

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-RENTS

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Who wants poetry? How many baskets did Shakespeare make? Or them guys Sheats and Kelley? As for music I like a good brass band. All this symphony jazz is for de boids. What's wrong with the music these kids like? Sure it's loud, but didn't we like far-out music in our day?

So it was an inspiration to read Ron's manifesto in a Valley paper. It began; "The needs in society and therefore the students with whom we learn, have determined for us... the goals and tasks we must accomplish. " This non-sequitur issues from a confused mind, - poor Ron. But Ron proves that he can spout the gobbledegook. Listen - "The development of good reading skills, we feel, is not only critical for future educational success, but also is critical for economic and psychological survival in a super-industrial society. " Forgetting the royal plural, all we learn from this is; "Ya'll get no place if ya can't read." but complications have been introduced. He has us wondering what psychological survival may be, or asking ourselves when a society becomes super-industrial and how.

Ron is not a bad guy. In fact this statement offers the key to the situation. Being good guys, being non-committal on controversial questions, echoing what appears to be consensus or accepted authority, are the trade-marks of the new leaders of education. Spare a little time to pity the children and understand how society is declining when people like a flock of sheep are stampeded this way and that as the fashions of consensus change and when the person who declares a principle is reviled and isolated for being a boat-rocker.

Because wages have always been low in our monopoly society, private education has seemed to the average person as the perquisite of the rich. A public system has offered the only kind of schooling the majority could hope to have. Without monopoly these people would be the richest and best able to afford the education they wanted for their children. The coupon system is the least imperfect for now.

the most important thing was to win. And so, it was not surprising that if a referee at a basketball game should make an adverse decision against the team he coached, Ron would gesticulate wildly, scream imprecations and rush aggressively at the referee. After all, the peace of Ron's existence depended upon having a winning team.

Soon after Ron arrived, such was the shortage of teachers, that it was ordained that almost any degree would be accepted for qualification in B.C.. A number of B.C. teachers who would never have made the grade in a U.B.C. master's degree programme found colleges and universities with very low standards which would confer a degree once the appropriate jargonese had been mastered. Knowledge, intelligence and meaningful study meant nothing. Simple concepts had to be dressed up in involved language to the extent that the meaning became lost. A few catch-words had to be learned, among which, "the property tax is regressive", and then the candidate was worthy of the description of Master of Education and qualified to superintend the education of B.C. children.

Ron followed this sorry road; then having shown success in generating school spirit he became a vice-principal, and now a principal of a secondary school. The same path has been followed by many half-literates who would in father's day have realised their inadequacies and kept their ambitions within reasonable bounds. The result is the hegemony of the anti-intellectuals.

Their thought-processes can be seen, - "I am successful therefore my education was good. I never could do French, in fact I failed first year university French several times. Clearly French is a frill, a device of pseudo-intellectuals to intimidate and repress those who have the sterling qualities of togetherness and rah-rah that contribute to the make-up of school spirit.

GAFFNEY IN CALYDON

When Mason Gaffney was appointed to the faculty of Victoria University, a press-release informed us that he would be acting in a consultative capacity to the new provincial government and that his special line was the economics of forestry.

The B.C. forest situation was and is, one of monopoly. Under the Socreds a fairly free system in which anyone with the cash and the drive could have a crack at logging, deteriorated to one of control by a few powerful firms. The chief instrument of monopoly was the forest management licence which carved the B.C. forest into several kingdoms, each of which was awarded a licence free of charge. Such licences are now worth millions of dollars for their monopoly value.

The contribution made by the forest giants to the Province for the privilege of using public forests was small. In 1972 MacMillan Bloedel paid to the Province only \$5,711,000 in stumpage charges out of a grand total of \$44,134,000 to all three levels of government. One half of this was corporate income tax to the federal government. It is plain that the people of B.C. were getting only a paltry return on the forests which are under the provincial jurisdiction alone.

