Have you ever looked at a familiar friend, and suddenly realized that he was old? And not just old, but losing his ability to function? Well, I did, some two and a half years ago. The friend was a book that I had long prized and often used-- *Land-Value Taxation Around the World*, published by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation in 1955. That was about the time when I first became active in the Georgist movement, so one might say that we grew up in the movement together. I no longer recall just what specific thing it was that struck me with the awareness that, just as I had been accorded the status of emeritus professor, it was high time for my old friend to become emeritus, too. But the fact is (and here is where I am reluctant to press the analogy between us) that so much had transpired since 1955 that my friend was fast becoming little better than a useless relic.

It had performed yeoman service as an indispensable source of information, but that information was now sadly obsolete. Clearly, something needed to be done. So, as a director of the Schalkenbach Foundation, which had published it decades before I joined the board, I approached the Foundation's executive committee, and said: "Look! We've been asleep at the switch! This book should have been updated long ago. It's an essential tool that's become rusty and inadequate. We need a new edition, and we need it soon!"

The committee agreed, and asked me if I would undertake the task. But after the publication of my fourth book, my wife had issued an injunction: "No more books!" After more than 30 years of marriage to this lady, I had learned that when she issues an injunction, it is not something to be taken lightly. So I declined, and suggested another person for the job. He also declined. Then I suggested another, but that person declined as well. It became evident that if the task was going to be done at all, I would have to be the one to do it.

"Well," thought I. "What can it amount to? After all, it's just a
matter of finding people to update the existing chapters, and add new ones for countries that didn’t have Land-Value Taxation in 1955.” And so I persuaded Bonny, much against her better judgment, to relent, and accepted the assignment as editor. Of course, she was right and I was wrong; I had no idea of what I was getting into. Needless to say, the chapter authors of the original edition were all dead, and finding individuals competent to update their work was anything but easy. Finding people to write totally new chapters was even harder. In many countries, I had no contacts to enable me to determine whether or not they warranted inclusion. In all candor, editing the book turned out to be a nightmare of frustrations: chapters that had to be rejected and new authors found; authors who made commitments that they didn’t keep (in one case, failing to respond to all conceivable attempts to reach him); deadlines missed, and extended, and missed again, and extended again, and missed again; typists leaving on vacation without notice at crucial stages in the project; and technical problems in preparing the finished manuscript for the press. I could continue this litany of horrors, but I won’t.

Instead, I am pleased to be able to announce that more than two full years of effort have not been in vain. The second edition is at last a tangible reality, here to mark the centenary of the exact date of Henry George’s death. True, in this small preliminary run, it lacks an index, and there are no clothbound copies. But we made it in time for this occasion, and these deficiencies will be duly rectified in the regular run to be completed shortly.

* * *

This second edition of Land-Value Taxation Around the World not only marks the centenary of Henry George’s death but also ends a hiatus of 42 years since the publication of the first edition in 1955. The preface to that edition opens with a descriptive statement that is equally applicable here: “This book deals with the efforts made by various peoples to take for public purposes their geographically and socially produced land values” -- an object of which George is universally acknowledged to have been the most famous, eloquent, and thoroughgoing exponent.

Thus Land-Value Taxation is understood in both editions to
encompass more than a literal construction of the term would indicate, for the public capture of "geographically and socially produced land values" sometimes takes other forms with respect to method. Since "land" in economics is a synonym for Nature, severance taxes on extractive resources may be the most appropriate mechanism for such capture. Where land is publicly held, its rent may flow directly into public coffers without passing in the form of taxes through the hands of private owners. Some attention is paid to both of these alternative approaches in this volume, but the primary focus is on Land-Value Taxation in the narrower sense, i.e., on Site-Value Rating.

