

"A throaty, mouthpiece, sport." Opinion expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily endorsed by the Henry George School.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF NEW JERSEY Issue #209

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GEORGISTS' CHINESE WALL

By: Robert A. King

Is it possible that we Georgists have walled ourselves off from all other economic lore as though ours is the beginning and end? About 328 B.C. the Chinese felt so superior to outside barbarians that they built a 1400 mile long wall. Following the Anglo-Chinese war (1839-42) the Chinese were amazed how backward they were in relation to the foreign invaders.

Religious groups have their Chinese type walls, too. The Hebrew religion begins and ends with the Torah (old testament) and regards the new testament as forgery. The agnostic considers all Bibles, Korans and other religious writings as abominations, that we'd be better off without any of it to cloud men's minds.

Four generations have passed on Georgism as blacksmiths and farmers passed on their skills father to son; some of us acquired our knowledge through reading PROGRESS & POVERTY by ourselves or in classroom. But like the Chinese and Hebrews, we've built a wall around George's words and go no further.

George wrote (The Problem; Progress and Poverty page 3) that in the preceding century productive power increased through the marvels of the first industrial revolution, and he deplored that children were running machinery. A child labor amendment failed to pass in 1920, but many labor laws enacted since have made such child abuse a thing of the distant past.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF NEW JERSEY

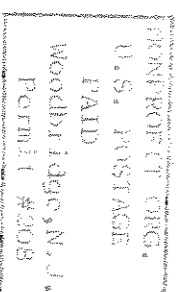
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The marvels of the first revolution were eclipsed by the second, still going on. Automation, computerization, supermarkets, air and space conquest, and electronics. Duplicating machines give us instant copies of anything. This year's microfilm surpasses last year's or of five years ago. Hard labor jobs performed by stalwart men only a few years ago are mechanized and today women have truck and bus operator jobs. Brawn won't get you a job today; college and technical training are needed.

"Upon streets lighted with gas" and "the tramp comes with the locomotive" (P&P, 7) date the book. Lord Macaulay's prophesy is hinted at but not explained for newer generations except in the newer glossary, page 572, that hungry hordes would soon elect a president.

George correctly predicted poverty to reach California, but he couldn't visualize the degradation and lawlessness we have today coast to coast. Why couldn't we, who knew how to make a better world, make ourselves heard, to eradicate war, crime, domestic strife and poverty? We let radio and TV pass us by. We let the socialist loudmouths have their way, expecting them to fail. We let legislators make one mess after another, expecting them to realize that ours was the ultimate reform, that they'd adopt it without any advice or lobbying from us.

Of interest (P&P 177-196) George quotes Frederic Bastiat's "Illustration of the plane" (mentioned 63 times). How many readers have stumbled over this,



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

confused a woodshaving plane with an aeroplane? A minor criticism, but the word "tool" (any tool) would have been more comfortable. Our lesson sheets contained brief statements of definitions of land, labor, capital, rent, wages, interest, and should have been printed in the 75th anniversary edition for clarification.

Not realizing that students attend a first or second session and often drop out, we have acquainted too many with Thomas Malthus, and, since 1945 "population explosion" is on everybody's lips; we helped. One Georgist recently cracked that pressure of urban overcrowding will force our reform after all else fails. How can it when it is not apparent and nobody knows we're here?

"The Story of the Savannah" is practically our liturgy (p. 235-243), showing how a community forms, how land value arises. A teacher gave numerous chalktalks based on this theme. Another of my favorites is George's supposition of an island arising from the "German Ocean" (p293). When I tell it I bring it closer to home by telling of "Streeterville"; Captain Streeter's fishing boat stranded July 1886 off shore of our Gold Coast where millionaires lived. Tugboats couldn't pull him loose, so he invited scavengers to fill in around the boat, invited unemployed to come there, build tar paper shacks and live there free of rent. The Gold Coasters claimed riparian rights, evicted Streeter's people and confiscated the land, his well provisioned ship demolished along with the shacks. The shoreline millionaires expropriated everything.

"The Law of Human Progress" (473-552) and Conclusion (553-565) are a philosophical and prophetic masterpiece. We get a glimpse (p557) of tyranny of czarist Russia; and from his statements that "the earth is the tomb of dead empires (485) and that every nation "really perished from internal decay" we see that's what happened in Africa and Asia. Unfortunately here again we were impotent to advise how to make a true democratic government. A new breed of landlords took over, and tyranny is still there. The socialists were there in force well trained to train the new leaders. Our Georgists Chinese Wall held us back as it did when East Germany built its atrocious Berlin Wall.

