

Rubenstein to Direct School's Programming

Stanley Rubenstein, associate professor at C.W. Post College and social studies teacher at Oceanside High School, will take charge as acting director of the Henry George School on July 1, 1973. Arnold Weinstein will continue as the School's president.

For the past seven years, Mr. Rubenstein has directed the School's suburban activities on Long Island. It is this experience, as well as his training as an educator that he will bring to the task in New York.

Mr. Rubenstein is an authority on simulation and games as used in education. He is a contributing editor on this subject to the journal of the New York State Council of Social Studies; he has published widely in this area. As he describes it, simulation recreates a segment of reality in the classroom. For example, in a class in economics some students will assume the role of entrepreneurs, some may be buyers and sellers, while others take the part of government officials, acting out problems faced in business.

Mr. Rubenstein defines the School's role as disseminating the philosophy of Henry George as it applies to today's world. He would bridge the gap between the public school system and the Henry George School.

Striving toward these goals, he will initiate a three-pronged program in the fall:

1. He will schedule five to seven classes in "Progress and Poverty" and "Reform for Our Time," dealing with some of the problems that affect urban society as diagnosed in George's major works. In addition, he has arranged for an "in service" course in "Reform for Our Time" using simulation techniques for teachers in the New York Public School system. There will also be a "teachers' training course" for the School.

2. A high school program will take "mini courses" into the schools that will treat some of George's major themes. Mr. Rubenstein has also made preparation for several urban workshops to be conducted at the School in which high school students will research and discuss various urban problems.

3. As the start of a communications effort, Mr. Rubenstein has arranged for a five-part radio docu-

(Continued on back page)

Academic Efforts Pointed Way to Overcoming Handicap

The numbers game offers some amusement, but even the dullest player counting on his fingers realizes that the numbers themselves are meaningless. What counts are the things or the personalities the numbers represent. In other words, unless we are counting identical items (all stamped out by the same cookie cutter) mere quality has no meaning; only some conception of quality can have significance.

Thus when we come to examine the School's performance, mere numbers can tell little. It may be of some interest to note that over the past decade there has been persistent decline in the number coming to the School. Total enrollment peaked in fiscal 1965, ended June 30, at 2,957 but had slid to 1,515 by '69. Who were these people?

Concerned with numbers we are reminded that Napoleon graduated twenty-third in his class at the military academy. Dean Swift wanted to know "Who were the twenty two who preceded him?" It may be more interesting to note that the drop-out rate for the School's primary course hovered around 60% through the past decade, but it was reduced to 50% in the year ending this month. A latter-day Swift might infer there had been some improvement in the quality of instruction as well as in attendance.

For example, the primary course, long offered without charge, attracted as many as 1500 or more each fiscal year during the late '60s, but only four out of ten stayed. And repeated experience with the four who remained gave evidence of considerable ignorance of what George had to say.

When, in 1973, however, the subject matter was offered in modern idiom and publicized, not as the touchstone of all economic knowledge but as an inquiry pertinent to today's urban problems, sensible people were willing to pay a modest fee for the course. The result was fewer classes (the numbers were small) but a larger proportion of those who enrolled stayed in class. Although no objective test was applied, instructors reported that class discussion indicated a gratifying degree of understanding.

Much remains to be done. It is not sufficient to present George's ideas and ideals in today's language,

(Continued on back page)

from the clippers . . .

Every few days, the mail brings an envelope from somewhere — here or abroad — that contains clippings; newspaper clippings, magazine clippings, and often unidentifiable clippings. They all seem intent on substantiating what we already believe to be valid. Sometimes they are accompanied by a brief note, sometimes be a cryptic letter. Most often they are simply marked up and scratched with barely decipherable marginal notes. Because they seem to be motivated by a desire on the sender's part to share, we thought we would pass the more worthy ones on to our readers.

From Lancaster M. Greene, New York; *Aviation Daily*, May 18, 1973:

Boeing Chairman T.A. Wilson told the House Ways and Means Committee that "the best tariff is no tariff" during hearings on the Trade Reform Act of 1973. Wilson . . . said his company sold \$716 million worth of airplanes abroad in 1970 and had less than zero domestic sales . . . "We would have had a difficult time staying in business except for those foreign orders."

