



Robert Schalkenbach Foundation

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www.schalkenbach.org

www.workandwealth.com

December 12, 2012

Dear Friends of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation,

After the presidential election in the United States, the daily news cycle switched instantly to the looming “fiscal cliff.” The media industry needs an incessant supply of dramatic events to retain audience attention, so the switch was predictable. Notably, the fiscal cliff was rarely mentioned during the election campaign. There now seems to be a general assumption that the matter will be resolved one way or another. Which taxes may be raised and which programs scaled back will come in a histrionic cliffhanger of a deal. For most Americans the normal routine will continue.

Once again those seeking substantial fiscal and economic reforms will have their hopes dashed on the rocks of political expediency and narrow interest-based horse trading. No matter what kind of resolution is eventually crafted to the fiscal cliff, no one assumes that it will somehow magically transform a landscape of extreme inequality, poverty, unemployment and loss of hope.

Henry George wrote *Progress and Poverty* (1879) at a time of great economic dislocation. Towards the end of his life, in 1897, there was yet another terrible depression, which was historical confirmation that his theory of business cycles, rooted in the sequestering of economic rent by privileged interests in society, was the principal cause of deepening unemployment, poverty and economic turmoil. Our current evils would no doubt dismay, but not surprise, him.

The Foundation continues, in its modest way, to advance the Georgist vision of economic justice. We recently launched a hub website, www.workandwealth.com, to address issues around unemployment, poverty and income inequality. This is an example of our more aggressive foray into social media in the last six months. The use of short videos, blogging, Facebook, Twitter and other social media will enable us to reach

broader audiences as well as enhance communication with a younger age demographic. We expect our latest video production, "On Solid Ground", to be accessible on-line in early 2013, and to promote the message of the new website. Another website has been created that is devoted to Henry George's newspaper *The Standard*. This is a long-range project that involves transforming PDF files into corrected and searchable OCR documents. We'd like to do more of these types of projects, but we have considerable resource constraints, so your donation will go far in helping us expand our vital internet and social media presence.

In 2012 the Foundation financially participated in the conferences sponsored by the Council of Georgist Organizations (held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania) and by the International Union for Land Value Taxation (held in Buenos Aires, Argentina). As a result, individual and organizational contacts were renewed and new ones were established.

The Foundation continues with its ongoing program of publishing the works of Henry George and also distributing scholarly commentary on his ideas. Our latest example is *Two Views of Social Justice: A Catholic/Georgist Dialogue*. This volume brings to fruition the conference RSF co-sponsored with CGO and Scranton University in 2007. Published by Wiley-Blackwell for *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, it is an example of what RSF can accomplish in cooperation with other institutions. Please see the enclosed material about this and other notable publications.

The Foundation, like many other non-profits, has had to restrict its discretionary expending in this difficult investment environment. We have a dedicated staff in New York City and an active board of volunteer directors from all over North America. We are, however, stretched to the limit with available resources. If you are able, please make a generous contribution to the work of the Foundation. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Sincerely,

Francis K. Peddle
President
Robert Schalkenbach Foundation