Liberty Amendment Committee, for 25 years authored and led by Willis E. Stone, is now headed by W. Cleon Skousen, Salt Lake City, whose Freeman Institute people are studying Henry George. It behoves us to move closer to them as individuals ask our congressmen in Washington to support the Liberty Amendment before them now. Stone contends the income tax to be utterly unneeded, that federal government has wasted this revenue shamefully, and names stupid

useless projects supported by it. Although the Liberty Amendment does not contain an alternative rider, we could ask our congressmen to do so, to provide for a 1% remittance by states of their land value tax collection. Since no tax is currently collected by states, this could start the machinery.

Discussing economy in government, greater education, thrift, industry, cooperatives, and government interference (299-327) points up that a college history text dencounces "WASP" (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) control of government and society, John Calvin's creed, "Work hard, save money, you'll go to heaven", and supports big government. I put in a weak protest that WASP is a racist obnoxious name, but many voices will be needed to erase the word. Despite economics being taught wrong in our colleges, unworkable government projects fouling our economy, and crime running rampant, we must scale our Georgist Chinese Wall, find a way to be heard far, wide, and quickly, undo harm done so that we can see a Georgist economy in our lifetime.

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WHAT HAPPENED TO THE

LIBERTY AMENDMENT?

The new administration is all for tax reform, as who isn't? We are going to have more simplified income tax forms. If the 1976 income tax form is an example, let us go back to the more complicated forms. More errors were committed and more mathematical manipulations required under the simplified form than before.

Of course, it is impossible to simplify the income tax. There must always be loopholes, or the people might simply refuse to pay the taxes. People with homes, want their mortgage payments, and property deductions, not to mention their medical expenses.

The politicians know this, but keep on playing up to simplification at the same time they urge special reductions to interested groups, so as to get votes.

If the administration really wants simplification, all it needs to do is to abolish the income tax. What are the possibilities what such will be done? What are the possibilities that you will live forever? The answer is the same.

(The above was a portion of SALT of the EARTH which had to be omitted last month because of lack of space.)

Bob King in his article holds a somewhat different view. Perhaps the old Income Tax can be abolished - what do you think?

Some hold the view the Liberty Amendment might move faster if in addition to slashing federal government expenditures, some alternative revenue might be suggested. WE KNOW WHAT!

AMERICA SPREADING STATISM

ABROAD?

Page -3-

History is a peculiar business. No one knows exactly what has happened in the past for no one ever has all the facts. Even if one did, no one could possibly know the motivations of the peoples involved.

To try to reconstruct such a trivial incident as a fight in a nearby street or an automobile accident is very difficult, as is shown in the court cases on accident claims. If this is so, then it is patent that attempts to know what actually happened in such great historical events as a world war cannot be expected to succeed.

People we call historians do this, however. What arises is not so much history as their interpretation of what occurred. These views cannot help but be prejudiced by the historians' own beliefs, understanding and biases, no matter how objective they strive to be.

It is said that if one reads the history of the American Revolution as written by an Englishman and compares it with a history written by an American, one would think they were writing about two different events.

Already hundreds of books have been written about World War I, and this is probably only the beginning of the torrent which will keep flowing out as the years go by.

In studying periods of time, historians like to find great primordial forces at work. They attempt to generalize events and point out certain principles or purposes at work. Whether this is actually the case or not probably can never be proven definitely one way or the other. What we do know is that people who are living are attempting to get enough food, clothing and shelter to stave off the inevitable death call as long as possible, and to get as much pleasure out of what they are doing as they can. To interpret such activities as part of some grand purpose or principle which is animating them seems to be a bit much.

But there is no question that the world is presently divided into what are known as states which are governed by a relatively small group of people. The group in control may have attained its power by force of arms, as when some group conquers another, or it may have come into control through such a process as elections by those deemed to be the citizens of the state.

In the United States, we like to believe that those in control were put there by the people through the elective process and that in general

they represent the wishes of the people. But, if that is so, why then is the United States constantly interfering in the affairs of other states? Whenever there appears to be an outbreak of violence as some group attempts to overthrow another, almost invariably the United States appears on the scene attempting to impose its will.

Just in mentioning the United States imposing its will constitutes a generalization of this writer. More properly, it may be said, that the group in control of the political and armed forces of the nation tries to impose its will on these other states. It is doubtful if the American people wish to. Often the countries involved most Americans never heard of, or if they did have only the vaguest idea where it even is located. How many Americans heard of Vietnam before those in control of the government involved the nation in its affairs?

It may well be said that while it is true that few Americans had the least interest in interfering in such countries as Vietnam, inevitably those in control of a nation as powerful as the United States always have and always will interfere, if only to divert attention from domestic problems which seemingly cannot be solved to foreign ones, which appear amenable to solution.

