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ONE-SENTENCE ECONOMICS
AND WORLD LEPROSY
- Howard W. L'Hommedieu

An end to monopoly — in government, banking, land, patents, mergers, trade unions, medicine.

Rational, humane laws. Prisons abolished; replaced by fines, with psychiatric treatment if necessary.

Assess full ground rent, without exception, for ethical revenue-source, low improvement taxes, an end to speculation. Choice of sites at true rental value will ensure a surplus of safe employment, at wages equal to one's production.

CRIMINAL NEGLECT

A PROPOSAL FOR ABSOLUTE HONESTY,
JUSTICE AND HUMANITY, AS SOLUTIONS
FOR OUR URGENT PROBLEMS

Government restitution for official or private injuries. Polygraph tests to be accepted as evidence.

In view of our rapidly deteriorating economies, ecologies and societies, the misery caused by foreign exploitation, monopolies, discrimination, poverty, hunger, sickness, starvation; the flight from dishonest currencies, we must, and should turn to fundamental reform:

1. The equalization of site costs, making all sites available at their true rental value (their superiority over marginal land), to assure surplus work opportunities (and access to homesites) at all times, the selection enabling people of every race, religion, national origin, age and either sex to obtain wages equivalent to their production, in the only way possible: by assessing ground rent (the "unearned increment," created by nature and community development, and estimated, in the U. S., at \$ 150 billion a year) progressively, to equal 100 % in five years. This would reduce the sale price of land (the capitalization of the now unassessed portion of the rental-plus speculative increase) to a nominal figure, removing the basis for hoarding and speculative pricing, now always keeping millions unemployed; and in addition, providing a principal source of unearned income to land-owning businesses, speculators, land developers, and politicians with rezoning and development powers. Landholders' assessments should approximately equal lessees' rentals. These assessments would cover all local community services, with improvement taxes correspondingly reduced. Remaining ground rent would be apportioned to the state and federal governments, permitting other reduced taxes on production. This procedure returns to the community the value it created, leaving to individuals more of the value they created. The present denial of our most basic right, to exercise our faculties, function as human beings, and receive the equivalent of our labor-with all its concomitant sufferings-is the greatest and most prevalent crime in the world, and those responsible-all who are aware of it, and do nothing to correct it-are the greatest criminals. Statements by "kept" "economists," claiming that 4 % is the minimum unemployment, 3 % the minimum inflation, and that 6 % is "acceptable" for each, are unscientific and heartless lies. Inflation-funded "make-work" projects for the few can have only a slight and temporary effect upon the economy, until the public's reduced purchasing power slows down other industries; while sites at their true rental would give us surplus jobs at all times, with no slums, minimized crime.
2. The creation of money (mostly bank credit-and A Claim On Wealth) to be limited to the value of goods offered in the market place (a receipt for grain in an elevator or finished machinery in a warehouse), thus maintaining a balance, and avoiding monetary inflation. Credit extended on some other basis to be obtained from existing credit. Government banks could handle this, and also prevent discrimination in lending, which now contributes to monopoly within each industry, and banking control over all large business.
3. Cancellation of the national debt, except for paying off small bondholders, saving \$ 30 billion a year interest. No large national debt has ever been paid. Henry George said that it was like a check on the First National Bank of the Moon. Most of the bonds should have been tax receipts, more equitably distributing the cost of government, deterring war.
4. Socialized medical and dental care, as the only adequate solution for all. There is a backlog of 25,000 operations on Indian Reservations; most people can't afford ridiculous medical charges; Medicare has so far paid only 35 % of its patients' costs, and covers no dental work. Charity and Veterans' Hospitals are often atrocious. (See I'M DONE CRYING.)
5. A nutritious diet, decent clothes and housing for all unable to support themselves-the cost greatly reduced, once we have surplus jobs. Only jobs can end our nightmare.
6. Constant independent inspection of all Indian Reservations and all institutions, to assure equity, humanity and government restitution for any abuse, official or private. There is brutality in the prisons of all 50 states-many deaths. 90 % of the men engage in homosexual relations within two years, much of it rape; nor are women free of torture and

assault. Indians are legally harassed and arrested, their property seized, their children separated and miseducated. Trading post overcharges may be from 50 % to 100 %. The land left to them will not support them, and they may be restricted as to its use.

