The National conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) held their 24th annual conference in San Antonio, Texas from August 11 to 15, 2001. The NCSL's theme was Navigating the Crosscurrents of America. The NCSL bills itself as The Forum for American Ideas. The Public Revenue Education Council (PREC) was right there with them sharing Georgist ideas.


Also distributed was the recently reprinted "Synopsis of Progress and Poverty." A copy is inserted in this GroundSwell issue.

It is a job getting all these materials in the big convention centers without the help of a shipping service. The dock workers do not like us carrying our own boxes. PREC is a low budget organization, and we do everything to cut cost. This year instead of going to the shipping dock, we went to the catering/food service dock. We did not unload fast enough and the Chef's helpers did a "clapping dance" on the dock to get us to move out of the way of their delivery trucks.

We had an "in line" booth near the front entrance of exhibit hall. Our hard work paid off because we had a lot of visitors at our booth. PREC is being recognized at the NCSL conferences. We are also able to recognize officials who have attended past conferences. People come up to the booth and call us the "Georgist Group." We attracted people to the booth with a copy of Stephen Harrigan's novel, The Gates of the Alamo. Anyone who asked about the book was given a copy of the book review that was recently printed in GroundSwell.

Being in San Antonio, we handed out more Spanish literature than usual. The Organization of American States attends the conference. Officials from Central and South America stopped by our booth when they saw our sign "La Mejor Manera De Pagar Por El Gobierno." We also met people from Russia, China, Germany, Canada and Japan. Germany, Canada and Japan have booths at the conference.

Al Lubin had a sign made up that read "No Product No Service Just An Idea." He would point to the sign to assure people we weren't selling anything. Then they would gravitate over to the booth and pick up some of our literature. It must be remembered, these government officials are at the conference for an "education." Many of the officials' wives and husbands attend so we stop them and say, "Here, read this to your husband tonight just before he goes to sleep. It will make him feel good about the world knowing some people are trying to help make things right."

The Alamo was near the convention center so we took a tour. We were surprised at the number of Texas Rangers at the Alamo. When we questioned why there were so many Rangers, he answered that tourists would destroy the place if they were not keeping them from digging chips out of the walls. The gift shop had over one hundred books about the Alamo. Across the street from the Alamo was the Emily Morgan Hotel named after the "Yellow Rose of Texas," the beautiful 20-year mulatto woman who "distracted" Santa Anna so much that he lost the Battle of San Jacinto. Her womanly appeal delayed Santa Anna's orders and won Texas its freedom. Santa Anna was a womanizer and had a wife in every town his troops would visit. Santa Anna was evil as hell but his American counterparts were not much better because besides fighting for land they were fighting just as hard to bring their slaves into Texas. Slavery was opposed by Mexico and Santa Anna.

On the other side of the Alamo was the Menger Hotel where Theodore Roosevelt recruited the Rough Riders to fight in Cuba during the Spanish-American War. The bar had dark wood paneling and looked like it could hold about two dozen people.

Back at the conference we were greeted by representatives from the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey letting us know they do not engage in cruelty to animals, especially elephants. Yes, everyone comes to these conferences to get their message across to the state government officials.

While at the conference, Missouri State Senator Pat Dougherty stopped by the booth and picked up PREC's package of materials. Sen. Dougherty is Katzenberger's newly elected state senator. I had to come all the way to San Antonio to get a few words with my senator, but I will take any chance I can get. By being at the conference he at least knew we were serious about what we were promoting.

The National Conference of State Legislatures is an organization that States join. The American Legislative Exchange is an organization of individual state representatives, senators, and other government officials. The NCSL conference will be in Denver next year for the NCSL's 25th anniversary. Denver is the home office for NCSL. NCSL has a branch office in Washington, DC. Georgists need to get on the program of the NCSL. We need to provide Georgists for workshops on the collection of public revenue. While at the Council of Georgist Organizations conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania State Representative William Russell Robinson said he will write a letter to NCSL requesting that Georgists be workshop presenters at NCSL conferences. Rep. Robinson is giving us a wonderful opportunity. Let us show him we are able to fill his request if the NCSL accepts.