

We had a good example of the principle of getting public revenue by indirect methods in a recent TV performance, a telethon. One channel conducted a 24-hour session raising three million dollars for health purposes; previous telethons raised the money for other 'worthwhile purposes'. It will become a permanent feature of our taxation system. It was pitiful to see kiddies turning out their money boxes to add their mite to what was nothing more than a scheme to line the pockets of the 'third hand'.

A successful property developer has just brought out a book entitled *New Zealand—The Way I Want It*. There is much good stuff in it. One chapter is headed, *Taxation Is Theft*. He urged people to avoid paying taxes. Yet when the Prime Minister asked him whether he paid his taxes he dodged the issue.

I have always been suspicious of people who talk about taxation as being theft. All too often further acquaintance with their thinking reveals that they have a quite inadequate knowledge of the business of government. So it proves with this author. He denounces government expenditure, calls for drastic curtailment of government activities, advocates a return to private initiative. All very good. But there is hardly a word that would help a hard-pressed Minister of Finance, or Federal Treasurer, in his fight against inflation.

Had he denounced commodity taxation, the taxing of goods for government revenue, he would have directed attention to the cause of inflation. Inflation is a breakdown of government finance. Government, the agent of the community, fails to collect the values of the community services that the community renders to the individual. They allow these values to fall into private pockets (the third hand in the game); but the soldier and the policeman must be paid. To get the wherewithal government resorts to the taxing of goods. Here we have the reason why goods cost more than when largely hand-made two centuries ago.

We single-taxers must heed Frank Chodorov's advice. 'We must polish up our ancient arguments, apply them to the current scene and offer them as brand new merchandise. We must do a selling job. Youth will not buy us out lock, stock, and barrel, but will be rather selective about it; they will take what seems good to them, modernise it, build it into a panacea and start a revolution'.

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## THE INTERESTS OF ALL MEN ARE HARMONIOUS

(A paper read by W A Dowe at the Spring School of The Australian School of Social Science at North Sydney of 8th October 1978)

Harmony is a very wide subject. For instance:

1. There are the physical and chemical harmonies

of the natural order. To some people nature seems to be far from harmonious—'nature red in tooth and claw'. As quoted by Henry George from Tennyson:

'Are art and nature then at strife  
That nature lends such awful dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems  
So careless of the single life.'

Against the concept of the harmonies of nature is the philosophy of Heraclitus that everything in the universe is CONFLICT. This is also the philosophy of the general run of the ruling classes, especially in Britain. Sir Henry Newbolt expresses it in 'Clifton Chapel' (where the young generation of Britain's elite is taught to take fighting as of the unalterable natural order):

'My son, the oath is yours. The end  
Is his, who made the world of strife  
Who gave his children pain for friend  
And death for surest hope of life.'

This philosophy flowed down from Heraclitus through Hegel to Marx in whom it emerged, somewhat inverted, as the Class Struggle.

2. Opposed to this is the man-in-the-street's philosophy of the good neighbour, a watered-down philosophy of the Golden Rule—be friends with everybody as far as is 'reasonable', i.e. as far as convenient and as far as one's prejudices permit.

3. Very different again is the 'Christian Ethic' (to which Mr Wran recently announced his attachment). This is a highly radical philosophy which is generally dismissed as impractical and airy-fairy, but which I believe is a completely social, practical and logical philosophy. It is tersely and forcefully expressed in the 'Sermon on the Mount' recorded in Matthew's Gospel, chapters 5, 6 and 7. It should be read in a good modern translation, and must be pondered over and digested. Among the many pearls in the sermon are the Golden Rule (7.12) and Resist Not One Who Is Evil (5.39). It is full of still untapped revolutionary force, and has been expounded and demonstrated in modern times by Tolstoi who wrote lengthily about it, and by Gandhi who applied it successfully by expelling the British rulers from India without bloodshed.

