

FREEFOLK

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Explaining the social nature of ground-rent
and the injustice of taxation.

A PUBLICATION ADVOCATING: THE COMPLETE

ABOLITION OF TAXATION: THE PUBLIC COLLECTION
OF THE FREELY OFFERED AND AUTOMATICALLY
ADEQUATE GROUND-DUES

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In some cases there has been a response, either neutral or favourable. One response was quite enthusiastic. The letters will shortly cease when some idea has been given of the tremendous impact private ownership of land has on social conditions. The letter presently in limbo concerns land tenure and town planning with special reference to the monstrosities perpetrated in Langley City and Municipality by comic opera types of aldermen who assume that they have automatic knowledge because enough people have voted for them.

The letter-writing approach has had some success and is more in line with today's conditions. After spending considerable sums on advertising and rent of rooms, the Society for Economic Education has recently had little or no success. There are many people, too, who will not come out to a class because they are convinced that they already have the answers (It's a question of morality and you can't reform human nature) Such people will normally read letters and it would be strange if some new ideas could not rub off.

This approach is recommended to anyone who would like to spread economic knowledge but who is distant from a centre where georgist groups exist, or it might suit anyone who is disappointed with the apparent lack of result in trying to organise classes and compete with T.V.. The method can be tailored to suit local conditions, but the most important thing is that it works.

earns or makes; that no-one can earn or make land, but by being good co-operative neighbours, we all cause land to have rent; that rent therefore belongs to us all. These facts are all that need to be known in order to comprehend social life.

As people turn away from authority seeing in it foulness and corruption, they are not likely to place great faith in those exalted by that same corrupt authority to the level of experts, arbiters and spokesmen. They have every logical justification for turning a deaf ear, instead seeking instruction that can be presented to them in a simple, clear and humble way.

GOOD NEWS

A series of fifteen unsolicited letters has been sent out to fifteen selected correspondents. Week by week they have been mailed off.

These letters attempt to explain certain social conditions in the light of the implications of wrong land tenure. They begin with an attack on the fallacy that it is the greed of men that causes social evils and attempt to prove that we don't have to make all men virtuous before good social conditions will follow. Once this fallacy is refuted, the way lies open to the conclusion that bad social conditions must be the result of wrong thinking which has caused wrong action in the past. It is hoped that thoughtful people will see the hope that lies in the use of logic for the solution of social problems, and so generate an appetite for the coming exposition.

MORE CONTROL

There is a widespread belief that human behaviour can be governed by man-made laws, and consequently we now have a myriad of regulations stipulating how people should behave in their dealings with one another. Consequently bureaucracy is indeed a flourishing business with all its inefficiency waste, and harassment. But people will clamour for more of the same until they discover that the natural laws of economics provide for a social order of equality and justice.

By exploring the nature of man we find that, in the field of exchange of goods and services, everyone tries to get as much as possible for as little as possible. Obviously we were meant to provide for ourselves individually, and therefore we are furnished with a sense of self-preservation, a quality which causes people to arrive at the desired result with the least possible effort, but a quality which is often confused with greed, and mistakenly regarded as the cause of the maldistribution of wealth.

This false notion makes many professors of economics call for measures of a totalitarian nature, and with apathy prevailing among the populace, the whole world is gradually moving into a state of serfdom, our new masters being the powerful bureaucrats.

To succumb to this trend is to abandon all hope for peace and social harmony, but hopefully there will always be people around who can do their own thinking, maintaining a sense of freedom and courage in a world where there is a penalty for being different. But it is necessary for a person to be an "odd ball" in order to counteract the forces of totalitarianism. Also it should

be more widely understood that greed alone does not enable people to appropriate what they haven't earned, that special privileges issued and protected by governments are the things to be abolished, beginning with the privilege of treating land as property to be bought and sold, - the land which supplies the requirements for existence of all life, - plant, animal, and human.

Gunnar Jeberg.

COST OF HOUSING

A reader writes to say that he cannot agree with the figuring done in last month's FREEFOLK regarding the cost of housing then and now. The reduction in cost effected by the public substitution of ground rent for taxes of all kinds seems to be too drastic for him, so let's take another look at the problem.

In Canada, especially B.C. the cost of house and land is exorbitant. Just a few miles south in the state of Washington, land is less than half the price it is here. This fact has caused many Canadians to buy up land in Washington, and the increased demand has had its effect on prices. In Seattle, the city has been at a low ebb for some time because Boeing has not fared too well lately and Boeing is the greatest employer in the area. Seattle is a little too far away for B.C. land speculators and so houses in Seattle cost perhaps one half of an equivalent house in the Lower Mainland.

When we consider that a reform in taxation should decrease the price of a home in Seattle by the cost of the land there, why should a house in Vancouver cost more than one in Seattle?

TRUTH SNOOTY?

We received a publication from a group, - L.E.A.F. - advocating the ideas of Henry George. The initials stand for "Land, Equality, and Freedom", a very praiseworthy ideal. However, on reading the articles within, a person feels disappointed. Everywhere it is impressed upon us that the prime movers are acceptable as authorities, - Ph. D's, captains of industry, and what have you. In this way, popular standards of value are accepted and perpetuated. One wonders how long it will take to jettison Land and Freedom when Equality has had such a short reign.

The possession of a Ph. D. may mean nothing more than the fact that the possessor could not get a job on finishing a bachelor's degree and so stayed on and on and on at university. The university granting the doctorate matters greatly as does the discipline in which it is granted. A Ph.D in mathematics or the sciences (physical sciences) is usually worthy of respect. The holder has a high order of intelligence and has worked steadfastly, but a Ph.D in Education implies that the holder has mastered a certain amount of pedagogical jargonese with which he cloaks the barrenness of his intellect on the premise that if what he says sounds to be learned and if the listeners do not quite understand it, they will assume that it is valid and the product of a high order of intelligence and expertise.

So, it was a disappointment to note how the idea of authority was played up. The truth that Henry George saw is simple. It needs no obfuscatory Ph.D's for its expression. It can be put in words of few syllables, words that simple people use. A pre-teenager should be able to understand that land is the source of all wealth, that human labour produces that wealth, including the capital that assists labour; that a person should have all that he