Any change in provincial levy on the forestry industry, we might expect to be influenced by Mason Gaffney. Since he seems to have a good understanding of the principle of economic rent and to favour its confiscation by the public, we might expect him to recommend a change in the unscientific stumpage levy, and to no-one's surprise this has occurred.

A forestry official recently explained over the

radio that the new scheme will work somewhat as follows: Suppose that for each \$100 worth of lumber, the cost of production has been \$50, and the "profit" the company could normally expect has been \$20, then a charge would be levied on the surplus, - in this case \$30. Another \$100 worth of lumber might have a cost of production of \$60, a profit of \$20, and in this case a surplus of \$20, on which the levy would be made.

The official was careful to explain that the whole scheme depended on estimates. The cost of production is to be based on 1972 figures because the lumber companies have made none available for 1973. We can be sure that when the lumber barons supply figures for 1973, these will be padded as no bra-burner can imagine, with the result that the surplus will be minimal.

We can see in the change another flaw common to socialist thinking, namely, that investment must bear a profit. In the world of private enterprise, investment often returns a loss, but the planners find this fact too disorderly and always insist on profit being made, usually at public expense. It therefore appears that the lumber barons must have their "profit" assured in the figuring necessary to arrive at their contribution.

The classical sum of the contributions to the production of wealth is the tripartite wages, rent, and interest. At first sight the new socialist levy on logging appears to follow that pattern, the surplus returned to the public being rent, but the truth is that it leaves the way clear for manipulation of figures just as the tax on land values in B.C. has been manipulated until valuation is a farce and the land value tax exists only in name. Since land speculators have been

income, in order to to draw the entire "mincome" while keeping their assets in the shape of the land-title.

The rent of land publicly appropriated will be adequate to defray all genuine community expenses including adequate pensions. There is no other just or feasible way to finance any social project.

PATHEPIC PICTURE

Last month we described for our readers the public educational picture as reflected in manifestoes of Fraser Valley principals as their schools were preparing for convocation. This month we use a similar inspiration to bemoan trends which cause schooling to be a disservice to our youth.

Ron Altmann (not his name) came to a district as a neophyte teacher of "physical education". His job was considered very important for the generation of a quality known as "school spirit". Consensus had it that if a school had winning teams and if a large number of students attended games, yelling, beating drums, blowing trumpets etc., all was well with the school spirit. What the school spirit could be directed to beyond yelling, animal aggression, and the impregnating of schoolgirls in a state of exaltation, was never made clear. School spirit, like motherhood and Caesar's wife's virtue is a matter that must never be put in question.

Ron's greatest ordeal was on a Monday morning after a losing game at the week-end. He would be on the principal's carpet to explain how it was he had failed to uphold and reinforce the school spirit. To Ron, therefore

N.D.P. DONA FERENTES

Natural law ensures that given similar sets of causal forces, similar results will ensue. Natural law decrees that where land is treated as private property, any circumstances that would apparently benefit all people will in the long run benefit only landholders. One of our supporters who this month contributes \$10 to FREEFOLK, gives a current example.

The new government of B.C. has instituted a minimum income of \$2,500 a year for all B.C. residents over 60 years of age. Our supporter has just listed a 40 acre farm in the Fraser Valley for sale. Two prospective purchasers are elderly people from Manitoba where there is no "mincome"! This is no coincidence. Milder winters were always an attraction, but the minimum income is an attractive force which will increase the competition for B.C. land.

Since the supply of land was fixed in the six days when "the Lord made Heaven and Earth" any increased competition cannot result in increased supply, only in higher price. There is no wonder that the price of B.C. land shoots up. The prairie exiles will be buying their pension capitalised in the price of a land title.

The N.D.P. (Socialist party) is doing grievously wrong things to provoke situations like the foregoing in which people able to lay out six figure amounts of dollars come to jump on the pension wagon. The newcomers are not to be blamed for they are only doing what they think it will pay them to do. In fact local residents have caught on also. They are converting their interest-bearing assets into a title to land which will not bring in an

able over the years to nibble at valuations until some are less than 2% of market values and hosts of land speculators pay only \$1 a year in property taxes, we cannot expect the big boys of the forests to pay their dues gladly for very long. In fact, we can be sure that batteries of lawyers and accountants are already at work finding out how they can nibble away the levy on the surplus.