* * *

Let me give you an outline of the book's contents and tell you something about its contributors: It begins with an introductory essay, much of which you will be hearing in this talk. Part I, The Ancient and Medieval World, includes a chapter on Mesopotamia and Classical Antiquity by Dr. Michael Hudson (a specialist in ancient economic history); and one on European Feudalism by Sir Kenneth Jupp (a retired British high court justice). Part II, The Americas, includes a chapter on Argentina by Fernando Scornik Gerstein (a lawyer who was formerly chairman of a Special Commission on Land Taxation in the Argentine Ministry of Agriculture); a chapter on Canada by Garry B. Nixon (a tax consultant with offices in Vancouver, BC, and Cork, Ireland); a chapter on Chile by Dr. John Strasma (professor of applied economics and director of the Center for Development at the University of Wisconsin); a chapter on Jamaica and some other Caribbean States by John M. Copes (formerly commissioner of valuations in Jamaica, and UN advisor on land valuation and taxation in the Caribbean); and a chapter on the United States by Walter Rybeck (formerly assistant director of the Joint Congressional Commission on Urban Problems and publications director of the Urban Institute). Part III, Europe, includes a chapter on Denmark by Ole Lefmann (deputy president of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and sometime member of the Assessment Committee of the Borough of Copenhagen), and Karsten K. Larsen (a section head at the Danish Statistical Office); a chapter on Finland by Dr. Pekka V. Virtanen (for many years professor of urban and regional planning at Helsinki University of Technology); a chapter on Germany by a chap named Backhaus (whose
credentials it would take me the rest of the hour to cite); and a chapter on Hungary by Dr. Balázs Kónya (formerly a department head at the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce). Part IV, Africa, includes a chapter on Nations of Eastern Africa by Dr. Rexford Ahene (associate professor of economics at Lafayette College, Easton, PA, and a staff consultant to the World Bank); and a chapter on the Republic of South Africa by Godfrey R. A. Dunkley (a distinguished mechanical and electrical engineer who is immediate past president of the International Union for Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade). Part V, Asia, includes a chapter on Abu Dhabi by the editor; a chapter on Taiwan by Dr. Alven H. S. Lam (academic dean of the Land Reform Training Institute near Taipei); a chapter on Hong Kong and Singapore by Dr. Sock-Yong Phang (senior lecturer in economics at the National University of Singapore); a chapter on Japan by the venerable Dr. Yoshisaburo Yamasaki (longtime professor of social policy in the faculty of economics at Kobe University), with the humble collaboration of the present speaker; a chapter on the former German imperial colony of Kiaochau by V. G. Peterson (late executive secretary of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation) and Dr. Tseng Hsiao (founder of the department of land administration at Chengchi University, Taipei, of the Chinese Research Institute on Land Economics, and of the China Land Reform Association); a chapter on South Korea by Dr. Tai-I Lee (vice-president of the Construction and Economy Research Institute of Korea); and a chapter on Papua New Guinea by H. J. Manning (a fellow and medalist of the Australian Institute of Valuers, who, among other things, once served as chief assessor of Singapore). Finally, Part VI, The Antipodes, includes a chapter on Australia by Geoff Forster (an editor of scientific research papers, active in the Land Values Research Group, Melbourne), and one on New Zealand by Robert D. Keall (an investment broker who is honorary secretary and treasurer of the New Zealand Land Value Rating Association).

These chapters without exception were expressly written for this book, although some draw to a certain extent upon previously published material such as the late Miss Peterson’s treatment of Kiaochau in the original edition. The original edition had 11 chapters; this one has exactly twice that number, three of which cover more than one country.

*   *   *
Obviously, some economic rent is appropriated by public authority in all countries by other means--most notably income, estate, and capital gains taxes. But (with a few exceptions such as South Korea’s differential levy on “capital” gains) in most such cases it is lumped together with other returns in such a way as to defy separate identification, and hence could not be dealt with in these pages. One should note, however, that land tends to enjoy so many special tax advantages that there is reason to believe that the land-based portion of public revenue from these sources is much smaller than might otherwise be supposed.

