The August reports from the Henry George School conference were heartening, and I look forward to the next issue with more of the same. I am concerned about the letter from David B. Ascher of Haifa (August HGN). His state-leased land experience compares rather poorly with many cases in Australia and Pittsburgh where land is privately owned but taxed. There are contributing conditions, apparently, that someone with specific knowledge should answer and investigate.

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As I read the various discussions in HGN it often occurs to me that not enough is said about the difference between the value of land and the market price. The latter is like the part of the iceberg above the water, whereas the value is the entire iceberg.

If a plan envisions the increase of taxation on land from 2 per cent to 4 per cent, the market price will drop as expected, say, from $1,600 to $800, and then will not the assessor be likely to depreciate the assessed value of the land unless he is thoroughly briefed on this point? He should understand very definitely that this lowering of the market price of land is exactly one of the aims of the land value tax and that a 12 per cent tax on market values is in fact only a 4 per cent tax on the full value, or that a 30 per cent tax on market value is only a 5 per cent tax on the full value.

It seems to me that Mr. Ascher in his letter in the August issue overemphasizes some technical difficulties [presented by Oscar Johannsen's proposal that the government rent out land to the highest bidder] although it would be simple compared to the complexities and injustices of our present income tax which must employ at least a million people in and out of our government.

Furthermore, in his imaginary example of "my" piece of land being put up for auction, he offers the highest bid, $1,000, and sublets it to me for $2,000. Where was I when he got it for $1,000? Was there collusion between him and some government employee? Certainly if the bidding was above-board my $2,000 should have won.

Later on he mentions that the National Fund in Israel owns 95 per cent of usable land and leases it to farmers and builders who have learned to speculate with these "exactly as they speculated with the lands themselves." Obviously the government is leasing the lands far below their value, otherwise there would be no margin for speculation.

Most of the difficulties, either imagined or real, can be solved with a little common sense and a good understanding of the principle of the land value or scientific tax. I call it scientific because it is rational. It taxes and inhibits undesirable activities and untaxes or frees desirable activities.

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As quoted by George R. Geiger in his scholarly and well-documented book *The Philosophy of Henry George,* it was Henry George himself who clarified the issue raised by Oscar B. Johannsen in "Philosophy of Freedom Versus the Single Tax" (June HGN). On page 558 of Professor Geiger's book there is the following notation:

"George, when told by William Lloyd Garrison (the younger) that he