

"GROWTH AND GREED"

Being a review of

"LAND REFORM OR RED REVOLUTION"

(Economic Surplus and the Dynamics of Political Violence) by  
Fred Harrison, M.A.

Centenary Essays No. 1 ESSRA, London 1980, 38 pages, £2.50  
(inc. p. & p.)

"Idle Land Means Idle Men"

- Slogan of the British Progressive Party 1880.

Idle land indeed means idle men but the present day question  
on the political agenda is what causes the land to be idle and  
thus men to be unemployed?

The London based Economic and Social Science Research Association  
(ESSRA) in commissioning a series of centenary essays to  
commemorate the 100th anniversary of the publication of  
Henry George's "Progress and Poverty", has undertaken the valuable  
task of disseminating the theory of the single tax on land values  
at a crucial historical period in world land/use development.

As the global economic crisis deepens, the world wide political  
realisation is rapidly dawning in the progressive camp that neither  
western "free enterprise" nor soviet "socialist reality" have  
between them the right answers to the vital problems of the  
rapidly augmenting landless, homeless, jobless, helpless, masses  
of unemployed and marginalised humanity throughout the earth.

What is to be done?

Fred Harrison, a graduate of Ruskin College, Oxford and Burbeck College University of London is the editor of "Land & Liberty" the official organ and journal of the United Committee for the taxation of land values, the United Kingdom organisation keeping the Henry George ethic alive.

In his centenary essay Mr Harrison contrasts the four alternative forms now available for politically meeting the land use crisis in a spectrum ranging from institutional reform through violent reform and from institutionalised revolutions through to violent revolution. He gives as one to one examples of each form of political agitation in the Ulster civil rights marches, the Watts riots, the Allende experiment and the Sandinista Nicaraguan revolution.

While trying to set up a twin dichotomy between reform/revolution and institutionalism/violence, Mr Harrison does not need to stress what is perhaps self evident: the political truism that in critical mass situations no matter how gradualist a civil rights Ulster reform is mooted or how bloodless a 'legal' Allendist revolution is attempted, a chain reaction leading to a nuclear explosion into terroristic violence of either right or left is almost inevitable when the burden of global social injustice in planetary land/use terms exceeds the resilience of the political structures to carry the mass/stress force/weight ratios.

After a majesterial world survey of the political and economic global situation which ranges comprehensively over the attempts at redistribution of world income and the inception of the welfare state from the poor laws and charitable ethos of the 19th Century on to a review of the peasant based revolts in Europe commencing with France, Russia, Ireland and on to the third world ferment in Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Bolivia, Zimbabwe, Chile, and now El Salvador and concluding with the parlous and scandalous state of abject poverty of the British farm workers who even to this day cannot afford to eat the food they grow for the rest of the community, the oversight of events ends with an analysis of the two alternative panaceas presented by private monopoly land use under "capitalism" and the enforced collectivism practiced under "communism", both of which Mr Harrison conclusively demonstrates, have failed in their goals of social justice and right distribution of wealth.

Mr Harrison presents a clue to the final solution of the quadrilemma of the gradualist/violent/reform/revolution syndrome in the title of his penultimate chapter.

#### "Conclusion - Land the Key"

In his closing argument the author clearly states -

"Without a lasting solution to the land issue there can be no long run stability in the industrialised economies..."

Political conflicts over possession of the land... can be resolved only by the right land reform".

As students of Henry George have good reason and logical argument to know, the only "right land reform" is the universal institutionalising by legal force of government of the single tax on the site value of all land:- not through variable agrarian reforms, not through false sales, not through nationalisation nor collective farming, not through socialist enforced co-operatives, nor state planning and centralised purchasing, not through limited re-distribution of large haciendas and latifundias into tight **Kulak** and small peasant land holdings, not through the enforced eviction of large land owners and enforced resettlement of small landless peasants will the world solve its global land problem.

Only by the single tax being universally implemented will the perhaps not unpainless, but only quick, just, universal, equal, and right radical land reform be achieved.

As Mr Harrison explains only the single tax will achieve the fundamental pre-requisite for economic stability which is the basic structure for the unlimited growth of real wealth of nations and its unprejudiced distribution among the peoples of the earth.

The coming struggle for this right, this mighty reform, the imposition of the single tax, is about to become the overriding global issue in the forefront of world events.

All the signs are there that this climactic struggle is about to commence.

As the final conflict inexorably advances all Georgians realise that they have only just begun the good fight;-the last great battle with the last great robber, the landlord, is now at hand.

The only obstacle to our dreams of unlimited growth on the broad uplands of tomorrow is the unconscionable greed of the landlords of today.

If Mr Harrison's centenary essay has moved the world a little further on the bright path to the single tax goal, it will have fulfilled its historical and ethically Georgian purpose.

We welcome this essay whole-heartedly and urge the reader to use it as a primer to the further and deeper understanding of the last great remaining political question before the general assembly of mankind - the land question - the final answer to which will determine the future ground plan for humanity:- be it utopia or oblivion.

- END -

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'H. H. H.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

LONDON UK 15.3.81