Efforts to capture land values for the public through legislation not specifically designated for that purpose have generally proven ineffectual in the long run. The US income tax is a case in point. The 16th Amendment, having removed the constitutional roadblock to a direct federal tax not apportioned among states by population, freed Congress to define taxable income any way it chose. Congress might have limited taxable income to realized land rents, or possibly even to the annual rental value of land. Instead, however, the Revenue Act of 1916 merely included land rent as part of taxable income. Prominent Georgists, led by Rep. William Warren Bailey of Pennsylvania, were instrumental in fashioning the tax in such a way that, for a number of years, it bore lightly on earnings and heavily on land rent and other monopoly profits.¹ But over the past half-century, the rent component of the federal income tax has steadily and drastically declined, making the tax increasingly a burden on the work and enterprise of the median citizen.

* * *

Over the more than two score years that have elapsed since the publication of the earlier edition, so many changes have taken place that the present edition is, of necessity, virtually an entirely new book. In 1955, Land-Value Taxation seemed to be advancing steadily if not dramatically; it was spreading on the local level in Australia and New Zealand, and its extension in Denmark was backed by all three parties that made up the national government’s ruling coalition. Since then, serious reversals have occurred in New Zealand and Denmark, where it had seemed most solidly entrenched, and, although nowhere actually rescinded in
Australia, it has been minimized there by the growing imposition of users' charges. At the same time, public capture of economic rent has become a major feature of several nations on the Pacific Rim; adopted in modified form ever more widely on the municipal level in the state of Pennsylvania; and, most recently, been significantly extended in South Africa.

Hence, to those who share George's vision, retrogression is not unalloyed by gains. Yet it must be stressed that these gains are slender, tentative, and by no means secure. In point of fact, most of the "success stories" hailed and endlessly repeated in Georgist literature have been quite exaggerated. The implementation of Land-Value Taxation has really been extremely modest, and its impact, where genuine, all too often blunted by countervailing policies, usually at other levels of government. The accounts set forth in the ensuing pages may have the effect of "throwing a wet blanket" on some cherished Georgist illusions. But better sober realism than naive complacency.

* * *

A comment is in order about the word "taxation" as applied to land values, for a Land-Value Tax is not, properly speaking, a tax at all. A tax, strictly understood, is a levy imposed without respect to benefits received. A Land-Value Tax, however, is what Walter Rybeck has aptly termed a "super user charge," a payment for a very fundamental benefit indeed, namely, the exclusive use and disposition of a site or natural resource at the expense of the rest of the community. If this were not a new edition of a book with the phrase "Land-Value Taxation" already in its title, my inclination would be to jettison the term in favor of one more descriptively accurate, such as, for example, "Public Charges Upon Land-Value," the title of a study about which I shall have something to say later.

* * *

In Australia and New Zealand, the current tendency is partially to supplant Land-Value Taxation at the local level with user charges for various amenities, evidently because of failure to appreciate that a Land-Value Tax is itself the most basic user charge of all. If sufficient rent is
publicly collected, no additional user charges should be necessary for site or neighborhood-specific benefits, for the value of such benefits will be reflected in the rent.

* * *

The moral case for Land-Value Taxation is clear enough. It represents an indemnity to the rest of society for the privilege of monopolizing something the owner did nothing to create, and the market worth of which is a social, not an individual, product. Such a levy is, as George put it, "the taking by the community, for the use of the community, of that value which is the creation of the community." Heavy imposts upon land, even if offset by reductions in income and/or other taxes, will be decried as confiscatory by some parties on the excuse that the land was purchased in good faith under the protection of the laws existent at the time. But this assertion (which could apply equally to the increase of any levy) rests upon the assumption that every transaction is entitled to the same government-related conditions in perpetuity as those under which it was entered into -- an assumption that, if valid, would render all reform, or, for that matter, any kind of change of policy, impossible. Whenever public authority does anything that constitutes a policy departure, someone's expectations are bound to be negatively affected, yet nobody contemplates that all present policies should therefore be carved in stone. Why then should policies that affect landowners be any different? Practical wisdom, of course, dictates that changes as far as possible be phased in gradually enough to enable people to make necessary adjustments, and this applies to the taxation of land values as it does to other matters.

