



## Lars Lindsig's view from the right

Have you ever seen the Monty Python film about the (rather mad) escapades of the knights of King Arthur's round table? In it, one of the knights, Sir Robin, encounters a giant three-headed monster who threatens to kill him. However, the three heads bicker with each other about how and when best to kill Sir Robin—before or after tea—and ultimately fail to do him any harm at all. Because, as the heads discover after their argument, “ee’s bugged off!”

That three-headed monster is the United Nations. The UN is a three-headed monster of bleeding-hearted do-goodery, which produces reports and holds seminars, bickering with itself, only to discover that whatever it opposed or was in favour of, also has “buggered off.”

Yet land tax proponents are positively enamoured with the UN. Particularly, but not exclusively, those of the left. Well, no wonder, as the UN is widely considered as infallible and ‘good’ as Mr Obama. And they’re both full of politically correct hot air.

But change for the better will not happen through the UN.

The UN is powerless. It can advise and produce reports urging the adoption of this tax or the other, which are then generally ignored by its member countries. Despite the UN’s suggestion, for example, Jamaica did not adopt land value taxation in 1962 even though it would have soothed the country’s ailing economy.

Oh, intentions might be good. Perhaps a lot of money and effort was put into a research project that ended up putting forward land value taxation as *the* answer to the ailments of the world. Perhaps someone actually got it. But at the same time that report is released, the UN will have funded research into how income tax in India can become more efficient. Or it will have released a report advocating sales taxes. And so does the argument for a tax on the value of land stand any stronger than anything else?

So much for relying on individual countries to act on the UN’s recommendations. What about the UN itself? Well, it does not raise taxes of its own, not at the moment, but it has tried to do so. On a number of occasions there have been initiatives to promote any number of global UN taxes – on financial transactions, energy consumption and even email. What’s next? Land? That, one might think, sounds enticing: what if the UN took it upon itself to raise a tax on the value of land? Isn’t that what we’d want? Well, no. No, it really isn’t.

Imagine, if you can, an organisation which combines the efficiency of a rural Hungarian Communist party official circa 1960 with the starry-eyed, LSD-induced love of one’s fellow man found in a Deadhead who’s been tripping a little too hard for much too long. If you think it’s annoying to wait a month for the telephone repair man to come round, then how would you feel if he stuck a flower down your receiver, left, and then charged you for it?

And then there’s the view (which I hold) that the collected rent should benefit the community that created it – on a city-wide or regional scale – and not be lost in a world-wide bureaucracy.

No, taxes and the UN do not mix. We do not need world government. It would do us no good – not as individuals, as peoples or as proponents of more efficient and fairer taxes.