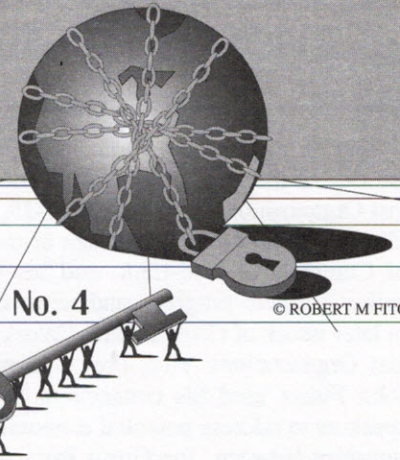


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NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES BOOTH HOSTED

by Al Katzenberger, St. Louis, MO

The NCSL held its 25th annual conference in Denver, Colorado. The home office of the NCSL is in Denver. The NCSL is moving to a newly built 65,000 sq. ft. office building. The NCSL has branch office in Washington, DC. The conference was held July 24-27, 2002.

Over 5,500 people attended the 2002 conference. Included in this total were nearly 1,000 legislators and 800 legislative staff.

This year I drove to Denver alone. Al Lubin had planned to help in Denver (as he has helped at previous NCSL conferences), but he was needed at home. The door step to Denver is called the "front range". So I was "alone on the range". One of the fellow exhibitors, the U.S. Census Bureau reported the overall Native American population of some Great Plains states grew by 20 percent or more during the last decade. There are now more Native Americans on the Plains than at any other time since the late 1800s. In contrast, many white residents have left the area, abandoning unproductive farms and ranches. One thing that was very noticeable to me was the large number of men milling around the grounds of the state office buildings in Denver. A police officer that I spoke to thought the situation was normal for a large city. I assured him it was not. He did not reply.

Thanks to the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation for funding the publication of the "Synopsis of Henry George's Progress and Poverty," because hundreds of copies were handed out to those stopping by the Public Revenue Education Council booth. The booklets were printed by Woody Giles in Woody's Little Print Shop. Hundreds of copies of the Center for the Study of Economics' booklet, "44 Objectives and Responses," by Steven Cord were handed out to the point of depletion. PREC needs a huge supply of "44 Q&Rs" for next year's conference.

Common Ground-USA supplied the updated "The Revenue Source Is Under Our Feet" brochures and the Internet postcards called "World Wide Web Georgist Home Pages." Those interested in doing legislative research were given Gib Halverson's "Bibliography of Two Rate Property Tax, Land Value Taxation or Site Value Taxation." Materials in Spanish were also distributed.

PREC's booth was across from Harrah's Casino booth.

It was interesting to watch the three adults in the booth promote Harrah's goal to keep those under 21 from gambling at their casinos and have the legislators circumvent their efforts. Harrah's was passing out decks of cards to their adult visitors. They refused to give them to children. The legislators ignored Harrah's efforts to discourage children from gambling by taking the cards from Harrah's booth and passing them out to children who were denied cards and to their own children. It was absolutely disgusting to watch.

I had new signs on the display table saying LAND / LABOR / CAPITAL. The labor sign attracted several labor officials to the booth. There were a lot of government people from Africa. They were attracted by the words land and capital.

The Executive Director of NCSL, William T. Pound, stopped by the booth and informed me that if PREC wanted to put on a workshop at the 2003 conference that we should submit a workshop proposal to his staff by December 2002. This was wonderful news. We have been trying to get legislators to ask NCSL to put our economic ideas on their agenda and in their conference workshops. If you can help with a workshop at the next conference in San Francisco, July 22-25, 2003, please contact Joshua Vincent at the Center for Study of Economics, phone 215-988-9998.

This is a plea for help. As stated above, the conference will be held in San Francisco. PREC would greatly appreciate the help of Georgists who would help man (woman) the exhibit booth at the 2003 conference. Working an exhibit booth is interesting. You get to meet a lot of different people and hear all kinds of different responses to your Georgist ideas. Most of the people who stop by the booth are at least a little curious about why you are at their conference. If you can help at the booth in San Francisco, please contact Al Katzenberger at 314-781-2077 or fax 314-781-6321. The sooner you call or fax, the better.