

## Whither the Georgists?

by Drew Harris

The modern clans of Georgists are small in number, fragmented, ineffective, and perhaps too trivial to call a movement. Despite having the best of intentions, significant resources (in the hands of a few organizations), a wealth of talent, and perhaps the greatest secular idea in history, Georgists have almost no impact on public dialogue, much less public policy. If Georgists were a species, they would be declared endangered.

Through personal, individual efforts today's Georgists have kept George's beautiful philosophy alive, but it is in danger of dying with this generation. However, as others will surely comment in

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this volume, now is not the time to worry about just surviving. Changes in technology, the vacuum created by the collapse of Communism, and growing awareness of the failure of neo-classical capitalism make this an ideal time to re-energize our

movement and change the course of history. But, to do that, most Georgists must change their approach to organizations!

Many Georgists elevate individualism to dogma. They fear organization, scorn formal education and treat leadership with hostile suspicion. Yet, one of George's key observations was that every significant advance in civilization happened because of educated people gathering in cooperative effort. So it follows that if we want to lead civilization to one of its greatest advances, we must cooperate.

Although most of us have had unpleasant experiences with would-be leaders and their methods, there has never been a successful movement without leadership and cooperation. As we approach the new millennium, the Georgist movement must find and support the leaders who will recreate a strong, vibrant movement. We must look at our organizations and ask if they provide structures and processes that encourage cooperative individualism. Do our leaders and our organizations express the philosophy we believe in their behavior? For if we cannot live and succeed as Georgists, how can we ask the world to embrace our philosophy?

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