

## LAND REFORMER NKOMO BOUND FOR VANCOUVER

defect to the communal system. It encourages under-use rather than over-use of the better land. Thus, it adds its own impetus to emigration.

Irish agricultural conditions ensure that the soft option, cattle or sheep, with few labour and capital management problems, is relatively profitable. So the peasant proprietor has even less incentive to contribute to overall output and employment.

Whereas the surplus under the landlord/tenant system tended to be squandered on dependants and profligate living, and much of it was spent on foreign produce, the surplus is not created in the first place under peasant proprietorship, just as it was not created under the communal system (or was consumed by "surplus" population).

**C**APITAL investment and economic growth have been ignored in the preceding static analysis, but it seems likely that the land value tax system which ranked highest in Table 1 would be more conducive to economic growth than the other systems. Such growth would counter the effect of rent in lowering the size of the workforce.

The spending of rent by government could also be expected to be directed, at least partly, towards satisfying the workforce and therefore raising its real income. Private possessors of rent can be expected to direct the rent only towards satisfying their own desires.

Thus, the depressing effect of rent on wages may be counter-balanced by its being spent publicly.

It may well be, after all, that the money-changers may be driven out of the temple of private property in land without destroying it. But a closer examination of history rather than theory will be necessary to shed light on the need for such a cleansing.

- REFERENCES:
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  4. A. M. Honoré, *Ownership*, in Oxford Essays in Jurisprudence, edited by A. D. Guest, Clarendon Press 1961, p. 108 and p. 113.
  5. B. L. Sotlow, "A New Look at the Irish Land Question", *Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4, July 1981.
  6. R. D. Crotty, *Irish Agricultural Production: Its Failure and Structure*, Cork University Press, 1966, p. 53.
  7. J. Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: 1800-1850*, Allen & Unwin, 1983, p. 146.

DR. JOSHUA NKOMO, Zimbabwe's isolated politician, will address the International Union conference in Vancouver on May 18.

The conference organisers in Canada extended the invitation because Dr. Nkomo has some important views on how to redistribute land and rental income.

He and Robert Mugabe led the guerrilla movement that sought independence for Rhodesia. They led the Zimbabwe African People's Union (which Mr. Mugabe then left to form the Zimbabwe African National Union).

The two leaders knew that land tenure was at the heart of the social and economic problems that confronted the millions of poor black families.

In 1979, Dr. Nkomo suggested a policy for an independent Zimbabwe:

*"We don't believe in trading land or selling land - no. And in any government that I lead, you can be certain those practices must go. That does not mean we will be taking people's land. It means that other people who haven't got money will have a chance to use land, which is the common property of everybody."*

*"And if they have to pay some rates or rents, that will go to a general fund of the people. In this way citizens can use as much land as they want. Our system is this: once you use land, that land belongs to you. But you have not bought it. You cannot sell it to someone. The land belongs to the people, but everything on that land is yours."*

But once the Mugabe-Nkomo team formed their government, differences appeared between them that resulted in Dr. Nkomo falling from power.

Prime Minister Mugabe emphasised



● Dr Joshua Nkomo

a socialist future for his country, which caused alarm among the white landowners. Some form of corrective action was needed, for 6,000 farmers occupied 15m hectares while 6m blacks were crowded into communal areas which were rapidly losing their fertility through over-cultivation.

*Paul Knight writes:* Dr. Nkomo's solution - a tax on the rental value of land, which could be distributed equally among all citizens of the nation - seems to be a sensible solution to Zimbabwe's agricultural problem. Unfortunately, the political split between him and Mr. Mugabe has forced this fiscal solution to the land tenure problem into the background.

Dr. Nkomo will fly to Vancouver for the conference organised by the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade if he is free of his commitments in Zimbabwe.

The conference is being organised by Ms. Mary Rawson, 1406 Woodland Drive, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5L 3S6. Tele: (604) 251-2908.