



A descriptive phrase for Henry George's remedy is a most interesting issue and I would like to comment on recent contributions to this subject made by Ethel H. Van Buskirk and Lancaster M. Greene.

The most important aspect of a descriptive phrase must be its accuracy, after accuracy would follow clarity, 'catchiness,' etc. Neither phrase—land value taxation nor location value taxation can be really accurate. If an individual pays to the community income unearned by him but earned by the community, how can taxation be involved at all? "To tax" means "to burden" according to the dictionary, and clearly, no burden is involved when you give up something that isn't yours! If anything, land value is the opposite of a tax—it's more like a bonus or a free gift from the nature of communities.

Here are some possible alternative names: land value collection, location value collection, and economic rent collection. Maybe also community reward collection. Can others come up with better ideas?

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Elizabeth and Harry G. Brown, two busy retired persons, great workers in the Georgist cause, now living in Columbia, Missouri, have been reaching congressmen, journalists and others with appeals in defense of LVT. "Why should federal taxpayers, including those who have only their wages, be required to contribute billions of dollars to pay for subsidizing housing," they ask, "when the cost of private enterprise housing is kept high by the anti-incentive local tax policy that encourages the speculative holding out of use in our cities, of millions upon millions of vacant lots, thereby keeping the price of land and housing high?"

Further quoting an article from the Columbia Daily Tribune, they state, "if millions of Negroes, and many whites too, are to be freed from having to live in the slums, our local tax system must be reformed. This does not mean higher taxes on 'real estate.' It means progressive untaxing of housing and other improvements, compensated for by higher taxation of community-produced location values. This usually means lower taxes for the majority of homeowners, and it means also, no tax penalty on owners of slums who so improve them that they are slums no longer."

A Free Cities Plan for Vietnam was proposed in The Humanist of January/February. These cities would be free ports similar to Hong Kong, responsible to the U.N., furnishing trade outlets but bearing no political relationship to the country.

Although the authors do not mention economics, an opportunity could be afforded to implement land value taxation as the economic base of such city states if they were ever established.

Certainly the proposal would be doomed from the outset if the role of the U.S. were, as suggested, to "contribute capital at the rate and in the amount now being spent on the war—about two billion dollars per month," without assuring equitable distribution of such capital and the subsequent increased production of wealth.

Indeed the U.S. failure in all its aid programs is precisely the inability to dictate how much aid shall be distributed. With an equitable tax system we would eliminate most of the graft and corruption that is now rampant and which undermines our moral and ethical position before the world. I believe a committee of qualified and outstanding Georgists should be named to study such a plan and see how our ideas could be incorporated in it.