

CGO 2013 CONFERENCE UPDATE

By Dan Sullivan, Pittsburgh, PA

(Dan Sullivan is the president of the Council of Georgist Organizations.)

This year's conference of the Council of Georgist Organizations "celebrates" the 100th anniversary of two important landmarks: Pittsburgh and Scranton becoming the first two cities in the United States to adopt a land value tax (which we do indeed celebrate) and the Wilson Administration's implementation of the Federal Income Tax (mumble grumble).

Alex Wagner Lough is doing her doctoral dissertation on the Georgist movement in the progressive era, and will speak on the participation of Georgists in adopting the income tax and on the divisions within the Georgist movement over that issue. She suggests that passage of the income tax marks the decline of the Georgist movement, and might have caused it.

George himself vehemently opposed income tax, agreeing with David Ricardo that a revenue tax, even on rental income, would be passed on to the tenants. In *Progress and Poverty*, George wrote,

As to the truths that are involved in socialistic ideas I shall have something to say hereafter; but it is evident that whatever savors of regulation and restriction is in itself bad, and should not be resorted to if any other mode of accomplishing the same end presents itself. For instance, to take one of the simplest and mildest of the class of measures I refer to - a graduated tax on incomes. The object at which it aims, the reduction or prevention of immense concentrations of wealth, is good; but this means involves the employment of a large number of officials clothed with inquisitorial powers; temptations to bribery, and perjury, and all other means of evasion, which beget a demoralization of opinion, and put a premium upon unscrupulousness and a tax upon conscience; and, finally, just in proportion as the tax accomplishes its effect, a lessening in the incentive to the accumulation of wealth, which is one of the strong forces of industrial progress. (*Progress and Poverty*, Book VI, Chapter 1, Sec. V.)

However, Wilson's administration, awash with Georgist leaders, proposed the 1913 income tax, and Congressman Henry George, Jr. cosponsored the legislation. Which Georgists supported the income tax, which opposed it, and the arguments and predictions they made, will be the topic of a special presentation at this year's conference, August 6 -10, at the Airport Holiday Inn, Coraopolis, Pennsylvania (a Pittsburgh suburb). We are excited to explore this very important but long-ignored aspect of the history of the Georgist movement.

We will also celebrate and detail the great successes of the Georgist movement in Pittsburgh and other Pennsylvania cities, and will tell you more about that in an upcoming edition of *The Georgist News*.

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CGO CONFERENCE INFORMATION

By Sue Walton, Evanston, IL

(Sue and Scott Walton are the administrative staff for the Council of Georgist Organizations.)

Conference Brochures should be published in mid-April. To make sure you receive a brochure, please email your postal mail address to Sue & Scott Walton, CGO Administrators at sns@swwalton.com.

Save the date for the 2013 Annual Council of Georgist Organization's Conference to be held August 6-10 at the Holiday Inn Pittsburgh Airport. The hotel is located at 8256 University Blvd, Moon Township, PA 15108. It offers many fine amenities including 24-hour complimentary shuttle to and from Pittsburgh International Airport, indoors swimming pool with whirlpool and sundeck, 24-hour fitness center, coin-operated washer and dryer, ATM/Cash machine, health club, dual line phones, free parking, voice mail, coffee makers, hair dryers, irons and ironing boards. The hotel is located close to several non-hotel restaurants. If the name sounds familiar, this is the same hotel that the CGO used for its 2001 conference. The food is still excellent!

ROOMS: Sleeping rooms are \$99 plus tax single/quad occupancy. To get this rate you must reserve your room by July 10, 2013 by calling: 412/262-3600 or 800/333-4835. Please be sure to mention that you are attending the CGO/Georgist Conference. "Any reservations received after this date will be honored on a space available basis at the most available rate. Rates can NOT BE CHANGED at check-in or checkout for guests who fail to identify their affiliation at the time the reservation is requested." The hotel will charge an early departure fee if less than 48 hours notice is given.

Please note that the hotel charges for meeting rooms if we don't stay in the hotel; staying within the CGO's room block keeps conference costs down.

The CGO administrators have already arranged for Amtrak Conference Fare Discounts. There are several trains daily to DC, NY, Philly, Cleveland and Chicago and places further west. Pittsburgh is served by Mega-Bus from Cleveland and points east. There is direct bus service from New York City. Trains and buses come into downtown Pittsburgh. From Downtown, one can take the 28X Airport Flyer via West Busway. Service is approximately every 30 minutes and the fare is \$3.75. For more information please contact the Port Authority at 412/442-2000 or visit their website at:

www.portauthority.org/paac/RiderServices/AirportService.aspx.

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DE JONG INTERVIEWED (from page 5)

ample revenue for Manitoba to provide services without equalization payments. So it's plugging the leaks of your economy which serves this purpose.

(Frank de Jong may be emailed at fdejong@earthsharing.ca)