

LOGIC AND REASON
vs EMOTION

Not too many years ago the Henry George School of N.J. was endeavoring to interest people to make a brief study of basic economic principles by taking a course at the school. It was thought that if a person did this he would be convinced of the logical and reasonableness of land value taxation. In the days of the great depression, people were not only concerned but frightened. Many were unemployed and anxious to learn not only why, but what might be expected. It was not too difficult to get classes of 30 or more persons.

We endeavored to present the "case" as so carefully set forth by Henry George in PROGRESS & POVERTY. Dr. E. E. Bowen, who with her husband, Geo. Rusby established the N.J. school, compiled notes from which they published ECONOMICS SIMPLIFIED. As the title of this book indicates it attempted to simplify economics, but still thoroughly set forth the basic principles. (The book is out of print) This book served in N.J. as the text book of the course for a number of years. The Faculty of the N.J. school met frequently and endeavored to increase their knowledge of the fine points of the economic principles which they were teaching.

As the economy apparently improved, and people recovered, then became affluent, their interest in economics waned. It became more and more difficult and expensive to get fewer and fewer people to attend courses offered by the school.

It was believed by the Trustees and Faculty of the school that an emotional approach, while it might possibly attract a greater number, they would not retain loyalty to the Henry George principles. Some other emotional appeal might attract and "George" would be quickly forgotten.

It has occurred to me that, in today's world, people are not attracted by appeal to logic and reason. It seems to me that we might better downgrade that type of appeal and endeavor to get them thinking more about the injustice and harm of our present land tenure system. We ought to appeal to emotion rather than the economic basis of modern society.

I do feel it is necessary to include and stress some of the economic basis of the Land Value Tax movement, but I suggest it be done with the least "jargon" of economics. For instance, in presenting the basic course in N.J. recently we promoted it as "Your Right To Know" - a five session discussion of some of today's pressing problems - principles of obtaining our material desires in a Free Enterprise System -

Natural Sources of Public Revenue, for local, state and Federal Government - Monetary Inflation; Government's role in Business; Possible change in our Land Tenure System toward equality of opportunity.

In presenting the course we started with discussion of Natural Resources - Human Energy, Man-made things including tools and machinery and the formula: $NR + HE + T \& M = P$ (Products) From this we discussed dividing up the Products. We then discussed Public Revenue and Taxation - the natural sources of revenue, the basis of ownership. One session was given to business cycles and industrial depressions; money and credit, inflation. Function and limitation of Government was discussed.

The final session was devoted to our Land Title system and how it might be improved.

Thus the emphasis was shifted more toward emotion rather than cold logic. Did it make for more or fewer converts? Frankly, I do not know. I am really not able to say one way or the other. Logic and reason or emotion? Perhaps both have their place and it may be best to use both in our presentation.

John T. Tetley