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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.

HENRY GEORGE, CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

"I propose to beg no question, to shrink from no conclusion, but to follow truth wherever it may lead"

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.

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

What he would say today

"Let us first decide what are the natural rights of man, and endeavor to secure them, before we propose either to beg or to pillage." We have no right to pillage, starve, torture, rape, poison, vandalize, imprison or slaughter the Third World, at home or abroad, except that, as Rousseau remarked, "Inferiors (the weak) have no rights which their superiors are bound to respect." We must stop pillaging most of Latin America, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Indochina, S. Africa, numerous small islands, our own 10 % actual unemployed, and the millions of wretches condemned to live in urban and rural slums or migrant labor camps, often lacking the most elementary facilities. We must stop abusing our thirty million hungry, with large percentages suffering from anemia, vitamin A deficiency, various other diseases, and premature death, resulting from malnutrition, before birth or in early childhood.

The U. S. should depose the vicious puppet governments it set up, free all their prisoners, political or victims of economies we ruined, withdraw military and financial support from all dictators, and permit free elections. We should set an example of a humane and equitable society, first by providing an adequate and balanced diet for everyone, employed or unemployed, aged, incapacitated, in asylums, prisons and jails, charity hospitals, veterans hospitals and nursing homes, through whatever agencies are now available. We should provide socialized medicine, to provide equal care for all, under any contingency, as it is impossible to have complete insurance coverage—for many, even moderate coverage—now absurdly overpriced. Medicare and medicaid (inadequate) and the bad to terrible conditions prevailing among the poor and those under detention would end, along with dangerous and frivolous experiments on those in charity hospitals, veterans hospitals and in prisons. As a drug firm doctor remarked, prisoners (at \$1) are cheaper than chimpanzees. Useless, identical and cruel experiments on animals should also be checked. White collar recidivism is non-stop.

The State should provide adequate old age pensions, irrespective of one's earnings,, whereupon Social Security should be abolished. We should stop all direct and indirect subsidies to business, except in rare and temporary emergencies, as there is no scientific justification for them, and as they alone create monopolies. Depletion and accelerated depreciation allowances, investment tax credits and arbitrary tax loopholes should end, as should tariffs and import quotas, as long range policies. Anyone should be able to use a patent, by paying a reasonable royalty. These measures would do what anti-trust laws haven't done—reduce firms to their normal size. The hidden, and most prevalent indirect subsidy is the unassessed rental value of the land alone, created by nature and community development, and to which the community is entitled, to support government services. Only a fraction is legally assessed, and often not that. Its full assessment would have the greatest potential for good, bringing a prosperity and freedom not now imagined. The bare land value should be assessed in full, progressively, within five years, quickly forcing all land into its best use, to pay the assessment, or causing its release, for others or the community to use. As this would substantially eliminate the private retention of this unearned increment, it would reduce the sale price (the capitalization of unassessed ground rent) to a nominal value, and so end speculation and hoarding, making all sites available at their true rental values—their superiority over marginal land. This normalization of site costs would create substantial equality of opportunity, and thus a great surplus of work, for one's self or for others, while the ample choice would enable everyone to obtain the equivalent of his production.

The availability of alternative work would enable trade unions to engage in non-violent bargaining, as to salary, working conditions, safety and pollution. One could leave work dangerous to the environment, or unethical for other reasons. One could join or form producer and consumer cooperatives, and have more of a say in working conditions and management. One could better work for peace and civil rights, as it would be apparent that our economy did not require the robbery of others, and with full employment, at good wages, street crime and dissipation would be minimized. With residential sites also available at their true rental value, people could move away from polluted environments.

Banking laws must be revised, so that new credit is issued only against goods brought to the market place; other loans to be taken from existing credit; as one of the definitions of money is "a claim on wealth," and this is a means of keeping credit in balance with the goods available for purchase. If government spends within its income, and there is no business or trade union monopoly, we should have zero inflation. Henry George compared the national debt to "a check upon the First National Bank of the Moon." No large national debt has ever been paid off. It should be cancelled, paying off only small bond holders.

George: "the best use that could be made of our great law libraries...would be to send them to the paper mills." There is no way by which positive law can be made to cover the infinite contingencies of human experience, and scientific mediation boards, freely and automatically reviewed by sociologists and civil rights representatives, should render decisions. Restitution should be only in money, according to both the actual injury and the guilty person's ability to pay (as long recommended by experts). This would eliminate sumptuary laws, creating crimes without victims, and free much of our prison and jail population, 52 % of whom, in addition, are simply awaiting trial. Detention would be only for genuine psychiatric care. Penology is expensive (up to \$ 5,000 a year), disgustingly bestial, dangerous to prisoners and society, incapable of worthwhile improvement, and in addition, by far the greatest crimes are committed by big business and government, subject only to rare and minor penalties, while the monopolies and consequent hunger and degradation they create are the chief causes forcing their victims into crime. All debates about prisons as deterrents and rehabilitation agencies should be ignored. The only deterrent is a just economy. No one considers deterring and rehabilitating anyone in big business and the various branches of government, who need independently selected ombudsmen to supervise them. Only 1½ % of street crimes result in imprisonment, and the more violent ones are most often committed against friends and relatives, with no repeats. We have ignorance, discrimination and fiendish sadism, in place of justice for all. Mediation would be a great improvement in civil suits also, as in Denmark, saving a great deal of time and money, and contributing to reasonableness.

(The Choice: The Issue of Black Survival in America" is a recital of many details of the Government's and the communities' atrocious treatment of Blacks, in denying them their culture, jobs, equal pay, equal schooling, equal charity-enough food to prevent many diseases of malnutrition, even causing growth retardation and brain damage-subjecting them to political gerrymandering, countless false arrests and brutal beatings, framed evidence, fantastic sentences, denial of parole, murders in and out of prison, destruction of their property, their schools, their political leaders and organizations- a progression toward genocide, perhaps because many Whites believe that Blacks are no longer needed to build the country, and are socially undesirable. The book also shows the danger to the weak and dissenters from Establishment policy-including President Kennedy-of all races, especially in the computerized data bank on everyone the power elite don't like, or wish to use for their own purposes-soon everyone. As Congressman Cornelius E. Gallagher put it, "Total information about individuals means total control over those individuals." Hitler purchased one of the first I. B. M. punch cards. If we aren't complete idiots or jellyfish, we'll make sure that they're all destroyed.)

Most of the disabilities of minorities and the weak in general would be greatly alleviated or eliminated by the aforesaid reforms. Very little can be done without surplus jobs, mediation and an end to penology. With them, we could have a civilization. We have billions for war, graft, monopoly and prisons. Justice requires a conscience.