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The full application of land value taxation may prove to be a turning point in the history of mankind. In the Middle East, in particular, where the danger of communism is most apparent, it is possible that the Land Values Taxation policy would win over the masses and thereby save the Middle East for civilization. -- N.E. Dangoor, Baghdad.

Over 300,000 Englishmen are waiting for passage accommodation to emigrate to the British Dominions, where countless acres of land await their willing hands. Our guess is that almost all of them would rather stay in their homeland -- but the price the landlords demand for the privilege is too much to pay. -- Henry George News, May 1947.

The forces of evil that we are combatting never quit. One day we get them down but they just lie in waiting ready to take advantage of any lull in the battle. -- Wm. F. Devin, Mayor of Seattle, Wash.

THE SQUARE DEAL

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THE SITUATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

It is unfortunate that Canadian governing bodies have at times paid considerable sums of money for extremely bad advice. Some will remember that in the 30's the Dominion and Ontario Governments each paid financial "experts" \$40,000 for advice which resulted in the payment of a good many millions in excessive bond interest. A few years back the Saskatchewan Government spent a good many thousands on the "Jacoby" Commission, whose chief recommendation, that municipalities should be required to tax improvements on the full assessment, they wisely disregarded. Recently the Government of British Columbia spent quite a bit of money on a Commission headed by Dr. H. Carl Goldenberg. This Commission recommends that municipalities be required to tax improvements on 75% of the assessment, besides installing a business tax similar to the that which now hampers and afflicts Ontario citizens.

As shown in THE SQUARE DEAL for May-June, during the years in which most of its municipalities exempted improvements altogether and most others taxed them at extremely low rates, British Columbia made the greatest progress of all the Canadian Provinces, becoming the wealthiest of all and occupying a high position in all important respects. As more and more municipalities increased taxation on improvements the Province lost something of its preeminence, while still ranking as the third most progressive. As at present B. C. municipalities tax improvements on percentages of the assessment varying from zero to 65, this recommendation would greatly aggravate the tendency which has persisted since 1923, resulting in a perceptible deterioration in social conditions.

The people, who at every opportunity have voted by large majorities against any taxation of improvements, have shown strong disapproval. Premier Hart has announced that he will not compel municipalities to adopt the recommendation. He has however stated that the Government will not give any aid to municipalities which do not adopt it. Unfortunately, there will be all too few members of municipal councils who will realize that the injury done by the taxation of improvements would be far greater than the advantage of any possible dole -- and of course the more the municipality taxes improvements the greater will be its need of assistance.

What is actually needed is a general reform in assessments. Last year New Westminster had a tax rate of 78 mills. Ald. Jackson stated: "a corner lot in a commercial zone was assessed at only \$1,000 -- a ridiculous assessment when the property could stand a tax four or five times the present amount." Ald. Jackson supported Mr. E. S. Woodward's proposal, that assessment should be on the use-value, or gross value, rather than selling value. The use-value is the economic rent multiplied by the current rate of interest -- with no deduction for present taxes. This system, rigorously applied, would limit the tax rate to at most 50 mills, which would take the full economic rent. It is evident, however, that B. C. assessments are but a fraction of present selling or site value.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE AT CHICAGO

The 1947 National Conference of the Henry George School of Social Science was held in the Central Y. M. C. A., Chicago, on May 23-24-25. The programme was a comprehensive one, including luncheons and an "Economist's Bus Tour," which apparently is to be a standard event. The sessions were full of information as to the practical results of partial applications of the Georgist principles, and of suggestions as to the most effective educational methods.

Margaret Bateman brought out the little known fact that 100 years before Columbus discovered America Queen Margaret of Denmark made a step in the direction of enforcing the people's right to land by transferring land from the nobility to the crown. She spoke of the great influence of the Danish Folk Schools -- schools without textbooks, examinations or diplomas, where people just go "to learn". She mentioned the useful term "land debt" which the Danes prefer to "land tax" as better expressing the fact that it is a debt which people owe to the community.

J. Rupert Mason described the organization of the California Irrigation Districts. In 1909 a basic amendment was made to the California law, giving these communities the power to tax land values, exempting improvements. A vote of the citizens was overwhelmingly in favor of the principle. Under its operation the land in 110 of these communities, including many fine cities, is now growing 80 per cent in value of the agricultural produce of California. The big feudal holders have made unremitting efforts to find ways of circumventing the law, even bringing pressure upon the Congress of the United States to avoid payment of the tax. Mr. Mason emphasized the fact, that if the Federal Government took upon itself the power to abolish taxes on land it would undermine the sovereignty of the State and also the inalienable rights of the citizens.

