

FREEFOLK

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER:

E.A. Bryan,
25805 Fraser Highway,
R.R. 5 Aldergrove, B.C.

SUBSCRIPTION:
\$1 per annum.

A PUBLICATION DEVOTED TO:

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-RENTS

Volume 4 No. 12

December 1974

CONTENTS:

SIT DOWN BOB!

FAILURE?

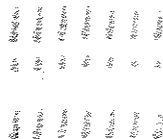
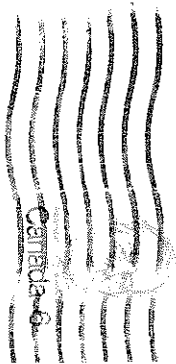
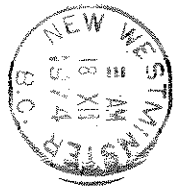
SLUMP.

6759

COMMONWEALTH

SOCIETY FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM

25805 FRASER HIGHWAY
ALDERGROVE, B.C. V5W 1G1 855-6295



*R. Schanley
IV, New Letter
R.M. 462 R. 55 W. 42 St
New York 10036 U.S.A.*

Any reader of FREEFOLK who would like to go to work with such a correspondence course, may have the letters as they are drafted so that he may modify, copy, or whatever, provided the message goes out. Send to the EDITOR and ask to be put on the list.

SLUMP

We have today most of the classic signs of a slump. The unemployment rate has increased, yet prices of commodities still rise. Building construction is now on the decline. There are more newly built houses unsold than before, and the price has suddenly come down a little - maybe three to four percent. One cause of this is the fact that mortgage rates went up, making it unfeasible for people to go on pledging a greater part of their life's labour for the necessity of a home.

Shrinking of the effective demand for housing cuts down the demand for land. Eventually prices of lots would have had to come down to a level where people could once more invest in a house. There was hope that this would occur, for land prices have formed a plateau. Now the planners in Ottawa have announced a scheme to help home-buyers. All the benefits of this subsidy will go to people with lots to sell, because now with the subsidy, people will again buy lots to build upon.

Henry George pointed out lucidly how land prices tie in with the course of an industrial depression. To prevent recovery we only need artificially maintain land prices. So Ottawa's subsidies hold us back!

*A merry Christmas to all our readers.
Joyeux Noël à tous nos lecteurs.*

SIT DOWN BOB

There is a notion current in B.C. that the provincial Minister of Lands and Forests is a Georgist. Although Bob Williams' name has been linked in the press with the Henry George philosophy, there is nothing in his conduct that would suggest that he understands the principles of the land for the people through the public collection of its economic rent.

While he was in the opposition he was asked to address a C.S.E.E. meeting on the subject of town planning. This was a great chance to have an audience hear some Georgist ideas, but the audience was disappointed. As a means of making homesites cheaper, he suggested only that municipalities should put the sites that they were holding, on the market. - "I asked for bread, and ye gave me a stone"

Vancouver mayor, Art Phillips has stated that the community ought to get a return from landholders for the value the community puts on the land, and Phillips is no Georgist. World-famous Arthur Erickson, the architect of Simon Fraser University, has stated that private ownership of land is the greatest stumbling-block to good town planning, and he is no Georgist. Realtor John Jeffery made a long plea to the commission on the real estate tax to shift taxes right off improvements and put them on land value; and he is no Georgist.

Now, what has Bob done while in office? He let an agriculture minister with the unlikely name of Stupich apply a "land Freeze" without any demur. Is that what we should expect of a Georgist minister of LANDS? He was the prime mover in buying up the bankrupt Ocean Mills mill and townsite to be run as a socialised industry. Here was a tremendous chance for a Georgist! The millworkers could have been given the mill, the storekeepers given their stores, but all could have been expected to pay a rent for their sites. The rent would have been a sure and easily

obtained income for the people of the province. Individuals would have had a great incentive to move ahead. It could not have failed. However, the doctrinary socialist method had the usual result, - Ocean Falls is losing money hand over fist.

Williams has been responsible for imposition of mining royalty charges which have already sent one formerly-viable company out of business. If a rent charge had been collected from all companies, the marginal ones would not have been liable for any payment. No-one would have gone out of business and the province would have had an easily assessed and easily collected revenue to boot.

The monopolistic tree farm licences begun by the Socreds, remain. The stumpage method of taxing the forest industry has been modified. Again, we could have had companies renting the public domain on a sustained yield basis, - but not in Bob's book. Instead he is spending public money, buying into the lumber business on a bigger scale. He is controlling prices of lumber products in the socialist way. Pretty soon, the whole of the forest industry in B.C. will grind to an ignominious halt as party hacks are rewarded with controlling positions.

Bob was a prime mover in buying up a construction firm, (Dunhill) to be run on socialist lines, presumably to mitigate the housing crisis. The crisis is now aggravated as sky-high land prices and controls on rented accommodation make their influence felt.

Professor Mason Gaffney was brought over to Victoria University (perhaps the only university to have had a president with a mail-order Ph. D.) presumably at Williams' invitation, to head up a "think tank" there. Mason Gaffney is one of the few economists in the ivory towers of the universities who ever say anything acceptable to a Georgist but it seems that he has been "frozen" like the farm land.

If Bob Williams ever was a Georgist, party politics, has changed him so much that he is now no different from the rest of his party, - labour-union hacks, professional games players, surly women's libbers and other carriers of chips on the shoulder who now compensate for their lack of success in the daily struggle of honest work by ruling with a stern hand.

FAILURE?

The Society for Economic Education recently advertised the beginning of a course in social philosophy. More was spent on this advertising than ever before, and the result was zero. The only prospective student who arrived was one contacted by letter.

It is a tragedy that just when politicians have come to the end of their Marxist- Keynesian road, and all the shambles is plainly to be seen, few people appear to care about listening to a scientific and just alternative.

S.E.E. members could be forgiven for being in a state of despair, but the failure to gather together a study group has not been too great a setback. It has resulted in the trial of a different idea.

Many people contacted in the past have shown an open mind although perhaps they have not seemed keen to join a study-group. A series of letters is being mailed out to such people in the hope that they will benefit from this new approach.