

La Emigración Argentina Contemporánea (Contemporary Argentine Emigration), by Juan Carlos Zuccotti. Editorial Plus Ultra, Buenos Aires, 1987. 335 pp. Reviewed by James L. Busey.

Juan Carlos Zuccotti, a world wanderer in 29 countries during 26 years, finally returned to his native Argentina last year, to produce a detailed book about his fellow emigrants, their experiences, hopes and dreams.

The volume contains data on the foreign experiences of Argentine emigrants, their psychological, cultural and economic problems in new and different cultures, the support activities, clubs and associations with which they became involved, religious life they found abroad. There are human-interest interviews with emigrants and letters from them about their experiences. The book relates the observations of Argentine emigrants in many foreign lands - Canada, Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Israel, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, South Africa, several Latin American countries, outside Argentina - and of course a principal one, the United States, where Zuccotti himself spent the years from 1979 to 1986 in Philadelphia.

What should be of special interest to Georgists is that Zuccotti repeatedly raises the question of reforms that his country must undertake to stem the flow of emigration and to encourage her departed citizens to return home. He points out that Argentina is as large as Western Europe and has fertile black soil and rich resources - but outside Buenos Aires and a few other cities is essentially an empty land, more thinly populated (26.5 per square mile) than any other European country except Iceland. Yet Argentina has become a land which her people leave in droves.

Zuccotti attributes this phenomenon to monopoly of the land, and proposes that this system be reversed through a shift of taxation from production to land values. Specifically, he says that the flight of people and wealth will only cease when "land rent is (publicly) collected and taxes of equal amount are eliminated."

This theme is not only developed in a few concluding pages. In one form or another, it is interwoven through several sections of the book. It is the central subject of the eleven-page prologue by Dr. Héctor Raúl Sandler, distinguished national and international professor of law and social sciences, and of Zuccotti's own introduction. It appears here and there in each of the first ten chapters, on the loss of workers and professional people, scholars, scientists and doctors; in Chapter 12, on the Malvinas (Falklands) war of 1982, where he cites Argentine land monopoly as one cause of the malaise that brought it on; in Chapter 22, where he goes into detail regarding a plan for new single tax cities, upon which he also touches elsewhere; and especially in concluding pages, which propose LVT as the solution to economic dysfunction and resulting flight to other parts of the world.

It may be argued that Zuccotti protests his case almost too much, and does not give adequate attention to the many military disruptions and dictatorships that have driven Argentines into exile; but political turbulence itself may have been caused in part by economic distress, by land monopoly that drove Argentines away.

This book has received many reviews in the Argentine press, and it is hoped that it will exert an influence in a country where physiocratic thinking has influenced important leaders. If you read Spanish, La Emigración Argentina Contemporánea may be obtained from the author for US \$25: Juan Carlos Zuccotti, Avenida Corrientes 4709, 30 - "38", Buenos Aires 1414, Argentina.

- - - - -

The Georgist Barcelona newsletter offers this slogan: "Impuesto único, si; impuestos inicuos, no." (Single tax, yes; iniquitous taxes, no.) Good alliteration - in Spanish.