Wilson said the best way to keep future foreign markets open is likely to be cooperative ventures with foreign companies. He said many quarters question this approach because of presumed loss of American jobs. "Underlying the assumption in this claim," he told the committee, "is that a firm contemplating such an arrangement has the option of keeping things as they are, with no loss of export business nor its export related jobs. But this is not an option that our industry is free to exercise." He also rejected arguments that such joint ventures amount to an export of U.S. technology. "The fact is, in our own aerospace field, the jet engine, the swept wing, the helicopter, the hovercraft, and advanced transonic airfoils originated abroad. Our technology is a two-way street and we can hardly afford to stop technical communications."

From Karl Jost, Washington; a "piece that was supposed to come from an unpublished manuscript of Charles Dodgson":

Alice in Featherland

Alice stopped just outside the clearing. Halted by the loud cawing of an enormous

Crow, she had hidden behind a large mullberry bush. The Crow was seated on a low branch and was obviously trying to call to order the birds that were chattering and hopping around on the ground below him.

A large Blackbird settled on Alice's shoulder so gently that she was more curious than alarmed. "If you're very quiet," he whispered in Alice's ear, "you may listen."

"What are they doing?" she asked.

"Be quiet and listen!" he hissed back at her.

The Crow had succeeded in quieting most of the assembled birds, but the Bantam Rooster continued to strut. "It's a great idea," he declared. "It's the only idea that can save us."

Alice was ready to believe him. His tone allowed no contradiction and his manner was so assertive that no one, it seemed, would challenge his authority. Indeed all the birds appeared willing to accept it.

The Crow, however, looked annoyed. "No one disputes that," he said sharply, "The question is: What do you want to do?"

"It's all in the Scroll." The Bantam insisted. "All one has to do is read the Scroll." He made a sweeping gesture with his wing and took obvious satisfaction from the murmurs of assent that followed.

"Where will I find the Scroll?" Alice whispered to the Blackbird on her shoulder, but he only shushed her back to silence as though she had asked an unnecessary, even impertinent question.

"Quiet! Quiet! We must have quiet," the Bluejay said.

The Crow wrapped his beak. "You still are not facing the issue. How do we get others to understand the idea?"

The Owl stirred nervously. "Who?" he said.

Resuming his strutting, the Bantam complained: "You're doing it all wrong. You've got to find the proper way to do it, but nothing must change. Mind you, nothing must change."

A large Gull that had been watching the proceedings intently stretched to his full height. "That's preposterous," he said, "The value of the Scroll has been known for a long time, but it should be obvious that a new approach to its content is needed."

"All you have to do," repeated the Bantam, "is read the Scroll. Get all the old birds back to read the Scroll."

"I don't have to listen to this nonsense." The Gull stated. With an efficient flap of his wings he took off and soared away.

"Awk." The Parrot bobbed on his perch. "The cookie jar. You've got to watch the cookie jar!" he admonished.

The Bantam paid no heed. "We must get Dr. Robin to read the Scroll. Then all the old birds will come flocking back."

At this juncture the Crow raised a claw. Looking very serious he asked, "How will we get others to pay attention?"

"Dr. Robin will know how to solve our problems," the Bantam replied.

"But it's not the season for robins. What do we do in the meantime?"

"The Great Eagle will provide."

A fat black hen waddled into the clearing. "Just what my mother used to say," she remarked and settled down to preen her feathers.

"We must be practical." asserted the Wren. Her dark, intelligent eyes darted from one to the other as if looking for reason. "We can't persist in impractical schemes . . ."

"Exactly," the Bantam interrupted, "but nothing must change."

"The cookie jar," the Parrot said, "you've got to watch the cookie jar."

"Who?" the Owl nodded and relapsed into silence.

"Why is he so worried about the cookie jar?" Alice wanted to know.

