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### HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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"I urge all thinking people to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity offered by the Henry George School in its free courses in economics. In electrical engineering a scientific study of natural law is essential. How much more important is it for us to learn the truth about economics, which vitally concerns every one of us. This is the contribution of the School."

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"No American man or woman should miss reading 'Progress and Poverty' by Henry George . . . It is unfortunate that this great man's works haven't a wider circulation at a time when George's philosophy could do so much to aid a troubled world."

William C. DeMille, in the motion picture industry, says:

"Business and professional men should be urged to study Georgetist philosophy. They have the brains to understand it - and once having grasped its truth they will realize its vital importance to the nation. Communism cannot be successfully fought by another false doctrine. It can only be defeated by real economic truth."

Harry Gunnison Brown, Professor of Economics, University of Missouri:

"The teaching of fundamental economics as carried on in the Henry George School of Social Science seems to me the most promising venture of our time in adult education for citizenship. I earnestly hope, therefore, that enrollment in its classes will continue to increase and in an accelerating ratio."

Glenn E. Hoover, Chairman, Dep't. of Economics, Mills College:

"No one, anywhere in the world, who claims to be a serious student of Economics, should remain ignorant of the writings of Henry George. He presented the 'dismal science' in clear and eloquent language, and made it intelligible and vital to the poor and perplexed of his time, our time, and all time. I am delighted that the Henry George School of Social Science is extending the circle of his readers."

Rt. Rev. Mgr. Luigi G. Ligutti, Executive Secretary, Natl. Catholic Rural Life Conf.

"Inspired by one of my seminary teachers, I read Progress and Poverty. I became interested in the problems of farmers and urbanites, for both of which George presents the solution. The Henry George School is doing a magnificent piece of educational work. When it spreads widely enough it will save our American democracy."

John Haynes Holmes:

"Henry George was one of the world's great prophets of emancipation. His mind conceived an immortal truth; his heart touched this truth with the fire of supreme conviction; his soul lifted this truth as a banner in a great crusade for God and his kingdom of the right. His whole life was a dedication to a cause which shall some day prevail upon the earth."

# The Contemporary Ideological Cleavage and The Henry George School

By Prof. Harry G. Brown,  
Department of Economics  
University of Missouri

(From an address given at the Fall Term graduation exercises of the Henry George School of Social Science, Dec. 9, 1950, at the First Unitarian Church, St. Louis, Mo.)

The adoption of a land-value tax system in any nation or substantial part of a nation, would operate to raise wages because it would make labor more productive and, therefore, worth more. Since speculative holding of good land out of use would no longer be feasible for owners, labor would be *better provided with land*. The removal of taxation from capital—or even the substantial reduction of such taxation—would operate to increase the amount of capital available to the people of such a nation. Therefore labor would be *better provided with capital, also*. Being better provided with capital *and* with land, labor would surely be more productive and would be able to command higher wages.

*What, then, is the compelling inhibition that prevents even a passing mention of a tax that has no such discouraging effect on incentive, risk taking or thrift, that, indeed, discourages only a speculative holding of land out of use, which speculative holding is itself a barrier to efficient production, and that does not add to the tax burdens of the poor? Land-value taxation is the one kind of taxation that is most completely consistent with the principles which are appealed to in defense of free private enterprise against socialism and communism. It is consistent with the essential genius of the private enterprise system. It does not interfere with but, rather, promotes those economic results which business executives, "capitalists" and economists profess to seek. Is it not permissible, therefore, to feel a bit of amusement at their vociferous protestations of*

## THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY

Like those who oppose us, or at least fail to go with us from sheer inability to see how the taxation of land values (or land rent) can abolish poverty, their mental gaze seems to be concentrated on what we propose to do, ignoring what we propose to do away with. The great benefit the appropriation of ground rent, or land values to public use would not be in the revenue that it would give, so much as in the abolition of restrictions upon the free play of productive forces that it would involve or permit. It is not by the mere levying of a tax that we propose to abolish poverty; it is by "securing the blessings of liberty."—Henry George.

The Standard, Jan. 21, 1888.





support for the principles of the free private enterprise system? Is it not permissible to question whether they really understand the principles in which they pretend to believe? And may we not fairly say that the case they make for private enterprise, as against various regimented systems or "isms" is an appreciably weaker case because they fail to point out the full possibilities of a self-consistent private enterprise system? How much right have they to complain if their encomiums on the virtues of private enterprise as rewarding efficiency, enterprise and thrift are at times greeted by some of the common folks they seek to persuade, with lifted eyebrows or even with hoots and jeers? Is such warped and evasive argument by representatives of the propertied class really the most effective way to persuade unpropertied workers to eschew communistic and socialistic ideology?

Instead of thus relying on a relatively simple tax system that does not penalize efficiency and thrift and that *interferes* only with restrictions on the use of the earth and with the enjoyment of *unearned* incomes, "proletarian" leaders in general—and most of our "social planners"—look to regimentation of economic life and to dictatorial control.

It is about the superficial and governmentally-controlled programs that journalists editorialize and politicians orate. It is in the advocacy of these that our most admired political heroes win new plaudits as friends of the "common people" or "the forgotten man." The tumult and the shouting among the spokesmen for labor, among the "liberal" sponsors of "social planning" and in the halls of our legislative bodies are largely concerned with these. And yet it is superlatively important that attention be given to the truly fundamental causes of the evils from which we continually suffer.

