

## EULOGY TO MR JOHN HENDERSON CORMACK

It is my privilege to pay tribute to John on behalf of The Henry George Foundation of Great Britain and those who, like John, have devoted such a large portion of their lives to protecting and promoting a body of knowledge essential to the peace and prosperity of the world. John understood how the value of all that nature and society as a *whole* provides, is distinct from what individuals and firms, by their enterprise and work provide. He understood how the value of all that nature and society as a *whole* provides is a natural and just source of public revenue and how taking what individuals and firms, by their own enterprise and work produce, is unjust and inefficient, and is a cause of widespread poverty, stress, unhappiness and war.

My understanding is that John discovered this truth in the early sixties when, after realising that the economics taught at university was not true, he joined an evening class run by the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values. John had a very high regard for Vic Blundell, the Committee's leader, and John would occasionally refer to what he thought he might have said, in connection with certain issues. Later John came to tutor the School's course himself and his commitment to the importance of education remained with him for the rest of his life. He was instrumental in securing the status of the organisation as an educational charity as the United Committee launched ESSRA (Economic and Social Science Research Association) and in the management of its transition to the Centre for Incentive Taxation and in due course to The Henry George Foundation of Great Britain in 1996.

I first met John a few years after this intense period of activity and change when I joined the Foundation's Council of Management where John was Treasurer. By this time the organisation's finances, were far less robust than earlier. The Vauxhall Bridge Road premises had been sold and rooms were rented at The London Fruit Exchange.

The Foundation was still employing a Chief Executive and several staff but by 2005, after another move to offices and a bookshop in Edinburgh, and a rapid depletion of our financial resources I, as Chairman together with John and other members of the Council, were obliged to arrange for all the Foundation's work to be carried out on a voluntary basis. I became Executive Chairman and John's activities as Treasurer increased several fold as he took on everyday responsibility for all matters financial and he continued to perform this role until shortly before he died.

When John first learned that he was seriously ill he prepared to hand over his responsibilities to a successor but there was no obvious successor. After a while a likely candidate was found and John, despite declining health and strength, worked very hard indeed to ensure a smooth handover. Unfortunately, it was not to be, as the candidate withdrew at the last minute. This was a bitter blow, but determined and courageous as John was, he kept going, supporting the system he had built. Eventually he found a suitable replacement himself so that the handover actually took place only a few weeks before his passing.

My experience of working with John was that he never sought the limelight, but that he was the most reliable of allies in support of what I and others were doing to promote the cause that had brought us together.

In this I pay tribute to a principled man who was a key player in preserving the Foundation through difficult times. I am sure he could not have done this without the support of his dear wife Christel and the rest of the family, of whom he was so proud - so my thanks extend to them also.

John's quiet and principled counsel and his absolute reliability will be missed by the Foundation and the wider economic justice community of which he was an important part. 