Violetta G. Peterson, Executive Secretary of the Schalkenbach Foundation, stated that the Foundation had sold 158,948 copies of Henry George's works, including 116,000 copies of "Progress and Poverty" and 14,000 of "Protection or Free Trade. The Modern Library and the Classics Club had also sold substantial numbers. (In the British Commonwealth, outside of Canada, most of the many thousands of copies sold have been printed by the Henry George Foundation of Great Britain. -- Ed.)

Robert Clancy, Acting Director of the Henry George School in New York, declared that what we are trying to do is to establish schools all over the country. At present there are large gaps, but more and more these are being filled up through leads received from correspondence students. Through a New York radio programme

an inquiry had come from a Georgist in France, already active there. Mr. Clancy mentioned the remarkable work done by Arthur Lea of Philadelphia wherever his duties had taken him in Europe during the war years.

Rev. W. Wylie Young spoke on "Economics and Religion". His address followed much the same lines as his address at the Annual Meeting of the Henry George Society in Toronto, previously reported.

Frank Choderov, editor of Analysis and former Director of the Henry George School in New York, provoked an animated discussion. Referring to the action of the Jewish elders who came to the prophet Samuel asking for a king, he said: "These Jews had not had the ownership of land -- they settled in the hills around Canaan and looked at the beautiful palaces in the valley and they found they had a king down there. Samuel said to these elders 'It won't do you any good, you're going to have nobles and an army and taxation and it won't be good for you;' but here's the point -- they could not institute the private ownership of land without power. If you go back of these institutions you find political power is the source."

Mr. Choderov added: "To me Georgism has always been an attack on the status quo. Today the status quo is not the private ownership of land as we understand it, but the power that's behind the private ownership, the State. Destroy taxation and you destroy the State."

To this Mr. Mason replied that "our laws do not recognize the private ownership of land as we understand it" and affirmed his support of the State on the basis that each community should have the right to make its own laws without Federal interference. H. B. Loomis remarked that "the only way you can have teamwork is to have the State." Judge John R. Fuchs of Texas, referring to the differences of viewpoint which had appeared, said: "I am not discouraged by these remarks -- we will fight on. We may have to compromise as Abraham Lincoln did, but we will not compromise with principles. The ideas may be dead but the truth will rise again."

CHRISTIAN JUSTICE -- NOT SOCIALISM

Mnsgr, L. G. Ligutti

The Australian Government is carrying out Georgist doctrines (the public collection of land values) quite well. In Canberra, the capital city, all land is held by the government and only a leasehold given. It keeps real estate men from securing an unearned increment at the expense of society, and that's good. Certain farm lands are also handled on a perpetual leasehold plan as against freehold. Ownership is perfectly secure but there is no possibility of inflation of values to the detriment of society. It's not socialism but plain Christian justice applied to land tenure. -- Written from Sydney, Feb. 18th; quoted in The Interpreter (Brookville, Ohio) Apr. 15, '47.

MISLEADING EXPRESSIONS

Ernest J. Farmer

Muddled thinking leads to misuse of words; the misuse of words leads to further muddled thinking, on the part of both speakers and listeners. The misuse of words is often intentional, with the object of confusing the hearers. One of the worst of misleading expressions, dear to lovers of privilege, is "the right of private property in land." Through the misuse of two words, those who use this expression commonly use it to imply the rightfulness of the chief error of our present-day civilization -- allowing land to be treated as if it were property.

In one of his writings Lord Asquith, usually careful in his use of words, claims that the British subject has only such rights as Parliament may grant him. Here Lord Asquith uses the wrong word. Parliament may so legislate as to protect the rights of the citizen against infringement, or it may so legislate as to infringe these rights. But it cannot confer, abolish or modify these rights -- they are immutable. Parliament may and frequently does confer privileges -- in almost every case infringing the rights of those not privileged. Among these privileges is, the exclusive occupancy of certain areas of land. As at present granted, this privilege grievously infringes one of the most fundamental of human rights, the equal right of every human being to the use of the land of this planet.

British law explicitly denies the existence of property in land. Mr. J. Rupert Mason has cited a number of judgments by Supreme Courts of States of the Union, declaring that a title to land is not property but a privilege granted by the State. It is true that the laws of some countries declare lands to be the property of the title-holders. An ancient conundrum queries: "If you call a dog's tail a leg, how many legs has a dog?" The correct answer is, four -- calling a dog's tail a leg does not make it a leg. Similarly the enactment of a law that land shall be property does not make it property. There is nowhere any authority competent to make land property. If those who speak of "the right of private property in land" would use the correct expression, "the privilege of private tenure of land", it would be easier to judge the truth or falsity of their statements. Some have gone so far in their misuse of words as to speak of a built-up lot as "the buildings and the property" Of course, the buildings are the property. The Manchester Guardian is one paper in which, apparently, writers are required to use correct language in writing of real estate, which is referred to as "land and property".

