

that his problems are raised into political spheres only because politicians often do not listen to his real needs but to his clamours instead. Greater state aids may encourage him to venture higher into the Welsh hills or deeper into the Yorkshire moors, but they do not help his predicament by one jot. Greater state aids only serve to insulate Westminster by placing the marginal producer out of earshot.

In one respect Mr. Body endangers his commanding case. He defines the word "dumping" too loosely and this word is the "bath plug" of the entire matter.

Yours faithfully,

M. A. HILL

London W.8

SITE-VALUE RATING IN JOHANNESBURG

SIR, — As a regular reader of your admirable journal, I was most interested in Mr. McCulloch's excellent article on site-value rating in Johannesburg (Jan/Feb 76).

It appears to be most successful, and as the author states "the beneficial results are obvious . . . there are more new developments and more replacement of non-viable buildings than in any other city in the Western World . . ." Pretoria also "only started to develop after the change from the rating of improvements to site value rating seven years ago.

However I would respectfully like to ask whether the Johannesburg method reflects the optimum Henry George doctrine; and—to pose a hypothetical question—if you were asked to address a meeting of South African site-valuers in Johannesburg, what theoretical or practical matters (if any) would you draw to their attention once you had given proper and deserved praise to their unique and very considerable achievements.

Yours faithfully,

MICHAEL D. K. TURNER

Sevenoaks,
Kent.

Editor's note

While the local tax system in Johannesburg by no means reflects the optimum of Henry George's ideas, it does reflect the *principle*. Thus the value of the example that Johannesburg offers lies not only in what it achieves but what

an extension of the principle would do if applied on a national basis replacing other taxes.

There is little we can tell the site valuers of Johannesburg that they do not know first hand from their own experience—indeed there is more perhaps that they could tell us. On the other hand, there is much we might feel inclined to tell the *politicians* not only in South Africa but in other countries particularly that the answer to many of their economic problems lies under their feet.

HENRY GEORGE AND THE POPE

SIR, — Permit me to thank Mr. Michael Silagi for his kind reply to my letter, "Henry George and the Pope."

Even granting that Henry George and Cardinal Manning considered the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* to be aimed at Henry George, the internal and external evidence is completely against it. Henry George probably associated the condemnation of his books by the Holy Office—a decision later revoked—with the Pope himself. The McGlynn affair, understandable but unfortunate, was also put right by the Church.

Pope Leo XIII was concerned to condemn "*laissez-faire*" economics, and the political system of socialism which was a reaction to it.

Pope Pius XI in a later encyclical wrote, "First, let it be made quite clear beyond all doubt that neither Pope Leo XIII nor those theologians who have taught under the guidance and direction of the church have ever denied or called in question the *twofold aspect of ownership which is either individual or social, according as it regards individuals or concerns the common good.*"

Lastly the Pope authorised his own Delegate in 1892 on leaving Rome for America to investigate the case of the Georgeist priest, Dr. McGlynn, and the latter was vindicated with the words, "Dr. McGlynn has presented a brief statement of his opinions on moral economic matters, and it was judged not contrary to the doctrine constantly taught by the Church and as recently confirmed by the Holy Father, in his Encyclical

Rerum Novarum."

True, Leo did not explicitly advocate George's thesis—but this is not a Pope's job. His principle of the widest possible distribution of the ownership of productive property gave rise to the "Distributionism" practised by some Catholics to this day. Of these some firmly believe that it can never be fully achieved until solidly based on Georgeist ideas. But that is another story.

Yours faithfully,

MRS. MARIE MCCRONE

Laxton, Near Corby,
Northants

GOLD AND THE MARKET

SIR, — I think the time has come for Mr. Henry Meulen and me to bring our correspondence to an end. Mr. Meulen cannot understand what I am saying: I cannot understand why he cannot understand.

The trouble seems to be that Mr. Meulen has not grasped the idea that the substance gold itself might once again be money in the same way as it used to be. A sovereign could not then have a price because it would itself be the money in which prices were expressed. Money does not have a price in money: it *is* money.

This difficulty on Mr. Meulen's part makes it impossible for him to write without contradicting himself. In Mr. Meulen's free market, for instance, a seller can refuse to sell. Quite right! All sellers could refuse to sell if they felt like it. What then would be the price ruling on the previous day at which a bank would redeem its notes? With no sellers there would be no price.

I hope some of these mysteries will be made clearer to Mr. Meulen when he reads my forthcoming book *What is happening to Britain's Economy?* which is to be published at £2.95 early in March. Copies of the first edition may be applied for by readers of LAND & LIBERTY and, incidentally, *The Individualist*, up to the end of March at the special pre-publication price of £2 signed or £1.75 unsigned.

Yours faithfully,

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