At this juncture it may be apposite to mention a point much emphasized by William S. Vickrey, the 1996 Nobel laureate in economics who died three days after learning that he had been chosen to receive the prize: The cost of public infrastructure may be defrayed at little or no expense to the general community merely by tapping the increase in land values generated by that infrastructure. This seems only fair. In hardship cases, the increased tax obligation could be permitted to accrue and its payment postponed until time of sale, transfer, or death (or until the arrearage reduced the market price to zero, which would trigger
forfeiture of title to the public).

To the extent that the rent of land is not appropriated for social purposes, the fruits of private effort, initiative, and productive saving are likely to be so appropriated. The burden of proof lies with one who would contend for the moral superiority of such appropriation.

* * *

The remaining arguments for Land-Value Taxation have to do with economic efficiency, on the one hand, and such fiscal considerations as ease of administration, and revenue stability and adequacy, on the other.

The first of these may be stated simply: If a sufficient percentage of a parcel's economic rent must be paid annually to the community regardless of how or whether the land is being used, its owner will have a compelling incentive to put that land to its optimum use or to sell it to someone who will, instead of holding it for speculation or (as is common in some Latin American countries, for example) merely for reasons of prestige. By "squeezing the speculative water" out of land prices, the policy makes land more readily available to those who could not otherwise afford it, and the purchase price is less apt to absorb funds needed for development, or to weigh the buyer down with a ponderous load of debt. Critics with a superficial understanding of the principle imagine that it would force all land into use and lead to overdevelopment. They fail to consider that economic rent reflects potential for optimum not maximum use, and that some land bears little or no economic rent. Instead of overdevelopment, there would emerge a more compact and rational pattern of development, with a wholesome reduction in the number of vacant and underused lots in urban centers, and a countryside not eroded by suburban sprawl. This compact pattern of development would cut the cost of public services. Insofar as the public capture of economic rent permitted the abolition or reduction of taxes on the returns to labor and capital, that much income would be freed up to raise living standards and/or for productive capital investment. Thus it may be seen that the impact of a substantial Land-Value Tax is not (as is often claimed) merely neutral in the sense of causing no distortions in the economy at large, but actually positive, a conclusion set forth and demonstrated in detail by Nicolaus
The last set of arguments is fiscal in nature — i.e., they focus on social appropriation of land rent, not in its larger aspects, but merely as a source of public revenue.

Administration of any property tax is largely a matter of assessment. Unless assessment is both accurate and up-to-date, the successful operation of Land-Value Taxation is severely compromised. Where sales are infrequent or there are no parcels with similar characteristics in a vicinity, the valuation of a site may present difficulties, yet sophisticated techniques have been developed to deal even with situations such as these. Computers, aerial cadastral mapping, and other technological innovations make for greater uniformity of treatment, rendering the process less susceptible to personal and political pressure.

In many jurisdictions, land and improvements are assessed separately although they may be taxed at the same rate. Where all real property is assessed at the same rate on the basis of land alone, the procedure is manifestly easier than where improvements must be included. Classification, exemptions, and differential rates introduce complications, but they are not insuperable.

Assuming a representative form of government in which official records are readily available for scrutiny, and provision is made for appeal at open hearings, a public revenue system based heavily on Land-Value Taxation is as nearly corruption-proof as any public revenue system can be. This is not only because of the oft-mentioned fact that land cannot be moved or hidden, making illegal avoidance of a tax on it well-nigh impossible, but also because if such a tax accounts for a large enough proportion of people's public revenue obligation, their attention will be so focused on it that each property owner will habitually examine the rolls to compare his or her assessments with those of others. Under such circumstances, favoritism is practically impossible to conceal and therefore unlikely to be attempted.

