



This time I want to split hairs with Stephen B. Cord over a peculiar statement, which, if true, would justify Marx's contention that all wealth should be socially owned, or, if you like, should be owned and controlled by governments. In "Right for the Right Reasons" (March HGN) he states "many knowledgeable critics have pointed out that all values are socially created."

I contend that is not true. Even if there is no community a man alone will produce for his own satisfaction. Although Crusoe was alone on an island until Friday came along, he did not give up, he went to work and produced enough to keep himself alive. And he salvaged the stores from his wrecked ship although there was nobody to sell them to. The land had no value since he could not hope to exploit others by charging them rent, but he could produce what he needed, and that is the point—*tax the land into use*, where there is a community, and then labor can get at it and produce what it needs. It is monopoly and speculation which prevent this and price land out of use. This is the vicious practice that could destroy our civilization, as all previous civilizations have been destroyed.

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Recently I read a pamphlet from the Public Revenue Education Council, St. Louis, by Noah D. Alper, one of the most literate and well versed writers on the natural revenue. He gives a resumé of how rent arises and then speaks of "taxing rent." It seems to me that we should cease to use this term "tax" in any way other than to condemn it.

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If we accept the proposition that rent is the product of human association, a phenomenon of the balance of nature by which people and their exchanges generate a natural and sufficient revenue for the support of their collective operations (i.e., government), how can we possibly use a term like "tax" in speaking of the process of returning this revenue to the channels from which it has been diverted? The term indicates an arbitrary measure, arbitrarily arrived at for an expedient end, enforced by arbitrary power which, if there were no alternative for the purpose of conducting government operations, would still be a method of extortion resented by all. Taxation is double robbery, since the rent is misappropriated and then taxed as the final insult.

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The article "An Experiment in India" (Feb. HGN) is an impressive example of the futility of our foreign aid which in this and countless similar circumstances is worse than useless, since it shores up and sustains governments dedicated to the doctrines of Karl Marx.

I have just read that over \$9 billions in grain and food are wasted annually in India—being consumed by rats and infected with insects, yet that wheat sells on the black market for \$21 a pound. Private owners of the storage bins could never afford such waste and would quickly take measures to avoid it, but government bureaucracy merely shrugs its shoulders.

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