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ROBERT D. BENTON
Director

August, 1976

In July, this year, the Governor's Advisory Task Force on 'Property Tax Revision' issued a summary, in which it said on page 45, "One solution would be a shift to site value taxation which would assess only land, not improvements. Such a remedy would encourage the highest and best uses of land, not the deterioration of property rewarded under the present system."

In one of its 6 studies it mentions Henry George and Land Value Taxation. It tells of Southfield, Pittsburgh and California where there have been attempts to tax buildings less and tax land more. In the one called Task 3, page 6, it says, "It is found, however, that the undesirable economic effects of the general property tax are largely due to the tax being applied to buildings." And on page 7, "A land value tax would tend to foster more intensive development and would provide an incentive to industrial concerns to relocate in the areas which did not tax improvements."

BUT there are lots of other comments not favorable to site value taxation. Some want a much higher income tax, some a higher state sales tax, some want to completely abolish the property tax, and instead support schools with a state income tax.

In OCTOBER, this Task Force will issue its final report. You can be important to that report. If you have any desire to untax improvements and to shift the burden of taxation to land value where it rightfully belongs, you are now urged to write your comments to:

Governor's Advisory Task Force on Property Tax Revision
Office of Revenue and Tax Analysis
Department of Management and Budget
Lewis Cass Building
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Please do this as soon as possible to influence the October report. You might say something like, "I am in favor of site value taxation because I believe it will create many jobs and encourage improvements" or "I believe a differential tax, which is lower on buildings and higher on land, would stimulate growth and development of our decaying cities"; or something like, "I think it is very wrong to tax people who are trying to maintain their homes, and I think it is right to tax land value, which is created by the community."

Of course, for the greatest effect, say it in your own words, keep it short and to the point, sign your name and address so the committee will know you mean business. This State may be on the verge of real tax reform, which will make jobs, reduce welfare, and thereby deter crime.

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Yours hopefully,

Robert D. Benton

AUG. 30, 1976

DEAR MARY AND VAUGHN:

JUST RECEIVED ONE OF THESE LETTERS FROM
BOB BENTON. OUR NEIGHBOR, BRUCE CAMPBELL,
RAN OFF 25 COPIES WHICH I INTEND TO SEND
OFF TO SEVERAL STUDENTS OF GEORGE IMMEDIATELY.
THIS COULD BE AN EXCITING DEVELOPMENT. ONE
STATE COULD LEAD OTHER STATES TO ADOPT THE
PRINCIPLES. WARMEST REGARDS,

Verlin