The answer to the last question in Lesson VI in the Henry

George Manual of Fundamental Economics is not particularly happy and has been subject to a good deal of criticism. It is: "We must make land common property." If by stretching the use of the term we are to think of land as property, then it is common property, never has been anything else and never can be anything else. What we must do is, we must enforce the rights which have always existed.

Marx gets into such confusion by treating of land as if it were a part of capital that he more than once goes to the trouble of explaining that by "capital" he does not simply mean machines, stocks of goods, etc. used in production, or even all means of production, but that "capital" is a relationship between persons. Here again Marx uses the wrong word. There is a perfectly good English word for a "relationship between persons" which acts to the advantage of one and the disadvantage of another -- that word is, privilege. Marx's whole 900-page book is not a discussion of capital at all, but a discussion of privilege. Using the wrong word as he does all through, it is no wonder that Marx is frequently confused and gets into various subordinate muddles.

Our very word "capitalism" is misleading. The system so called is one in which privileges are of much greater importance than the ownership of capital and bring in much greater incomes, but in which these privileges are bought and sold like capital and are by most people confused with capital. The most important features of the system -- the recurring depressions and the inevitable final collapse -- are due to the existence of privilege, not the the private ownership of capital.

Another term which often conceals a false "unearned income." It is of course used of an income not earned by the recipient, but the implication is that the income is not earned by anybody, and might as well go to the present recipient as to anybody. Such incomes are earned, every cent of them, though not by the present recipients. For the most part, they are earned by those who pay the taxes which defray the costs of the public services which make these incomes possible, and should go to reimburse these taxpayers.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty". It is also the price of not being fooled.

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It is impossible to find in the Bible any support for private property in land, or indeed for any of God's natural gifts as the sea, rivers, land and the treasures they contain. I state without hesitation that this system is unjust, contrary to reason and common sense, and in deadly opposition to the spirit of Christianity as enshrined in the two simple words, "Our Father." Who can defend it? -- Rev. W. H. Howard, Glen Osmond, South Australia; in The Commonweal of New Zealand, March-April, 1947.

have treated me as a criminal and I also wish to add the following rider to my testimony in justification of my action: That arrangements be made at once to permit charitable persons to come forward, and that charitable institutions be organized to provide with the minimum of air necessary to remain alive, all individuals and their families who will not or can not rent or will not buy it for themselves, from us bona-fide owners, in this and all other locations where private ownership of air is the rule, otherwise we shall have besides millions of people without work, as many suspended by their necks from tree branches, etc. -- In "Recht en Vrijheid" (Justice and Freedom), July 22, 1933. Translated by Oscar Boelens.

EMINENT GEORGISTS PASS ON

Webster Daniel Lamb, editor of the Plumas (Man.) Standard from 1905 to 1908, died at his home in Chicago on April 3rd at the age of 81. A great student of Lincoln's life and works, Mr. Lamb made public a number of Lincoln's utterances which show his understanding of the necessity of land reform. His letters on economic topics appeared in a large number of papers over many years.

Hon. P. J. O'Regan, member of the New Zealand Legislative Council and former Judge of the Arbitration and Compensation Courts, died suddenly in Wellington on April 25th, at the age of 78.

Judge O'Regan was for many years President of the New Zealand League for the Taxation of Land Values. When the League was reorganized in 1943 his son, Dr. Rolland O'Regan, became President.

J. W. Graham Peace, for many years a campaigner for the teachings of Henry George, died at his son's home in Worcester-shire on April 10th.

Up to 1919 Mr. Peace was active in the English League for the Taxation of Land Values. In that year he joined with the late R. L. Outhwaite in the formation of the Commonwealth Land Party (at first known as the Commonwealth League) and on Mr. Outhwaite's death became the editor of The Commonweal. He was the author among other works of The Great Robbery, an extremely thorough research into the enclosure of the commons, by which the English people were deprived of such rights in the land as the Conquest had left them.

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Thanks to record prices for farm products, land values are jumping and "land gambling is still feverish in the Middle West's farm belt", where land costs are up 92 per cent from the pre-war level, prompting dire warnings from Government agencies. Being aged enough to remember the 1920's, we discern a familiar ring: hold your hats, fellas, here we go again! -- Sydney Mayers, in the Henry George News, June '47.

