

# IU Global Conference

The IU Global Conference 2010 was a pleasant mix of serious discussion, films and social contact, with reunions of old friends and meetings of new like-minded people. Delegates from South Africa, Australia, USA, Denmark, Canada, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Scotland and Wales as well as many London based members were in attendance.



researched presentations and lively debates. We were treated to a wide-ranging series of lectures by academics, authors and film makers.

Day 1 included a full afternoon 'Think Tank' on how to get the Georgist message across to a bigger audience. There has certainly been no lack of effort by those in positions to promote economic justice but, as always, it is clear that more still has to be done to present a unified message and obtain the support of

the European Union. A number of inspiring documentary films provided an insight into historical causes that have led to current world problems of poverty and unequal distribution of wealth. Delegates were shown the Robert Schalkenbach production "The end of poverty...?" and invited to make comments on the impression it made.

We enjoyed in depth studies on topics such as Western debt and Islamic finance, and sessions entitled Opportunities in the 21st Century and Natural Law and the Human Condition. On the last day an inspirational session on renewable energy based on sea power was revealing and welcome. Delegates will certainly need plenty of energy boosts to absorb and distil the range and depth of information if they are to be ready for the conference next year.

In his closing address Fernando Scornik Gerstein said there was no reason for Georgists to be depressed and that we should be proud of what we are doing. He was confident that we had been introduced to many new ideas and reminded us that every challenge was an opportunity to guide people to the truth that continues to radiate from the genius and perception of Henry George.

Michael Hawes & Megan Ashcroft

Our speakers provided insightful presentations and the feedback received was very positive. Key note deliveries included Molly Scott Cato (the Green Party), Dr Richard Werner (Southampton University), Satish Kumar (Resurgence Magazine), Fred Harrison, David Triggs, Ed Dodson, Tarek el Diwany (Zest Advisory), Frank Peddle and Polly Higgins.

A number of policy advisors from other NGOs and delegates from the Ethiopian and Argentine embassies attended sessions.

The Conference could not have been more timely. With Greece in meltdown, Goldman Sachs in the dock and the UK in the final lap of an election we were constantly reminded of why things have gone so wrong by ignoring natural law and how they could so easily be put right.

One came away with the certain knowledge that the dedication and enthusiasm of the followers of the fundamental principles of economics proclaimed by Henry George were growing in strength.

Following a welcome by Fernando Scornik Gerstein, President of the IU, delegates participated in a full 5-day programme of well-

other organisations. One suggestion was to adopt a business plan and promote the non-controversial message of 'tax reform' to win general support before starting to introduce land value taxation to a wider public. And, of course, efforts must continue to be made to educate more young people while they are still open to the fundamental concepts of social justice. We should remember, in the crisis days ahead, that it is not economic principles that have failed, but politics.

With a programme of 25 sessions it would not be appropriate or possible to highlight individual sessions or personalities. But in brief summary: We looked back at why the Danes accepted and then rejected LVT, we looked forward to the needs for land reform in China, it was explained that there was hope in Ireland and New Zealand (where income tax is low and there are no tax on capital gains) and that significant progress had been made in Ethiopia regarding land rights, particularly for widows. As an example of how language can conceal the truth, we were informed that the sales tax in New Zealand is called Goods & Services Tax—a term so much more direct than 'Value Added Tax' used throughout