

## DRAFT PREPARED FOR A.G.M. TAX REFORM AUSTRALIA

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I wish to introduce my thoughts and ideas with a plea for understanding. Words are something terribly difficult: although most of them have a common meaning, they do not have common interpretation. And it is this interpretation by the listener which gives the word its meaning and with that its response. Therefore, I appeal to you, the listeners, to have an open mind, to be willing to understand what I wish to express.

My very first plea is for an outward appearance of unity, of harmony, of strength. I do not know how many H.G. organizations exist all over the world but I do know that when I write a letter to a stranger (say, to Mrs. Thatcher or to Nelson Mandela) as "Association for Good Government" A) I have to explain at long length who and what this Association may be, and B) the recipient will not take the trouble to read all that trash and that's the end of it. Consequently - a letterhead which indicates our international ramification at a first glance, one and the same logo, a similar layout of letterheads world-wide, not only for Australia. But let us make a start here. Half hearted attempts - as we have them here - are no good (see both letterheads Melbourne and Sydney).

Next comes a more local affair and concerns our two journals, "Progress" and "Good Government": why not have one full-sized publication, one which lends itself for distribution through traditional channels, news agents? "Progress to Good Government" would be a fitting title and would give both journals continuity of their names. I have heard enough arguments against this idea none of which is convincing to me. Perhaps there is somebody out there who can also see the positive side of the suggestion. Writing and publishing for the public at large instead of for a selected few makes good sense to me. Advertising should be included in such an issue. If we want our reforms, our Weltanschauung, to be accepted then we first have to make it known. Here, like in many other instances we have to change from an ego-outlook to an eco-outlook. The benefit to the whole, to the larger part of the community has to be considered, more so than the "I", the "little me" who, of course, is the all important particle of the whole structure. If this little particle wants to live it has to do so within the concept of all life, not as a separate unit, as otherwise it dies.

Comes point three: How to achieve this integration into the living world? For, obviously, we are still outside of it. The simple answer to this is the word "education". The difficult part is, as we all know only too well, how to go about it. With all the masses of erudite literature available on the proposition of changes in the tax paradigms I am still looking for a leaflet which gives in concise and understable words a stimulating picture of what we are all about. And what we are all about is not only taxation. It is foremost about all those abstracts of happiness and satisfaction, pain and frustration, riches and poverty, those components of the human psyche which, in their mixture, either make or break society. We have to accept that economy embraces all phases of human life. Inaslong as we leave out the spiritual influences (for lack of a better term) from our deliberations we shall remain where we are. If I were capable of giving you a blue print of how this can be done I would have done so long ago. As it is I have to live with my own limitations. I can only tell you - which you will know in any case - that Henry George had this gift of the third dimension. This understanding was the reason for his successes. This does not mean that I suggest we should neglect the academic/practical side of the issue. On the contrary. Today we have to be better equipped than ever before to support our claims with correct, up-to-date figures, to be able to give unrefutable proof of the soundness of our theory. To a large extent those theories have no empirical foundations. I see this as a great weakness. Supporting the creation or expansion of an area (state) where LVT works seems to me an urgent task - be this Fairhope or Danmark or New Zealand or Russia.

Finally I come to my old hobby horse of linking with other organizations, of sharing with their views (as may be possible), of caring for all life on earth (not only Homo Sapiens ?) and for daring to go out into the open by challenging the established economic and political practices of today. From a Gulf War to the current deliberations of the Christian churches (Canberra) there are innumerable ways where we could and should be heard. There is, actually, too much of it and we should concentrate on a campaign for one or the other, whatever. Money plays an important part in this respect so that we must look for sources of extra income also.

To give you just a short overview of the events where we should be present:

In October 1991 Garry Wiseman (Australia) stages "The Inspired Living Festival" in Hawaii, this in conjunction with "Sedona USA". The program gives you an idea of the magnification of this event. That Steven Card has

moved into Hawaii with his latest issue of "Incentive Taxation" (Dec.90.) is only by-the-way.

In November 1991 Sydney hosts the third Mind Body Spirit Festival on which we participate. More about this in a minute.

1992 will see the "United Nations Environment & Development Conference in Brazil". Dr.Keith Suter looks after this event in Australia. The U.N. chairperson for this is Dr.Rashmi Mayur, our last year's lecturer at the M-B-S Festival. Here, the connection with UNAA as a Non Government Organization (NGO) is of importance. This is a separate issue which has to be considered urgently.

During 1993 Dr.Michael Ellis is organising "Conference Earth 1993" in Melbourne. The ramifications of this event are expected to extend over several years.

That 1993 is also the year for the "International H.G.Conference" in Melbourne should be noted. Steps should be taken to bring those two events together as closely as possible (or the opposite).

Now, to come back to the MBS Festival in November (14th - 17th): I have invited Paul Johnson from the San Francisco Social Science School as our speaker and he has accepted. Paul is also a leading "Green" activist in USA. Through that we have a speaker who has already the essential connections in America. It is now up to each State organization to decide whether they can arrange a forum for Paul, and this for preference in conjunction with other environmentally concerned groups so that our message gets to them. From all of you I ask to contribute with connections to the media (print & electronic) and with slogans suitable for our cause. In difference to previous exhibitions I intend to decorate our stand at the MBS with posters which should stimulate the public to think. The final point of all the MBS activity is to attract students to our classes on LVT and to acquire new members.

This, for a start, should be enough to keep all of us busy - as if you would have needed my assistance for this - but what I sincerely want to ask you, please, once, forget what H.G. had said, what he had ment, what mistakes he had made. All that is not important. That happened 100 years ago. The important thing at the MBS is that you make your knowledge of H.G.understood today, in terms of today, in the spirit of today.

You all watch T.V. You can't avoid seeing modern advertisements, hearing modern music, seeing modern dance. You must see the changes which have taken place over the last 50 years, 10 years or 1 year. We never have had so many, so far reaching changes as there are now. It is not a question whether you like the changes or not. The changes are here. They are a reality called progress. We

hard unmoving science. We have to integrate LVT (or whatever other name you wish to give it) into this changing world, not by a single tax, or by site revenue, or by free trade, yes, by all these but also by saving land from exploitation, by keeping pollution down, by reducing the opportunities of amassing unfathomable amounts of money or making debts of the same magnitude. We have to see the writings on the wall, to formulate our approaches to the topics of the day, be this war or peace, unemployment or interest rates, but not on divisive disputation on terminology ( I am back where I started). It is up to us to see those varying opportunities and to formulate our approaches as the occasion requires.

Thank you.

Stephen Cantor.