THE TROUBLESOME CRIMINAL

Leon Cortvriend

THE EXAMINING JUDGE: (to criminal) You are accused of having tied a noose around a man's neck and hanged him from a tree thereby causing his death. What have you to say in defence of your criminal act?

THE CRIMINAL: I met this man at a lonesome place in the country and as I am too lazy to work I follow the example of other men who never work, still live in lavish wealth. I told him that the air which he breathed belonged to me and that he could not inhale it unless he paid me for it. He laughed at me and I submit that I was within my rights when I prevented him from using my property if he did not want to pay me for it. You will concede, Your Honor, that the noose around his neck was the only proper and effective means that I could resort to to prevent him from using my personal property, and if he did not live it is only because there were no charitable people around there who might have helped him by providing him with some air, released by me against indemnification.

THE JUDGE: What you just told me is all nonsense; you were simply trying to rob him of his money.

THE CRIMINAL: Your Honor, you asked me for my statement and I should like to see it recorded as given. I will now go further with my defence. The land-holders are using the same method with the ground that I did with air, with the only difference that I used the noose while the land-holders have an easier means owing to the fact that private land-holding is considered as justified by long practice. However, their method is as effective an encumbrance to life as a noose constricting one's throat, because death must also come to those who have no access to land through inability or unwillingness to pay rent to title-holders of locations in a community where charity is non-existent. Millions of workless people all over the globe would die of hunger if private and public charity were not preventing them. The result which I wanted to attain is the same as that conceded as a right to ground-holders, namely, that I also may live in affluence without working. The land-holders or with-holders (owners or possessors, so-called) tell us, and we have come to accept this as being quite logical, that it is not their fault if people starve, and since almost everybody respects their claim, mine should also be admitted as right on the same principle; therefore, I am not guilty and it is not my fault that this man died under the circumstances. He owed the same respect to my claim as most of us do to that of the various site owners. I further advance, Your Honor, that you ought not to

THE BLACK SPOT

Hed Wyn

We cannot lay hands on the starlight
Or on the nostalgic moon,
Or claim the golden fringe of the cloud;
But as our common boon

Translated
from the Welsh
by Robert Wynne.

We can lay our hands on nothing
Save this lowly, earthly clod;
And the clod's an isle of chaos
In the glorious cosmos of God.

ACTIVITIES IN MONTREAL

Strethel Walton

(This report, dated May 14th, was omitted from the May-June number in the confusion due to quitting the Bay Street office, Editorial apologies to all concerned.)

We had a very successful meeting in the hall of Emmanuel Church on Monday the 12th, with over 100 present. Senator Roebuck's address was received with great enthusiasm -- everyone thought he was tops. We had a small reception after the meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Blackwell.

We have one class in "Progress and Poverty" still going and also one in "Protection or Free Trade" which will finish next week. On May 30 we start a teacher's training class, the last until the fall.

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After reading "Progress and Poverty" I wanted to shout from the housetops. A door had been opened to me. At last I had discovered a writer who knew the cause of world chaos, and who also knew the remedy. Here was an inspired man who sought and found a logical way of accomplishing a spiritual purpose.

With the unfailing vision of a true seer this lover of humanity had risen above the experiences of a suffering mankind and succeeded in finding a solution to his quest for justice. Henry George discovered that God was not the author of confusion, but that all social wrongs could be traced to men's failure to abide by the Golden Rule. Revealing the causes of misery, he proposed a scientific remedy -- a remedy which conforms to our inherent sense of that which is just and right. -- Verlin D. Gordon, in "In Defense of the Spirit", Henry George News, February 1947.

THE UNSOLD LANDS

A. Duganne

A billion of acres of unsold lands
Are lying in grievous dearth;
And millions of men in the image of God
Are starving -- all over the earth!
Oh, tell me, ye sons of America!
How much men's lives are worth!

Ten hundred of millions of acres good,
That never knew spade or plough:
And a million of souls, in our goodly land
Are pining in want I trow;
And orphans are crying for bread this day,
And widows in misery bow!

To whom do these millions of acres belong?
And why do they thriftless lie?
And why is the widows' lament unheard --
And stifled the orphans' cry?
And why are the poorhouse and gaol so full --
And the gallows-tree built high?

Those millions of acres belong to man!
And his claim is -- that he needs
And his title is sealed by the hand of God --
Our God! who the raven feeds;
And the starving soul of each famished man
At the throne of justice pleads!

Ye may not heed it; ye haughty men of God,
Whose hearts as rock are cold!
But the time will come when the fiat old
In thunder shall be told!
For the voice of the great I AM hath said,
That "the land shall not be sold!"

-- The People's Advocate, May 1947.

