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June 26, 1991

Ms. Julia Bastian  
34 Dorset Square  
Marylebone, London NW1 6Qj

Dear Julia:

Thank you for your letter of March 1991, wherein you request input on "the finance, structure and functions of local government." I have enclosed herewith my letter to your Prime Minister.

My own reference to "LVT/SVR" is SAV-Dividend, "an unearned income dividend for the wage-earner on social appreciation value." I agree wholeheartedly -- and politically, with Stan Fredericksen (Public Revenue Education Council, MO-USA) that Henry George never meant a "tax" and, though he used it, since his times the word tax has taken on a bludgeoning character, much as it had in biblical times. "Taxes" have lost their near "tithe-like" quality that medieval times and benevolent kings (from William of Orange) had given to that cost the crown required of its military nobles, its clergy and its civil administrators. Now, "those who have" want more; their efforts are to avoid (legal, as per Oliver [may Dickens not be offended!] Wendell Holmes) or to evade (illegal) taxes. ("Avoision" is the grey area for litigation.)

But, as I say at page 5 of my letter: "this 'value-added' dividend [the SAV-Dividend] would not fall on the backs of our rich workers, but only on resource-rich owners, including, especially, owners of so-called 'public' debt on the public's infrastructure and defense establishment and holders of 'natural' resources, such as land, the spectrum, oil and the like."

I do not have any "case histories" to send to your government. Although, what I refer to that is happening in my own Village of Croton-on-Hudson, may, sooner or later, be such.

Thank you for asking for input. I have been involved as an active Georgist since 1979. I was doing research for Bread for the World and National Westminster Bank (yes, simultaneously!), when I

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"found" the Henry George School and remembered that I had his "idealist" Progress & Poverty book, -- a second edition, at that! Ever since, LVT has been at the core of my political activities.

Besides being President of the Incentive Tax League of New York, I am a Trustee of the Henry George School of Social Science, where I teach "Money & Banking". I also am a member of the Economic Development Committee and of the Board of Directors of the Croton Community Land Conservancy, Inc. of my village; I served as an elected Trustee (1986-88).

Fraternally yours,

  
Richard Barbuto

Enclosures

cc: Steven Cord, President, Center for the Study of Economics  
(Maryland)  
Mario M. Cuomo, Governor of New York  
Edward Dodson, President, Henry George School of New York  
Stan Fredricksen, PREC (St. Louis, MO)  
Herman Geis, Esq., Counsel, N.Y.S. Association of Counties,  
Norman Lockman, Associate Editorial Page Editor, Wilmington  
News (USA) (It was Mr. Lockman's article that provided  
the structure for my letter to your PM.)  
John Major, Prime Minister (UK)  
Chuck Matthai, President, Equity Trust; formerly executive  
director of the Institute for Community Economics (USA).  
(I first found the phrase "social appreciation value" in  
Mr. Matthai's work.)  
Ward Morehouse, President, Council on Public and International  
Affairs (New York)  
Richard Noyes, President, Council of Georgist Organizations;  
Editor, The Groundswell, COMMON GROUND/USA. (Maryland)  
Patrick Riley, Editor, Citizen -Register, Westchester-  
Rockland Gannet Newspapers (USA)  
Georgist Organizations: 25 (worldwide)