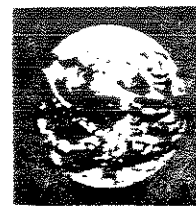




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Hartzok Says Americans Barred from Land

Most Americans have as little access to land and resources as the poor of the Third World, Alanna Hartzok told the People's Assembly at the United Nations

Speaking at the *Forum for Survival* meeting of the People's Assembly in the Dag Hammarskjold Library, Ms. Hartzok was part of a panel organized by Dr. Harry Lerner, Representative of the World Citizen's Assembly to the U.N., and Coordinator of the World Council for the People's Assembly. Mark Sullivan, Secretary of the Council of Georgist Organizations was also in attendance.

Ms. Hartzok told the group:

"I am sure that all of us here are in agreement that a more equitable distribution of wealth and basic resources is a key challenge at this time, and that the maldistribution of resources is a major source, if not the major source, of world conflict and unrest. The poorer citizens of the world are becoming increasingly vocal that they no longer want the kind of 'foreign aid' that has been given to them by the richer nations. They instead want to be free from economic exploitation of their land, labor and resources. What can be the response to this plea of those of us with world concerns who live in the wealthy nations? Surely we will no longer want to lend support of any kind to the lifestyles or economic systems that harm and hamper the development efforts of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the earth.

"It appears that the creation of economic justice throughout the world can best begin right where we are. For those of us in the U.S., we need to understand

the reason for the growing distance between the rich and the poor right here. According to statistics from the World Economic and Social Indicators, the income distribution, percentage-wise, in the United States today is about the same as that of India—the poorest 20% has 4% of the wealth while the richest 20% has 46%. In terms of real economic power, meaning ownership and control of land and resources, probably more than 80% of the U.S. population should identify with the Third World poor.

"We have heard over and over again, that land reform and banking reform are essential ingredients for economic equity and power for the people of the Third World. Yet it is a little known fact that in the U.S. 3% of the population owns 95% of the privately held land. Because so many have had homesites, the land has appeared to be better distributed. But the land under homesites is just a small percentage—about 2%—of the total land mass. In California just one company, Southern Pacific, owns more land than the land under all the homes in the state. The possibility of home ownership in an increasingly remote one even for middle class people. To afford a modest two-bedroom home in San Francisco now means that a family has to be making about \$4000 a month!

"As Theodore Roszak says in his fine book, *Person/Planet*, 'Land reform is the undiscovered revolution in American politics.' The access to the land and resources of this country by increasing numbers of its citizenry can help to create an economic system that provides an alternative to unemployment, underemployment, wage-slavery, and work in the weapons-producing industries. It is getting clearer that the creation of real economic justice in the U.S. is one of the best things we can do to promote the same throughout the rest of the world."

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