"It's not clear to me," the Blackbird replied softly. "He may be afraid there aren't enough to go 'round. But they're not his cookies, and I don't think he even likes them."

"Well," sighed Alice, "they may have a great Scroll, but it's obvious they don't know what to do with it. I think I'll follow the Gull.

From Faf, 5 Rue Denfort Rochereau, 92100
Boulogne, France:

Georgism is ailing, beyond doubt! In 1886
Henry George, as mayoral candidate of the

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paid at New York, N.Y.

Reform forces, barely lost New York City to Democrat Abram Hewitt and ran substantially ahead of Republican Theodore Roosevelt. Is there more than a handful of New Yorkers left to celebrate the School's golden anniversary in a few years? Probably not.

The failure of the School is due to a double error: 1. Emphasis on a minor aspect of George's approach. 2. No follow-up of the School's graduates.

The School's teaching presented George as an economist, but who today — or any day — cares about political economy? How many of George's enthusiastic followers knew a single world of this "dismal science"? They followed a **social reformer** who explained in simple language of his day why social reform was needed and how it could be accomplished, without bloodshed, without turmoil.

Political economy was, to Henry George, a means to an end. So the School should forget about George the social reformer. This should have been, but never was, the School's task. It is very late, perhaps too late, but his aggiornamento is essential if the School is to survive. Shift the emphasis, talk of George the **social reformer** and classes will again burst with new and enthusiastic students; new men and women will volunteer to teach Henry George's "Law of Human Progress."

But the School should carefully avoid repeating the mistake of the famed sisters who tried to fill a leaky barrel. The new Georgists should have a meeting place that they can call their own. The School should offer them not only a place, but a *reason* to visit that place daily, including Saturdays and Sundays. Why should schools and universities be Necropolis — modern unvisited cities of the dead — on weekends?

From a distance things look different and the trees are less likely to hide the forest. I have been in France for two years and have given some thought and taken a few steps towards the best means of introducing Georgism in France. Maybe these ideas will be of some help to stem the decline of Henry George's theories in the States, or maybe they are so much nonsense. They are offered in the spirit of Solomon's words: "He who spares the rod hates his son."

Rubenstein *(Continued)*

mentary to be taped by station WVHC at Hofstra University. This will present interviews with authorities on land economics and the property tax. The package will be aired by the station and will be available for syndication. The taped package will be available from the School at a modest price for anyone wanting to use the program or provide it to local stations.

Academic Efforts *(Continued)*

to relate them to current social and financial problems in the way people think now. Some dynamic applications of what George proposed must be found or created. To go on talking about justice and about the denial of special privilege in abstract terms will be to continue under severe handicap.

One sympathetic scholar sums up the judgment of the market place of ideas that "the extravagant arguments of passionate advocates of site value taxation appear to be designed to repel rather than persuade . . . and to convince opponents that this was and is a crank cause." At least some encouragement can be taken from the latest activities of the School that are enabling it to live down the label of "the home for a crank cause."

Tax Symposium Honors Brown

A symposium on the land tax was held in early April at the University of Missouri-Columbia in honor of Prof. Emeritus Harry Gunnison Brown. Dr. Brown is known as the leading American proponent of the land tax, according to the university's news department.

In addition to former students of Prof. Brown, the symposium was attended by several other leading proponents of the land tax. Among them were Dean Dick Netzer of the Graduate School of Public Administration of New York University, who opened the session with a discussion of "Land Value Taxation in an Ideal System of Urban Finance"; Dr. Richard Lindholm, finance professor of the University of Oregon, who discussed "Taxation for Low Cost Wood Fiber"; Dr. William Vickery, economics professor Columbia University, who talked on "Problems in Land Value Taxation: Equity, Expectations and Efficiency." The sessions were closed by Dr. Arnold C. Harberger, economics professor of the University of Chicago, with a run down of "The Economic Effects of Tax Changes in the Small and the Large."

Dr. Pinkney Walker, who succeeded Dr. Brown as head of the economics department at Missouri-Columbia, addressed a banquet on "Some Random Thoughts on the Land Tax."

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