But why does the group controlling the United States seemingly always favor those in control of a state and rarely those wishing to overthrow it? With the example of the American Revolution, one would suppose it would favor revolutionary activity. Instead it appears to favor the status quo, not all the time, of course, as in the case of Rhodesia where it favors the overthrow of the white minority, but in most cases. Time and again, it has furnished the arms and supplies to dictatorships threatened by groups seeking their overthrow. The excuse is that the dictatorships are usually those fighting communists, who wish to install a group favorable to the Soviet Union.

How true this is, no one knows. Often, it appears that, as in the Philippines, those fighting the group in power merely wish to have free access to the land so they can make a decent living. Probably most of the revolutionary activities throughout the world really are motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, for access to the land, for land represents opportunity. One would think then, the powers that be in the United States would encourage such activity. Instead, they almost always throw their support to those in control. And those in control are usually imposing more and more statist control over their

We thus have the truly surprising sight of a nation presumably predicated on the principles of freedom and distrust of the state, actively aiding the spreading statism throughout the world. But people cannot help but yearn to be free to pursue their lives as they wish, so it seems inevitable that revolutionary activities will spring up all over the world time and again.

That being the case, would it not be wisest for those in control in America to let the chips fall where they may and stay out of such matters? Who knows which side is correct? Someday historians may tell us, but that will only represent their interpretations. We do know that common sense tells us not to interfere in our neighbor's family quarrels. Since that is true why is it not true where other nations are involved?

The sooner the United States starts to stop interfering in other nations' affairs, the sooner other people will once again respect Americans, and possibly the sooner will this trend toward world-wide statism reverse itself and move toward freedom.

OSCAR B. JOHANNSEN

THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST HOMESOWNERS AND TENANTS

The above is the title of a new book written by William W. Newcomb, for many years a Real Estate broker in Florida; for many years a student and teacher of economics and taxation, specializing in the property tax, its assessment, collection and effects on the taxed and the economy.

Says Newcomb: "The basic monopoly is vested in the private appropriation of rent from land." And - "It must be remembered that for the right of existence on this earth in America and for the right of government services, all those not holding land must pay twice, first to the government in miscellaneous taxes...and second to the landlord for the rent of the ground carrying the tenant's shelter."

He calls attention to under-taxed land in all America and points out other taxpayers are paying more because land speculators are only paying a small part.

The book explains why land prices go down as land taxes go up. It presents "The Law of Rent: A Basic Thesis to Economics", and finally asks "What is the Answer? Then states - "Eliminate the Taxation on Buildings and Personal Property - Tax Land Only!"

Part I of the book is "The Conspiracy, Part II is "Out Foxing The Conspiracy" "How Will This Be Done? YOU the Voters Have the Power to Do It."

The book may be ordered at three dif-

ferent prices, with three proposals. These proposals provide assistance in introducing "prospects" to what they can do to bring about Incentive Taxation.

Order from: William W. Newcomb
P.O. Box 1178, Melbourne, Fl 32901

SENSE & NONSENSE

The New Jersey Council on Economic Education expects to hold two summer workshops to help teachers acquire the necessary knowledge to give students some basic economics.

The Council claims that this program is necessary inasmuch as "economics is the most poorly taught and most poorly understood subject in the school curriculum."

It pointed out that incredible though it may appear, in a study of 21,000 high school students, fewer than half were aware that the American economy is based on the private enterprise system. Although the State has all kinds of courses in pedagogy, enough to bore every prospective teacher to death, it does not require even one year of college economics for a teaching certificate.

The council is an independent, non-profit, nonpartisan educational organization which is attempting to make up for the deficiencies of the public education system in the field of economics

It is a sad commentary on education in New Jersey when it is necessary for an organization such as this one to attempt to teach economics. Since most of our lives are spent trying to make a living, one would suppose that economics and a knowledge of it would be a major portion of a school's curriculum. However, in a socialized system of education, which is what our public schools constitutes, the teachers have no knowledge of how business operates, or what incentives are necessary to get maximum production with the greatest efficiency. They look to some bureaucracy to get their wages, and they know the bureau gets its money from taxes, which is why teachers tend to be in favor of more taxes, but what is the effect of taxes on production is something that few, if any, teachers understand or even care about.

While it is a question just what the Council will teach, nonetheless it is a step in the right direction for it will, at least, attempt to point out the advantages of private enterprise over socialism.

Now if only some Georgists could be hired to do the teaching, the level of economic knowledge could not help but be higher in New Jersey than anywhere else in the country.

1977 Joint Georgist Conference

Lake Geneva, Wisc. July 1 - 5th

It is late, but if you can attend telephone Sam Venturella, 4721 North Hermitage, Chicago RIGHT NOW!

A great program is scheduled.