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The alleged "blessings" of poverty exist only in the imaginations of those who have never been "blessed" in that way. --
Farmer-Labor News (Modesto) May 22, 1947

We clip the following by an unknown author: Lord, give me courage to change things that should be changed for the good of mankind, serenity to accept things that should not be changed, and sense enough to know the difference. -- Fairhope Courier.

NEW ZEALAND LEAGUE

The report of the New Zealand League for the Taxation of Land Values is to hand, and shows that a considerable amount of work has been done during the past twelve months. A new pamphlet, "Why Rating on Land Values Should be Made Mandatory", has been printed and extensively circulated, 645 copies having been used in sending one to the secretary of every branch of the Labor Party in New Zealand. An effort is being made to get the Labor Party to write land values taxation back into its platform and policy. A second pamphlet, "Common Objections to Rating on Unimproved Values and Their Answers" is in the course of printing and will be circulated within a month. These two documents should very materially assist in connection with the rating campaign now being undertaken.

The League is doing fine work in connection with its effort to secure land value rating as the basis for local rating. Propaganda is now being undertaken to secure an extension of the land value principle at Christchurch, and rating polls are pending at Akaroa, Nelson City, Tahuna, Camaru, Mount Albert, Waitemata County, Horowhenua County and McKenzie County. It will thus be seen that a change in the rating system from taxing improvements to unimproved land values is a live question in New Zealand. Arrangements are being made for a deputation to approach the Government with a view to urging the desirability of making rating on land values mandatory. A fair amount of literature has been sold during the period, and a new catalogue is to be distributed so as to increase the sales during the coming year.

The Auckland Branch recently held its annual meeting, and good work for the year in that area was reported. Good work is also being done by Mr. T. E. McMillan, editor of "The Commonwealth of New Zealand", a journal that greatly assists the movement in the Dominion.

The League conveys its thanks to the Henry George Foundation of Australia for "its large and generous donation of pamphlets". The condition of the finances is reported fairly satisfactory, and the League will benefit from a bequest from the late Mr. P. J. O'Regan.

We congratulate our New Zealand co-workers on the very fine work they are doing for a just revenue system. -- The People's Advocate (Adelaide) July 1947.

("The Commonwealth" is now "The Liberal Leader of New Zealand". In 1923 wide publicity was given here to a statement by a New Zealand reactionary that "the Single Tax was dead in New Zealand when Julius Caesar was born." Since then dozens of New Zealand taxing bodies have adopted the Single Tax principle; and as the municipalities under Single Tax have naturally gained population more rapidly than the others, the gain is still greater. -- Ed.)

ANCIENT PRIVILEGE ABOLISHED

Soon after Admiral Viscount Nelson was killed at Trafalgar, the British Parliament voted to his legitimate heirs, descended from his sister, an estate of some 5,000 acres, a perpetual pension and the rank of earl. After about \$3,000,000 had been paid over some 140 years, Parliament voted last April to discontinue the pension after the demise of the then earl and his brother, the immediate heir.

Only a short time afterwards Earl Nelson died; as the present earl is well past 80 the pension will be no great burden on the exchequer in future.

There was no suggestion of resuming the estate, much more important than the pension, granted at the same time. Nor was there any suggestion of resuming, even in part, any of the far greater estates granted in the past for services of much less value than those of Admiral Nelson, or even for services the value of which is indiscernable. The dukes of Westminster have collected more in rents from their London estates than the Nelson pension amounted to in a century. True, the inheritance taxes have reduced many an estate to a fraction of its former bulk, but these make no distinction between the fortune gained through extraordinary ability and industry and one originally granted at the whim of a silly monarch.

TIMBER IS WASTED

American oak timber worth £,500 was tossed overboard from the British freighter "Moraybank" on the way round the coast to Melbourne.

Much useful timber that cannot be landed here because of excessive import duties is being dumped along the Australian coast by overseas ships.

It is second-grade timber used as dunnage to pack around cargo. When the cargo is unloaded, the dunnage timber is discarded because because its value does not warrant payment of import duties, which are the same irrespective of the quality of the timber. Officers of the "Moraybank", which arrived in Melbourne recently, said that it was a pity to see useful timber wasted. Some of it was fit only for burning, but in a fuel shortage it would be better to burn it than throw it overboard.

American oak was tough, durable wood, beautifully figured, and some of it was made into attractive lamp stands, book ends and nicknacks on the way to Melbourne.

Most dunnage is $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick, 8 to 10 inches wide and from 8 to 20 feet long. -- The Herald (Sydney) May 31, 1947. Quoted in The People's Advocate, July '47.

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Big imports mean plenty of work and good business. Small imports mean unemployment and bad business. -- The Standard (Sydney) Aug. '45