Our legislators and administrators continually and persistently hobble and regiment our economic activities.

They interfere with freedom by placing tariff restrictions on foreign trade and, though they have lately moved, in our trade agreements program, in the direction of freer trade, opposition to the consistent carrying out of this program is continually flaring up in our Congress.

They provide in legislation for quotas to limit the production of various crops so as to hold up prices, thus doing for the producers of these crops what industrialists are prosecuted for trying to do among themselves for the goods of their production.

They purchase food crops with government funds secured by taxing the people, and destroy them, in order to make them scarce and high in price in a hungry world.

They subsidize exports so as to make certain agricultural products scarce in the domestic market and high in price and, to add insult to the injury of consumers, the funds for this are drawn from taxes which are paid, in large degree, by Americans whose food bills are thus to be increased. Yet during war-time price control they subsidized the *production* of specific goods with the idea of thereby making these goods *low* in price!

They operate our system of money and bank credit in such a way as to bring, alternately, inflation with its disturbing evils and deflation with its accompanying bankruptcies and unemployment.

And all the while they persistently apply heavy taxes upon efficiency

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR,  
BOSTON, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1950

## Single-Tax-on-Land Plan Winning New Zealanders

By a Staff Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Wellington, N.Z.

The Henry George theory of fixing real estate taxes upon the land rather than upon the improvements placed upon the land is sweeping New Zealand.

After 75 years of trial and error, New Zealanders are rapidly adopting the so-called "single tax" as the best means of stimulating property improvements and simplifying the complicated process of levying and collecting taxes.

Out of 549 local communities within which rating authorities can be required to poll the taxpayers on the method of taxation, 224 have voted for adopting the system of taxing unimproved

value, or the land.

One of Three Methods

Based on this popular trend, of the unimproved value system is credited with curbing land speculation, and bringing lower rates to a large majority of property owners.

Throughout New Zealand, the single-tax system is one of three tax methods, two of which are gradually being relinquished in favor of taxing only the land.

Tax rates may be levied on capital value (land and its improvements), on annual value (based on rental value), and on the unimproved land, or single-tax system. Through a poll of local taxpayers, any community

and thrift and to goods largely used by the poor, and in doing so they simultaneously facilitate the waste of speculative holding of vacant land out of use.

Though contending throughout that they are strong supporters of the private enterprise system and—of course!—*utterly* opposed to the *wicked communists*, they have followed policies calculated to make this system into a miserable caricature of what it ought to be and could be, to keep many men and women and children tortured and unhappy beyond any necessity, and to bring the private enterprise system into a discredit that, on the basis of its proper essence and principles, it does not deserve. Then they turn to Russia and Yugoslavia and to our own minuscule group of communists and tell us that it is *these* who are the principal threat to the free enterprise system!

If *communism—or socialism—and* the incident regimentation *should win*, in the United States, in Western Europe, in China and elsewhere, *over the present caricature of free enterprise*, those professorial economists whose economic philosophy has contributed to make our economic system such a caricature cannot be held free of all responsibility for the system's ultimate collapse. For "capitalism" is indeed under heavy attack in a large part of the world. And the college graduates our economics professors have taught are but poorly armed against the bombardments of communist and socialist ideology, when they can oppose the optimistically idealized programs of the "planners" with nothing better than this caricature of what capitalism could be at its possible best. *Why have they not been shown the intriguing blue-print of a free private enterprise system clearly worth fighting for?*

can select one of the three systems.

This patchwork structure dates back through the years to the abolition of the provinces in 1876, when rates were levied on the annual rental value of property in all communities. The rating act of 1882 replaced rental value with capital value in the countries, and in all local communities excepting those that elected to retain the rental base.

Methods Thrashed Out

Then, when the land question was a burning issue in New Zealand, Parliament permitted rating on unimproved value in a special act. This also entitled the taxpayers to demand that the question of taxation on unimproved value be decided by a vote of the people.

Hence, there has been a remarkable swing throughout the country toward the policy of taxing the land only, thus encouraging the landowners to improve their properties.

For the last half century, the advantages and shortcomings of all three tax methods have been thrashed out in conferences and debates, with no immediate prospect of a uniform rating system.

Of more than 230 polls taken, 75 per cent have favored the single tax. It now is the most important system in operation.

Yet due to the growth of New Zealand cities, land is now used quite effectively. This brings them to a stage where unimproved value ratings disclose inherent faults, according to tax authorities.

It seems that the single-tax system tends to pander, very largely, the builders of flats, thereby densifying the population per acre. Furthermore, proponents of annual rating point to the creation of "pocket handkerchief" sections.

However, there can be no denying that the single tax or unimproved land rating does bring lower rates to a majority of owners. In 16 boroughs where the system is that of annual value, the average rate paid for each dwelling was \$36. In 21 boroughs using capital value rating, the average was \$43. In 67 boroughs where unimproved value was the system, the average rate was only \$18.

A previous article of interest to students of social and economic problems appeared in The Christian Science Monitor, July 14, 1950. Written by W. Clifford Harvey, Real Estate Editor, its title is "Tax-Conscious Public Turns Ear to Proposals of Henry George Theory." It can be found in the files of Libraries and Christian Science Reading Rooms.