

EAST KILBRIDE,
GLASGOW G74 4LN
28th., MARCH. 1977

Mr David A. Mac Murchie,
30, Auchrannie Terrace,
Craigiebank, DUNDEE.

Dear David,

Till now I have been busy on correspondence, including preparing, correcting, and posting circulars to all MEMBERS of Scottish League for Land Value Taxation re proposed 'Change of title.' to that of the Scottish Movement for Ground Rent for State Revenue, and also other literary activities. Due to that and being engrossed in related interests, I have not had the time to give serious thought to that letter from Mr. V.H. Blundell, dated, 26th., JANUARY, 1977, which you kindly sent for my information.

Of the letter in question, the first paragraph tells, 'we do not have any of the leaflets you mention.' To me that reads like: 'Yes, we have no bananas.' Still they enclosed the latest catalogue. It does not impress me. Probably, there are several omissions. I do not see any reference to Knud Tholstrup's 'Economic Liberalism'. Yet there is mention of 'Economic Liberalism' by one named Scot Young. (See P.12.)

Of course, I agree that all Henry George's works are invaluable. Yet as I review the situation, only those essays that are wholly in favour of 'Single-Tax', and literature closely related to the Taxation of Land Values get preference. Any essay that casts a shadow of doubt on the single-tax proposal is out of favour. Why? 17 years ago in my 'Open Sesame', I advocated 'Ground Rent for State Revenue', and the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values did nothing. Now it is dawning on intelligent citizens that this 'single-tax', or taxation in any form is the wrong approach and away from the objective of 'Ground Rent For State Revenue.' As our Dutch friends appreciate the LAND QUESTION, 'TAXATION' is the 'ROADBLOCK' to social progress.

At this point, one is prompted to enquire, 'Which side is "The United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values" on? In Spring 1977, Radicals are having it pointed out to them that, in advocating, 'Taxation of Land Values' Henry George made a pardonable mistake. Yet knowledgeable personalities, including Henry George state, 'All that it is necessary to do is to collect the ground-rent for the public benefit.' If that is the correct procedure and it cannot be refuted, why not get on with the good work wholeheartedly? Have the courage of one's convictions.

As the second paragraph evidences, the diehards have conducted a long drawn out battle which 'dates back even well beyond that, (thirty years.)' Those vested rights and vested interests exercise a more powerful influence than did Andrew Carnegies' LOBBY in Washington, U.S.A. The doubt has been prized. What appears to have happened is that those seeing the urgency of the need for a 'change of title' have not been organised, so the LOBBY of the rich contrive to preserve STATUS QUO. This is no Tweedledee and Tweedledum issue. It is vital to the rich in perpetuating that monstrous wrong of man exploiting man.

Consider that plausible tale pitched in the 3rd paragraph. Christian in 'Pilgrim's Progress' experienced a comfortable walkover by comparison. 'V.H.' should tell that one to the marines.

Imagine 'Single-Taxers' even bothering to discuss whether or not taxation is theft? One might as well discuss whether or not judicial hanging is State murder. Such a tiresome lack of knowledge is incredible and gives one the rats. Who told V.H. Blundell that---for he refers to third party and remote sources of information. In wealth distribution, where capital, the landowner, or the State obliges, or takes by force from the individual the property of that individual, if that is not theft, what else can one truthfully term the operation? Because such enforcement accords with law that does not alter the situation. More than likely it is bad law and ought not to be enforceable. Single-Taxers' can hardly say in one breath that their remedy will do away with the need for taxation---all forms of confiscation---and in the next breath say that all such revenue obtained by the State is not theft. Taxation applies to either labour or capital's purchasing power. The State has no right to confiscate capital and labour's purchasing power. The State

has its own purchasing power in GROUND RENT. That fund ought to be completely exhausted before one penny piece is extorted from capital and labour. If one does not like the term theft, yet though one terms it pelf, swag, filthy lucre, or plain loot, it is theft just the same. For if one refuses to pay the tax bill one has to suffer the consequences. Non payment of taxes is a criminal offence with penalties attached. Taxgatherers make it hot for known Hampdens, Brights and Cobdens. All that idle prattle about taxation providing services is begging the question. Robin Hood and his merry men are said to have done a lot of good---but it was from the proceeds of robbery, pillage and theft.

