

Plan for Success: Concentrate Resources

Sir, I have just read *Personally Speaking, "Land Value Taxation"* by Kenneth Jupp. Now, personally speaking, and, having been in the thick of politics for the last five years and more: I was a public representative, I attended many caucus meetings and understand why things never get done.

I would agree with Sir Kenneth, except for changing the name. I don't think that is an issue and here is my reasoning: Henry George and all Georgists today have in their hearts a desire to see a better, more prosperous society for themselves and others. If the approach were taken to succeed in one state or province in any country in the world and make other states jealous and induce them to enquire about the philosophy of LVT and its success, the concept would grow from a small start to replace all taxes world wide.

How could this happen? Probably impossible – but if all concerned agreed on a simple view of LVT and I emphasise *agree*, it might be possible. To disagree is to open the Georgist movement to being divided and ruled by other interests.

You, the philosophers/Georgists, must govern as Plato proposed: all resources and all manpower programs (that is to say every bit of money and energy) to be homed in on one province or state; the target to be decided at the next congress. Then, over the program time (say five or 10 years), to dominate by filling all political posts and official offices with Georgists. Eventually you would be in the majority and able to implement Land Value Taxation and publish the success worldwide.

The alternative is, knowing you have the formula for achieving the best state for man to live in, to be content with just knowing you are right and seeing the vision fall short of realisation. As I have said, I understand why things never get done.

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Free trade: stand firm

Sir, I would like to comment on Understanding Free Trade (*L&L*, Spring 2001). Why go to the length of trying to alter the King's English to pander to those ignorant members of society, namely labourers, environmentalists and subsistence farmers? They all have the ability to understand Free Trade if they would but think. Free Trade is just as relevant today as it always has been and always will be. Think of the enormous battle Cobden led, using his own resources to obtain Free Trade in corn; so why forget our past history? Stand firm for Free Trade, especially by a Free Trade organisation like the International Union.

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Greens back tax on capital

Sir, Whilst we Georgists smugly believe our paradigm will automatically meet the aspirations of the Greens, the Greens themselves remain largely unconvinced, and in this country even to some degree antagonistic. The connection is at best tenuous.

In both Auckland and Wellington the Greens have promoted Capital Value Rating for Local Govt. as against Land Value Rating, on the grounds that any form of Land Tax would pressure owners into over-intensive use, and that it encourages the destruction of the ambience of yesterday. They would put the whole of society into a straitjacket to preserve a few relics that can be covered by preservation orders and planning ordinances. Their lack of evidence suggests that they might be a front for others with a different agenda.

The evidence that we have, that changes to Land Value Rating are invariably followed by an increase in building permits and thus employment, if anything confirms their concern. That Land Value Rating encourages optimum land use, discourages urban sprawl and maximises the undisturbed environment means nothing to them.

Which Route to Justice?

Sir, Two articles (*L&L*, Winter 2000) carried on the debate started by Tony Vickers in the Autumn issue. Kenneth Jupp illustrated the difficulties in explaining LVT in today's world, and Richard Giles wrote about the choice between "small fiscal steps" or the "frontal assault".

There are those who say that we only need to advocate that a part of the Rent shall be paid to the community, perhaps to encourage developers to carry on their good work! Also that we only need to take that part which is needed to balance the budget. It seems to me that we shall never overcome the hurdles described by Kenneth Jupp if the argument is conducted on such a mundane level. "Why bother" will be the response when all we can show are a few improvements but at the cost of a wholesale change in the tax system, which does after all, deliver revenue to the government on a monthly basis. And are not the poor being dealt with? No, we have to take up the frontal assault. We have to fight with ethics and morality on our side. We have to stand for what is right.

Rent is created by the community and is due to the community. If it is appropriated privately, that is wrong. People are getting rich unjustly. Also, as a consequence, government has to levy taxes on production, and other people are denied their just share. We are facing a massive fraud here, and it is covered up by ignorance, hugely complicated tax systems and welfare substitutes. Therefore we should advocate that all Rent is collected by the community, because that is the right thing to do. Whilst it may be possible to move towards that state in steps in

Unabashed, they make their conservation demands, but apart from taxes that deter pollution and hopefully thus foster alternatives, they have no financial or economic plan, and admit it. Our economic plan contains no conservation element as compelling as the optimum land use example. Town planning and zoning rules can enhance as well as restrain land values and may also protect historic buildings.

At best, under leasehold land tenure or resource licensing, environmental constraints can be made terms of the lease or licence. But constraints are negative. A positive prospect is that greater capital investment in improvements may impel a conservative attitude to resources. A better population distribution based on organic farming would also resolve many problems.

In the absence of a clearly compelling feature in our case we may have to accept the Greens' approach as simply complementary, as indeed it is, and endeavour to convince them that a healthy social and economic plan is as important as their ecological concern, and complementary to it.
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order for adjustments to be made gradually, the ultimate aim should never be fudged, in the name of justice.
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Sir, I found the article "Debt" (*L&L*, Winter 2000) very interesting – also very disturbing. Oxfam and Jubilee 2000, in window dressing the HIPC Initiative, in my view, sold short not only their own supposed principles but those of indebted Third World countries and relevant U.N. organisations excluded from planning.

In accepting anything less than a Jubilee, they have shown favour to the World Bank/IMF initiative. Surely they should not have fallen for this ruse – they are wide enough awake to realise these two organizations are not creditable or trustworthy when it comes to the interest of others?

A copy of the "Debt" article was sent to the National Director of Community Aid Abroad – affiliated with Oxfam – and to a senior officer of the Salvation Army, both of whom I would like to enlighten. The Salvation Army Officer, in response, enquired if there was any additional reliable source or reference to support Dr Hudson's proposition and, if so, where could a copy be obtained.
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