Land-Value Taxation has long been recognized as an unusually stable
source of public revenue. In fact, the Georgist Single Tax on land has been criticized for being too stable, i.e., so inflexible as to be incapable of adjustment to changing fiscal needs. That is because it takes the total rent, less a small percentage which the owner is allowed to keep as an agency or collection fee. But the Georgist contention has always been that the Single Tax is far more than just a fiscal measure, and that its positive effects upon the economy would render many government operations (e.g., welfare) superfluous.

Of course, there is no source of public revenue that is wholly unaffected by the vicissitudes of the general economy. It is patent that a collapse in land values that precipitates or accompanies recession will constrict a tax base that depends upon them. But a Land-Value Tax of sufficient magnitude, introduced incrementally, will forestall recession by providing a perpetual non-inflationary stimulus to the economy in terms of production and purchasing power alike. Land prices will fall as the incentive for speculation disappears (although, as shown by the experience of Australia, their use-value may eventually come to exceed their former speculative value), yet rent is not affected by a fall in selling price. Far from shrinking, public revenue would increase along with the increase in productive activity.

What is probably the most uncompromising and also the most theoretically elegant assertion of the adequacy of land value as a tax base was advanced by Thomas G. Shearman. It was his contention that it is logically impossible for the average annual cost of necessary government ever to be greater than the average annual value of its land:

How can any government be necessary, which costs more than the privilege of living under it is worth? And what is the cost of the privilege of living in any particular place, except the ground rent of that place? . . . Any pretended taxation which takes more from the people than this is extortion, not genuine taxation.?

The less local the jurisdiction, the more attenuated Shearman's argument becomes, so that the case for financing national defense, for instance, out of rent is not so clear and unequivocal as is the case for services such as local law enforcement. Yet the advantage of being located in a free
country with secure borders might conceivably confer rent even upon a site that had little else to recommend it.

Shearman believed that, after legitimate expenses of government at all levels had been defrayed by rent, an annual surplus of about 35 percent would remain (which he, contrary to George, advocated leaving in the hands of the landholder). There are commentators who think it probable that, when Shearman made his calculations around the turn of the 19th century, he was not far off the mark.

Despite the force of Shearman's *a priori* reasoning, and conceding that his empirical estimate may have been fairly accurate in his time, few people would now agree that, despite the Cold War being over, land rent would be sufficient to meet the warranted costs of government today. This, however, is no argument against using it as far as it can go. And if one deducts corporate welfare and other forms of privilege from the costs of government, his estimate might be within the bounds of reasonable conjecture after all, even as the 20th century draws to a close.

* * *

As the late P. I. Prentice (longtime vice-president of TIME, Inc.) never tired of emphasizing, the general property tax is really two separate taxes, opposite to each other both in terms of moral justification (or the lack of it) and in terms of economic impact. The tax on land values is the recapture by the community of a social product; the tax on improvements is a toll laid by the community on individual efforts and their fruit. The tax on land values cannot be shifted from the owner to the user; the tax on improvements is routinely so shifted. The tax on land values stimulates improvements and productive use; the tax on improvements discourages them. And the list could go on.

* * *

Because the degree of Land-Value Taxation in operation is usually too slight to provide definitive data that clearly outweigh other factors, there is a paucity of hard empirical evidence for its success in practice. Yet the evidence that does exist is consistent, and its cumulative weight,
if not entirely conclusive, is, at the very least, impressive.

True, the system has in some few cases been abolished, but never because it was a failure. In Denmark, the explicitly Georgist Justice Party was voted out of Parliament and the advance of Land-Value Taxation halted, but this happened at a time of unprecedented prosperity and for political reasons that had nothing to do with Land-Value Taxation as such. In New Zealand, it was done away with in the three largest cities where it was in place, but this came in the wake of major jurisdictional reconfiguration, and was never submitted to the voters for approval. In various smaller municipalities, where the public had an opportunity to vote on whether to reject or to retain it, the overwhelming decision was to retain.