7. The use of mediation by representative boards, to adjudicate all legal disputes, even including murder, on the basis of actual injury suffered by individuals or the public; all wrongs to individuals to be compensated for in full by the government, and repaid by guilty individuals, up to their ability to make monetary restitution without serious injury to themselves, and considering all relevant circumstances. This to replace the deliberately vicious prison system and our capricious, expensive and discriminatory "positive" law, as recommended by experts for 100 years. Polygraph tests to be accepted as evidence of innocence or injury, but not of personal guilt. Decisions subject to free representative review. Involuntary detention limited to the helpless and dangerous. Present inmates to be released immediately: if proven innocent by polygraph tests; if a reasonable sentence has already been served, or if conditions are inhuman. The first provision, it is believed, would release 5 %; the other two much more. Remaining inmates to be released when adjudged safe for a society with surplus work opportunities-available, once full ground rent assessment begins, and landholders must put their land to its best use, to pay the assessment, or release it for others to use. 91 % of prosperous people surveyed admitted to having committed unprosecuted felonies, while, in one year, three Black men in Dallas were sentenced to 1000, 1500 and 1800 years in prison for minor crimes, the first for stealing \$ 70. A Chicago woman, in Dec., 1974, claimed that she was raped by ten policemen. She and all our tortured and raped prisoners and suspects should be able to obtain government restitution. As Henry George put it, the best use that could be made of our great law libraries would be to send them to the paper mills. The main purpose of our legal system may be surmised from "THE HIGHER CIRCLES:THE GOVERNING CLASS IN AMERICA" and "INDISPENSABLE ENEMIES."

8. Government operation of all natural monopolies (everything in limited supply), unless private operation pays for current value received, and is controlled by independent representative regulators. Other monopolies to be ended by ending all forms of favoritism (the source of monopoly). Monopoly provides the power for legal robbery, which is outside the field of political economy. Most European utilities are government owned; also railroads, which had to be increasingly subsidized, until governments took them over. Our own slowed-down railroads, with a wreck a week in Illinois, need government operation, in the interest of service and the ecology. Trade union violence, to extort personal demands, should end, once ample choice from surplus jobs permits scientific determination of differences, but strikes can serve a valuable purpose in rectifying flagrant injustice, such as the withholding of known gasoline supplies from truckers; the stopping of our bombing of N. Vietnam; or the refusal to fly dangerous materials on passenger planes. Limiting the number of trained doctors, nurses and apprentice tradesmen must stop. Our entire government should be run like an open, honest business. We should relearn freedom.

9. Ending of oil imports, additional offshore drilling, unrestored strip mining, and uninsurable nuclear power, as, like western Europe, we should need less than half the present U. S. per capita power consumption, if we eliminated foreign exploitation, monopolies, excessive armaments, competitive arming of others, and fantastic waste. We cannot even afford our present coal, oil and gas pollution, nor the waste of resources. We should greatly reduce, and steadily phase out, first nuclear, then fossil fuel power, as solar, wind and geothermal power become available, as we devote all our efforts toward their development. This could equal 100 % in less than ten years. Conversion to an economy benefiting all, once monopoly was ended, would be eased with the flexibility provided by equal site costs, and adequate charity during conversion. We now have Constitutional promises. If we don't turn them into guarantees, through independent cooperative checks on everything in government, we are guilty of criminal neglect.

Numerous activist organizations, comprising hundreds of thousands of people, have been successful in limited projects, helping many individuals and groups, improving certain conditions and delaying certain harmful action, but conditions are worsening in every direction. We need comprehensive control of causes, and that requires a structure of constant close public control of government.