

CONTROLLED INJUSTICE

DONALD Trump, who made his billions out of New York real estate, claims that rent control "stopped protecting the people who needed it the most" - and cites some examples in his autobiography:

- Actress Mia Farrow has 10 rooms overlooking Central Park. She pays about \$2,000 a month for an apartment that might rent for upward of \$10,000 on the open market.

- Singer Carly Simon, lives in the same building and pays

\$2,200 a month for her 10 rooms.

- BBC broadcaster Alistair Cooke pays \$1,100 for an 8-room Fifth Avenue apartment.

- New York's Mayor, Ed Koch, has "a very nice three-room rent-controlled apartment with a terrace in a beautiful part of Greenwich Village" for which he pays \$350 a month - perhaps one-fifth of what it's worth, claims Trump.

* *Trump: the Art of the Deal*, London: Arrow, 1988, pp.168-169.



• Mia Farrow

Move for 'George' reforms

ARGENTINA: The Bishop of Viedma, capital of the Rio Negro province, has called for social justice based on the introduction of an economic programme of reforms of the kind proposed by American reformer Henry George.

Said Monsignor Miguel

Esteban Hesayne: "The land is a gift of God and it is not moral to use it so that its benefits [economic rent] fall upon few people, leaving others - the great majority - excluded."

Known as "the Father Bishop", Hesayne is a leader of the progressive wing of the

Catholic Church in Argentina. His contact with Georgist economics was through Juan Carlos Zuccotti, a graduate of the Henry George School of New York.

SOUTH AFRICA: Cape Town City Council is to re-evaluate its property tax, which some people believe to be inefficient, expensive and a "turn-off" to developers.

A new councillor, Mrs Patricia Sulcas, called for an urgent investigation into the attractions of a tax that fell exclusively on site values. She argued that site value rating was the simplest, most efficient and equitable basis of property taxation.

Added Mrs Sulcas: "If land is more heavily taxed, it will not stop speculation but it will become more expensive to hold land."

FINLAND: Plans for Helsinki's new property tax have become law, and come into effect this year. Prof. Pekka Virtanen reports that *Land and Liberty* was inaccurate in stating that the 10% tax rate on the taxable value of land zoned for multi-family residential dwellings diminishes to 5% in subsequent years.

"In fact," writes Prof. Virtanen, "the first year's rate of 10% increases by 5% in each subsequent year until it is 50% of the taxable values."

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ticipate in what could be an ambitious new phase of crofting because of their (albeit justified) deeply rooted suspicions of Highland landowners and their hidden motives.

Morally, DAFS cannot easily relinquish their responsibilities to their present tenants. It would seem reasonable that they should be directed to devote substantial help, in financial and administrative backup, in order to safeguard the legal interests of the crofters. Any changes to the status quo will take some time to become established and the Scottish Office must realise this.

Some pragmatists are already saying that if the Scottish Office are determined to privatise the DAFS estates then it is up to crofters and the Scottish Crofters Union to take the initiative in proposing a scheme which will limit the potential damage and safeguard the wider interests of crofting.

The recent history of the Thatcher Government indicates that there is little point in ignoring the issue in the hope that it may go away, for it now seems certain that some new venture will shortly emerge from the Scottish Office. Local discussion has already begun among crofters in an attempt to contemplate the proposed changes, to consider the range of alternative options and to ensure adequate presentation of their case if and when the situation should arise.

The worst scenario of all would be for the crofting communities at the receiving end to have no constructive answer at all when Lord Sanderson makes his next move.