

Greetings:

*The price of pig is something big;
Because its corn, you'll understand,
Is high-priced, too, because it grew
Upon the high-priced farming land.
If you'd know why that land is high,
Consider this: its price is big
Because it pays thereon to raise
The costly corn, the high-priced pig.*

This poem appeared in an editorial in the New York Times on Feb 6th. At that time, hundreds of farmers drove their tractors to Washington in a dramatic, traffic disrupting cavalcade to voice their grievances. Thoreau wrote over a century ago - for each man who seeks the root cause of a matter, a thousand men hack at the branches. This poet pointed to the root cause of high prices - high priced farm land. Today, a thousand, a million cry out at the high price of pig, or the high price of corn that fattens the pig, or the high price of tractors with which the farmer raises the corn, or high priced gas that fuels the tractor ad infinitum.

Did the NY Times editor see the light - that high priced farm land was at the root of high priced pig, corn etc? It seemed he went on to hacking at branches in a confusion like other hackers - corn farmers, pig raisers, Congress and consumers.

Seek the root cause. Why do prices rise? Land prices lead in distressing, spiralling inflation. Land is essential to all human endeavor. It is basic.

Don't go away. This may sound dull, but it can be a most exciting discovery for you. Land costs affect rent and housing costs, food, clothing, energy, health costs, transportation, recreation, everything.

Henry George, the great American economist and social philosopher, preached this a century ago. His book, "Progress and Poverty", published 100 years ago, in 1879, sold millions of copies. Men like Tolstoy, Churchill, Sun Yat Sen and Albert Einstein have praised him. Do our schools and colleges teach George's Single Tax and Land Value Taxation today? No - a pall of silence. Instead we wallow in a morass of insane tax laws full of confusion, deception and injustice.

In his short lifetime, Henry George made a tremendous impression on people all over the world. He was better known to millions than the President of the United States. Immense crowds attended his lectures here and abroad.

Since this is March 17th, St Patricks Day, I am reminded of Henry George's visits to Ireland. He won tremendous acclaim from the Irish people. The problem of absentee landlordism was most distressing to them. Like St. Patrick who sought to drive out the mythical snakes from the land, Henry George sought to enlighten the Irish to the root causes of their misery. It is a work unfinished today in Ireland, indeed unfinished in the United States and everywhere on Earth.

--- Joseph Zashin

ON THIS DAY, AS ON EVERY DAY, WE MIGHT ASK WHY THE IMMENSE INJUSTICE OF UNDERASSESSMENT OF LAND VALUES PERSISTS IN EVERY COMMUNITY. WHY OFFICIALS, FROM THE HIGHEST TO THE LOWEST SEE NO EVIL IN A TAX LOSS OF UNTOLD MILLIONS WHILE ENCOURAGING AND FATTENING LAND SPECULATORS.

SIMILARLY, WE MIGHT ASK WHY REZONING CHANGES THAT REPRESENT MORE UNTOLD MILLIONS IN INCREASED LAND VALUES ARE GRANTED FOR FREE BY CITY AND COUNTY OFFICIALS. THEY MUST KNOW THAT THE ADDED DENSITY WILL ENTAIL HUGE COSTS FOR INCREASED SERVICES. WHY DO THEY FATTEN THE LANDOWNER TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE TAXPAYER PUBLIC.

WHY DOES THE PRESS KEEP SILENT ON THIS?