Public Charges Upon Land Values: A Study of the Effects of Local Government Rating Systems upon the Social and Economic Development of the Australian States, first published in 1945 by the Land Values Research Group, Melbourne, and updated in 1960, remains the most compelling single brief for Land-Value Taxation's practical efficacy. Primarily the work of the late A. R. Hutchinson, it compared the three Australian states with a substantial amount of Land-Value Taxation with the three with little or none. It did so in terms, not merely of the usual criterion—number of building permits issued annually, but also of a wide range of indicators including agricultural development, development of manufacturing industries, volume of retail sales, value of improvements, average wages, population gain through immigration from other states, etc., finding a definite positive correlation between all of these and the extent to which Land-Value Taxation was in effect! Unfortunately, a change in the government's policy of gathering and classifying statistics made it impossible to further update all these findings, but a study by Hutchinson eighteen years later confirmed the same pattern for those indicators for which data was then available.

In South Africa, Land-Value Taxation is almost wholly urban. In some Caribbean states, it is wholly rural. These differences seem to reflect purely political considerations, as there is no logical reason why it cannot be equally effective in both contexts, as has been amply demonstrated in Australia and elsewhere.
Canada offers a prime example of the truth that a property tax based solely upon land values cannot succeed unless a sufficient percentage of the land rent is collected. If the tax rate is set too low or the land is grossly underassessed, exemption of improvements only serves to help inflate land values and encourage speculation.

In Hong Kong and Singapore, where, in the first instance all land and in the second instance most land is public, rent flows directly to the state through leases instead of being paid by owners in the form of taxes. George had considered this approach and found it acceptable enough on moral grounds, but regarded the use of the tax method as more efficient administratively, and preferable where private ownership of land is well entrenched. This was not the case in the states in question, where the leasehold method seems to work quite well. Russia, which is not burdened with a vested landed interest, might be well-advised to follow the same path, instead of creating such a vested interest by privatizing land.

At the same time, it should be borne in mind that public ownership of land is no guarantee that its rent will be captured by the public. Even where land is publicly held, there may be vested interests with special rights to land use, and these interests will employ all the means at their command to resist full payment for such rights. In the United States, some salient examples of such special rights (or, more accurately, privileges) are absurdly low grazing fees on federal land, rights to federal water at a fraction of market value, rights to monopolize bands or channels on the broadcast spectrum for little or no charge, etc., etc. Then there is the tragically ironic case of Israel, where 93 percent of the land is public, yet provides only 3.2 percent of government income at all levels. (Although the 7 percent of the land that is privately owned is of greater unit value, the value of the remaining 93 percent is nevertheless estimated to be about half the total, which is scarcely the negligible portion that the rent collected from it would suggest.) Meanwhile, from the gross yearly income of the average worker approximately 23.1 percent is taken in direct and 27.1 percent in indirect taxes, making an aggregate of 50.2 percent!9

* * *
Readers familiar with the earlier edition of this book may be puzzled by the fact that the present one contains no chapter on Great Britain. The omission was deliberate. There has been no Land-Value Taxation worth mentioning in Great Britain since the Middle Ages; in fact, in 1923 vacant land there became entirely tax-free.\textsuperscript{10} The chapter that appeared in 1955 was an account of the organization and agitation leading up to two parliamentary statutes providing for modest degrees of Land-Value Taxation that were enacted but repealed before they could be implemented -- the Lloyd George Finance Act of 1909-10, and the Snowden Finance Act of 1931. (Great Britain is not the only country where there has been no Land-Value Taxation to speak of in modern times, but where organized efforts to introduce it have long existed. This is also true, in lesser degree, of the Netherlands and Spain. For several decades, the Dominican Republic has been the scene of vigorous educational work, and, since the fall of the Iron Curtain, considerable activity has taken place in Russia.)

Like many colleagues, I was under the impression that Estonia has had a national Land-Value Tax since shortly after regaining its independence with the collapse of the USSR. However, Robert A. Gilmour, who has made recent visits to this Baltic nation, reports that, in the absence of an active real estate market, the paltry Estonian land tax initiated in 1993 is really a tax on values attributed to land according to regional formulas that vary drastically from one region to another, rather than a tax on authentic land values per se.