We can forecast about the new forestry tax that it will bring in a greater revenue than the old stumpage for a while, but as time passes it will become progressively weakened until it is just one more obstacle for accountants and one more kind of imposition to ensnare the unwary.

The reform that is overdue is the unconditional abolition of all forms of taxation and restriction on individual human labour, while all land tenure, occupation of a homesite, a business, lot, farm, or an area of forest is made conditional upon payment of its rent to the public funds. In this way there is no guessing, no punishment of productive people, no prying into private affairs, and no imprisonment for resisting robbery by the state. B.C.'s forest problem will be solved only in conjunction with its agricultural problem, its homesite problem and its taxation problem. Meanwhile the wild boar of privilege which inflicts the most grievous of wounds will rampage unchecked until the true Meleagra appears.

We learn that Andrew MacLaren has safely passed the ninety year mark. Returned many times as M.P. for Burslem he always campaigned with bold placards announcing FREE LAND, FREE TRADE, FREE MEN. He was ousted as official Labour candidate in the 1945 election by the constituency party organisation who wanted to be with the times, demanding a Planned Economy. Andrew thereafter has been doing more good as an educator than he did as politician.

BRITISH POLITICS

John S. Pincham who has been associated with the Society for Economic Education for several years, has decided to become a candidate for the British Parliament. Uxbridge is the constituency. John has been working within the Liberal Party along with his brother Roger and others, to prepare a climate favourable to the ideas of Henry George.

It was the Liberal Party within which Churchill campaigned for social justice at the turn of the century. It was this party that had the honour of Ashley Mitchell's allegiance long after the original cry for social justice had subsided to an embarrassing murmur. The same party, offering a mild socialism had nearly run its course.

However, the people of Britain have learned very slowly that there is no difference between the Labour and Conservative Parties, and now they seem ready to entertain the idea of a Liberal alternative. This kind of empirical decision-making is deplorable. To have recognition of one's rights subject to the flip of a coin is almost intolerable, but the Pincham brothers are trying to build up a platform of principle.

They have decided to concentrate on the principle of land-value "rating" and in the "Leominster Liberal" of Sept. 1973 they state; "True to these principles, Liberals accept that the community has the right and duty, to ensure that wealth created by the work and existence of the community as a whole is returned to be used for the community as a whole. There is a corresponding right and duty to put a stop to the legalised plunder of this communally created wealth by private interests. The

creation of wealth by the whole community is immediately reflected in the unimproved value of sites (i.e. the value of sites regardless of any buildings or man-made improvements upon them, but taking into account all of their natural advantages.) It is in recognition of this fact that Liberals have for years advocated site value rating to replace the present rating system. Yet if the principle is acknowledged, this local change would only be a first step to the application of the same principle on a national scale. "

The authors continue with a lesson on the effects of substituting this ground revenue for the present taxation. The benefits that would flow in making home-sites available and revitalising the economic life of Britain are spelled out clearly, but above all, it is claimed that the platform, being based on natural justice, will help to free people from the shackles of government and its attendant bureaucracy.

CAR RADIO

We constantly stress the value of literacy as a tool by which to achieve clear thinking. It is a great pity that people who hold the public eye and ear are often non-respecters of logic or clarity, witness an early morning slot-filler on C.B.C. A journalist delivered the following as a requiem for the North American Indian: "The buffalo have gone, the land has gone, the freedom has gone!" This buffoon had fallen into the common error of using grandiose-sounding words to say; "See me perform boys! Admire my skill with words!" Perhaps what he said sounded poetic, but he didn't offer to show us where the land was before it went, how it was removed, or to what location it was removed.

That journalist was not a good influence for those exposed to his pronouncements.