### 4. SOCIAL HARMONY

I propose to speak on that aspect of harmony named in the title of this Paper. Man is a social animal, and benefits from whatever benefits his fellow-men and suffers from whatever injures his fellow-men. It is our duty to act so that whatever we do benefits our fellows and nothing that we do injures any of them. In this aspect the Georgist proposals and philosophy conform to the Christian ethic. They contain nothing that will injure anybody, and very much that will benefit everybody. To deprive a person, by the restoration of good government, of an unearned income which he

receives by the operation of misgovernment is not to injure him, but rather to benefit him by justice which benefits all.

It should be obvious to everybody that the two outstanding proposals of the Georgist philosophy, i.e. the appropriation of the economic rent for community purposes and the consequent abolition of taxation on individual wages, will benefit everybody, although even here those who have not adequately studied the proposals often imagine that they will cause unemployment and dislocation. In fact, among the most conspicuous of the benefits which will arise from the substitution of justice for injustice is the disappearance of unemployment, which is the great feature of the disinheritance of the people.

But the abolition of taxes and the restoration of justice involve freedom, particularly free trade, and there is a great deal of popular prejudice against free trade, and it is therefore to this topic that I wish to pay particular attention.

For the abolition of poverty amidst affluence it is, of course, essential that the wholesale robbery of producers by the private misappropriation of the economic rent and by the consequent taxing of private incomes be abolished. The consequent impetus to production will also increase rent which will be the public revenue and will enrich all.

#### HARMONY AND CIVILISATION

Anyone who observes the trading centres will know that these centres are the high-rent areas. In fact trade not only produces rent and harmony, but provides plenty on all sides. Without trade we should all be Robinson Crusoes, totally impoverished and scarcely human beings at all. Trade is, in fact, production. It is also the great harmoniser and civiliser and the originator of all the arts. See the poem *Trade* by William Cowper at the foot of this article.

All the main points about trade are, of course, dealt with in George's *Protection or Free Trade* and other books. The point here is that the interests of all men are harmonious, and that trade is harmonious and for the benefit of all.

Trade is both production and exchange. Each party to the exchange parts with what he has produced which is of less value to him and receives what the other party has produced which is of greater value to him. Each party thus makes a profit and confers a profit. Trade is always distinguished by these features. There is no loss in trade. It is always peaceful and voluntary and trade is never forced on anybody. It is always carried on between individuals, and those individuals form groups and also form the

economy. When the American government 'forced trade' on Japan they forced nobody to trade but forced the Japanese government to stop preventing individuals from trading, which is a normal occupation for all men.

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## THE ROAD TO PEACE ON EARTH

By F T HODGKISS

'On earth Peace. Good will toward Men.' Note the all-inclusive word 'men', for there cannot be peace on earth while good will exists only toward some men. But can it be established among all men? Not while statute laws are enacted based upon ill will and fundamental laws based upon good will are unregarded.

Land is the essential to life. In a Christian land the law would secure to all the right to possess land on terms equally just to all. Instead, in Australia, we find 86 per cent are landless, their lives dependent upon terms of access thereto granted by the relatively few. In some countries 5 per cent and less possess the exclusive legal rights to land.

The Premier of South Australia recently stated that on a country trip he came across a man in possession of 90,000 acres who made a good living by working only 1,000 acres. Thus, while thousands of men want acres and thousands of acres want hands, the utilising of many thousand acres depends upon the whim of one man. Our present legislation permits and protects such instances of private land ownership in this all essential to man's life and happiness.

The Premier added that the land should be purchased for closer settlement. Here he exposed the great wrong in our land laws. Land, the gift in common to all mankind, is made by legislation, merchandise, subject to private ownership and sale. In towns and cities tens, hundreds, even thousands of pounds per foot is privately demanded.

Owing to the increasing struggle to live, largely caused through our land laws, the owning of one's home is now less common. We note from English and Canadian sources other evils. A news item in the *Age*, 4.7.44, stated: In 15 minutes all the shops, houses, farms, and woodlands of a Norfolk (Eng.) village, with a population of 560, changed hands. The new landlord graciously announced, 'He wants these good people to know that they can continue to live and work as happily as they have done for 200 years as tenants of the Molyneux-Montgomery family'. Here, we behold, veiled, the autocratic power of the landlord.

In Saskatchewan, Canada, we read: 'The Government in 1935 to 1941 permitted 1,292