc., ad infinitum.**In its own way, your proposal would attempt to make contact with an influential segment of the outside world.

As I said above, we spent May 20-29 in the Dominican Republic. I was astounded at the fantastic accomplishments of Lucy de Silfa and her Henry George School--since 1966, no less than 8,500 graduates, and probably 10,000 or more! I gave the commencement address to a class of 60 graduating students, plus 40 more who are coming in to her next class. As you may know, she tries to set up classes of similar professional types. The one I addressed consisted mostly of people working in the various government offices. Quite soon, she will set up a class of about sixty congressmen!

But Lucy, who is an indefatigable worker, was troubled that despite all these students, and despite the probability that the Dominican Congress will soon pass legislation to grant tax autonomy to Santo Domingo (like the situation in Pennsylvania), she is still not getting far enough fast enough. I told her it wouldn't make any difference if half the population of the Dominican Republic were all Georgists, nothing will get adopted until some of them form a pressure group to get the ball rolling in the form of legislation. The same is true in the United States. You are not trying to set up a pressure group, but what you have in mind might have some effect where it counts. Good luck!

**I don't mean to imply there are
none such in the Ggist movement.
The various Incentive Tax Leagues,
the Public Revenue Education Council,
etc., come close to this--but need some
education in politics. - j.

Yours sincerely,


Jim Busey