

AN I-YOU CHAT

Some of our friends feel that more consideration needs to be given to the international aspects of our rent proposals. They argue that the earth is the heritage of all mankind and that inequalities in land benefits should be rectified among nations as well as within a nation. Others reply that we will have all we can do to try to get our principles adopted locally without tackling it as a world problem.

The argument for internationalization as a rule comes from friends in smaller countries, whereas those in larger countries feel the local job is the important one. Presumably those in smaller countries (with populations less than many of our larger cities) feel the restraint of their borders more than those in larger countries.

The argument for internationalization makes sense when one takes an extreme case like Kuwait, a tiny country with immense oil revenues, surrounded by larger and poorer states. However, instead of immediately trying to equalize the situation for the world, one possibility might be for a grouping of smaller countries to form a union and share rent revenue: e.g. Scandinavian countries, Central American countries, etc.

There are other matters bearing on the application of our proposals about which there are varying views, some of them hinging on different situations in different nations. For instance, some friends do not think our proposal can be put across as a tax because in their country there is nothing resembling a land-value tax, but that it might make more headway if presented as a royalty payment.

Some of these points may seem remote or academic. Yet they deserve consideration because questions like these arise when our proposals come up for discussion. We would do well to be ready with some answers. They need not be definitive answers for once and for all. They can be suggestions to show that there are various practical possibilities in the application of our proposals. "There is more than one way to skin a cat." The important thing is to bridge the gap between theory and practice, even if in some cases they are experimental - or we do not entirely agree with one another - or if the practice has to vary with the environment.

It is true that some questions and objections are thrown out as "red herrings" to prevent serious consideration of our ideas. But that's another story! On the legitimate questions let us be ready with some practical answers.

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Editor