"V.H." uses that old dodge of putting words in other people's mouths. He states: 'the "robbers" do not personally benefit from the proceeds the way a robber does.' The degree of robbery does not matter. I have known wage-earners go back to the cashier because of a half-penny short in their pay. It is not the amount of the shortage; it is the principle involved. 'A halfpenny is a halfpenny.' If raising revenue by taxation causes the employment of 1,000,000 persons, it means that the total cost of the scheme has to be extorted from the masses. Another fact is that where unemployment is raging setting up a P.A.Y.E. department does not cure problem. True, the unemployed would reckon such non productive work a Godsend. One does not require to draw on the imagination in this case---for we have in EAST KILBRIDE No.1, P.A.Y.E. Centre operating here. Need I stress that Scot's people detest taxation and all its implications? The point is, that all those employed in this P.A.Y.E. department are benefitting from the evil of wage-robbery--- a condition that did not apply in Henry George's time. Incidentally, the Press reports "Tax chaos at Centre 1". "Centre 1, at EAST KILBRIDE, is showing symptoms of strangling itself in paperwork". (FEBRUARY.1977.) On top of that, Sir William Pile, chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, recently told the Government, "The system" (of taxation.) "is breaking down." Students of the works of Henry George know that taxation is unworkable despite the makeshifts, improvisations, and refined pragmatism practiced. Burocracy grows by what it feeds on. What is most desirable is less burocracy. David, there is no denying the functioning of "Parkinson's Law." "Work expands so as to fill in the time available for its completion." That Law applies to this unnatural condition of wealth production like the "Iron Law of Wages".

Maybe "V.H." is unaware that the taxgatherer plunders the wage-earners' pay packet beforehand? If raping the wage-earner's pay-packet is not theft what does theft consist of?

In face of known facts, it is impertinent to say, "It is argued that the description of taxation as theft is not sufficiently accurate to be acceptable." Taxation is theft; and that applies with equal force to the 'Single-Tax' proposal. There is no call for a tax; just collect that spontaneous Ground Rent that is there for claiming.

Paragraph 5 is another boner. "Different countries are (not?) free to adopt their own terminology" as 'V.H.' avers. Para. No. 7 evidences that where it states: "Unfortunately it is still called a tax by those who administer the meagre land 'taxes'." On the contrary, our Dutch friends are searching for an abbreviated name, title, or newly fabricated word that shall represent the international tag for our Movement. The Dutch are only too conscious of the want of universal descriptions and exact definitions. Yet what 'V.H.' is asserting is that all distinct groups are free to form their own opinions. Quite true! But that spells a 'Tower of Babel.' Surely there is but one formula meaning Ground Rent for State Revenue?

The 6th paragraph is a hamfisted effort at reconciliation among dissident elements in the various groups. It runs: "Provided decisions are made democratically, (?) one side or the other is bound to be disappointed." In other words, compose your differences. Agree to disagree.

The last paragraph reads: "The Danes have an excellent term 'Gronskyld-meaning ground or land dues." Correct, in other words, Ground Rent for State Revenue. "Unfortunately it is still called a tax by those who administer the meagre land 'taxes' Quite true! As in the instance of the British people they are stuck, fascinated, and baffled by that false 'Single-Tax' notion as a method of raising State revenue. Para. No. 7, ends: "And their progress or otherwise appears to be due to the nature of what is proposed by them (the authorities?) rather than to what it is called."

As I see 'V.H.'s letter, it is not a compliment to one's intelligence. It is an amateurish attempt at baffle-waffle. The truth emerges in the last paragraph---"it is still called a tax." Our fight is to abandon all reference to taxation. It is wrong to advocate TAXATION in any shape or form. Our objective is to collect Ground Rent for State Revenue. Collecting Ground Rent is the ancient custom of financing the State.

James H Mac Murchie.