Too new to warrant a chapter in this volume is the modest tax on the potential income from agricultural land minus improvements, enacted last June as part of a general tax reform in Nicaragua.

I have tried to make this survey as complete as possible, but it makes no claim to being exhaustive. For example, in 1974, George E. Lent published an article\textsuperscript{11} listing Greece and Iraq among the nations with special urban taxes on unimproved land, and Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Senegal, Swaziland, and Turkey among the nations with higher urban tax rates on land than on improvements. In these cases, I was either unable to obtain current information, or had reason to suspect that the
magnitudes involved were too trivial to warrant the effort that might be required to get it. With respect to Iraq, one might remark that even an ideal system of land tenure and public revenue could do little to make life tolerable in a country under the absolute control of a rapacious and sadistic tyrant.

* * *

Although modern Iraq is not included in this work, there is a chapter that focuses on early Mesopotamia, which embraced essentially the same territory. The chapter is part of one of the features introduced in this edition—a section on the public capture of economic rent in the ancient and medieval world. Through his analysis of early Mesopotamian institutions, Michael Hudson raises a neglected issue that needs to be addressed today, that of the relationship between mortgage banking and the public capture of land values.

* * *

To paraphrase the proverbial observation of the Governor of North Carolina to the Governor of South Carolina about drinks, “It’s been a long time between editions.” The publisher is determined that such an extended dry spell not occur again, and proposes to henceforth issue updated versions no more than a decade apart.

I have been painfully conscious of the fact that editorial responsibility has this time fallen solely upon me, whereas the earlier edition had the benefit of a Board of Editors consisting of four of the most eminent authorities in the field (Harry Gunnison Brown, Harold S. Buttenheim, Philip H. Cornick, and Glenn E. Hoover), as well as of the inestimable services of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation’s late executive secretary, V. G. Peterson (Violetta G. Graham). It is my hope that readers will bear this fact in mind as they encounter, as I am sure they will, defects that have escaped my notice.

More than a score of authors have contributed to this volume. As might therefore be expected, its chapters exhibit considerable variety. Some concentrate narrowly upon the bare facts of property tax policy and legislation, often with statistics but little evaluative comment. Others
delve into historical background, illuminate relevant cultural and political factors, and express personal opinions with abandon. To the extent that I have felt it necessary, I have not hesitated to invoke my editorial prerogative to enforce a measure of consistency as to style and content. Yet, insofar as possible in my judgment, I have allowed each author to approach his topic in his own way.

As in the earlier edition, the work of all contributors has been compensated only by the satisfaction derived from involvement in a worthwhile project. To quote what was stated there, "they deserve the gratitude of all who believe in the just distribution of man's heritage."

NOTES


5Nicolaus Tideman, "Taxing Land is Better than Neutral: Land Taxes, Land Speculation and the Timing of Development" (working paper, Department of Economics, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1997), forthcoming in a yet untitled volume edited by Kenneth C. Wenzel, to be published by the University of Rochester Press.
6 Paul V. Corusy, “Improving the Administration of the Property Tax,” in Harriss, op. cit., p. 94.


Mr. J. Ted Gwartney  
Executive Director  
Robert Schalkenbach Foundation  
FAX: (212) 988 1687

Dear Ted,

Since Schalkenbach is sending Bonny and me to the Maastricht conference, it seems only right that it should have a copy of the talk that I'll be giving there. Most of it is taken from my Introduction to the book.

Perhaps some use can be made of it at the conference to be held November 1 at Cooper Union on "Henry George One Hundred Years Later." I wish that it were possible for me to be there. Please convey my greetings and best wishes to the conference, both on behalf of the International Union and on behalf of myself personally.

The six preliminary copies of the book arrived by UPS SONICAIR this morning. It was a great relief not to have to wait until the day of our departure for their delivery, or to have to pick them up at the airport before flight time.

Cordial regards,

Robert V. Andelson