

To Mr. Pat Aller
Ass. Director Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York.

Dear Mr. Aller,

Thanks to your postcard of 9th January '85 I do know that you and others appreciate my principles but you feel also that there is much ethical even among those who seem only pro-LVT.

Meanwhile I have got G.J. nr 46, contents duly noted.

In his editorial Robert Clancy holds: "wages to labor, interest to capital, rent to society" (unq) However, neither in common talk, nor in academic circles are these terms exactly determined to-day.

To give them a practical sense and understanding an amplification is needed: for ages wages go to laborers, interest to capitalists, and land-rent to land-owners.

This statement reveals a close connection between interest and rent, two powers dependent on labor. Capital is unable to produce anything without the help of labor and labor is unable to produce anything without the help of the productive forces of nature and without the help of raw materials. Labor is the dominant factor in production, nevertheless its share in the distribution of wealth fixes itself at the lowest level. May be that rent exceeds interest of quite the contrary but interest draws most attention, exchange news is daily world news.

In fact there are three means of collecting unearned income:

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|-------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. the lease of land | } | the yield is called either interest or rent. |
| 2. the loaning of money | | |
| 3. the lending out of capital | | |

To Georgists nbr 1 is the Great evil-doer, the object upon which everyone's eyes are fixed. Endless discussions without making any progress during a century.

Nbr 2. In the Netherlands 8% of the Gross National Produce is needed for the redemption of national debts. These debts never stop. We still pay redemptions of debts and rents of the Napoleonic wars. Since the entry into office of the present minister of finance ten loans of State have been issued at different rates, some at 12%, subscriptions amounted to over one miljard guilders each. Statistics report that the debts of the Third World amount to 3 billion dollars.

Who is to pay the redemptions and rents?

It cannot be paid from land-values, neither from values in general. Income is charged for it! Income is part of produce, part of wages, consequently part of labor.

The incomes of land-owners, or capitalists are not produced by themselves but taken from productive labor. In general it is taken that they share in paying tribute to the State's expenditures but actually they don't.

Nbr 3. Capital is the result of labor and land, therefore dwellings are capital also. Now, in the Netherlands 10m out of 14 million inhabitants live in rented houses. These people have to pay rent for land and interest for capital in one lump sum during their lifetime. How long will it take to explain to them that a tribute to land-owners is incorrect and a tribute to capitalists is correct. Why would we propose a taxshift while the dwellers are unable to see the difference.

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On examining the address delivered by Henry George on 18th february 1884 and titled Scotland and Scotsmen, it seems to me that the introduction of the existing tax-system into the objective of George, is obvious because the tax-legislation was felt as an injustice by the men of small means.

First of all George made a cry for justice and to show in what way he preached following quotations may serve:

page 5: the man who commands the land, on which and from which other men live commands these men.

To Mr. Aller, second page.

- page 15: I have been pointing out the evil, how can it be cured?
It cannot be cured by half-way measures.
- " 16: Take no stock of those people who preach moderation.
Take this wild beast by the throat.
Proclaim the grand truth that every human being born in
Scotland has an inalienable and equal right to the soil
of Scotland.
- " 19: Because you are governed by a landowning aristocracy that
likes to make war and finds a profit in making war.
(mind the Falkland war)
- " 19: Once give the people an opportunity, give mind a chance
to develop and the forces of production would increase
at a rate never dreamed of. (mind the present state of
unemployment amounting to 13.6 million in nine countries
of the European common market.)
- " 22 When you open up the land... etc
- " 26 If we break up the monopoly of land... etc
- " 26 It is the present system that is confiscatory...
It is confiscating labour every day...
It is not a robbery that is done and passed away...
It is a fresh robbery that is committed on every child...

At Zeist someone remarked: I urge Georgists to use the same
language as H.G. did.

How George made use of the tax-legislation:

- page 6 You charge and fine a man...etc
- " The owner holds a field worth 90.000 pds and you don't
charge any taxes for it.
- 17 You can easily take the revenue...etc
- 17 Dr. Cameron wants to re-establish the old, ancient tax
upon land. I want to go a little further.
- 17 You can divide the income drawn from the land...
- 17 The landlords will be routed....
- 21 The nationalisation of the rent of land...
- 26 I would take all rent in the economic sense.

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From the foregoing one may conclude that George's objective was
to restore the land to the common people and not to tax land-values.
From previous letters one may know that in my opinion, taxation of
land-values is an impossibility. Tax-levying is based on income,
never on values in general and never on land-values.

Properties, antiques, etc, are not being taxed themselves, only
income derived from these objects are being taxed.

Land is like air, like rain, like sunshine, it is indispensable,
its rent is based on monopoly and not a reflection of the true value
in production.

Land-maps could be useful but not at present for the same reason.

How can we go on? The difference of insight is very old. As a
proof I have copied and enclose an article, written by J.W. Graham
Peace and published in the Commonweal september 1927, 58 years ago.
I hope that it will induce pro LVT'rs to reconsider their position.

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(now read the attached copy of
Land Restorationists, NOT Land-Taxers.)

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Land restorationists, NOT Land Taxers!

Mr. Chester C. Platt, whose visits to the C.L.P. offices we remember with pleasure, tells in an article in the current Land & Freedom, of his discovery when rummaging in an attic, of some back numbers of Spread the Light, a journal published in New York in the early days of the Georgist Movement. In the first number of the paper, Mr. Platt found an account of a "Land Restoration Dinner," held in that city, which leads him to remark: "Land Restorationists" the land taxers called themselves in those days.

This was so, not only in America, but here in Britain, too. The name fitted. It indicated crisply, clearly and quite accurately the objective of Henry George; and, by its directness, left no room for misunderstanding upon the part of anyone conversant with the meaning of words. By its very boldness of demand it was attractive to all real Radicals and lovers of Justice, while also directly challenging the accepted view of those persons, who, whether from mistaken self-interest or mental inertia, were content to leave things as they found them. It left no loophole for timid compromising, and, by implication, ruled right out of the discussion any and all suggestions that there could be any bargaining with Land Lords. It was a name which summed up in two words the substance of the literature and oratory of the Georgist Movement, and which contained both a statement of fact and a prophecy. "Land Restoration" - the fact: that the land was being stolen; the prophecy: that it would be restored, i.e. given back!

The bold appeal to that inherent sense of justice within all men, will ever meet with a ready and enthusiastic response. Mr. T. Johnson, Editor of the Scottish Socialist weekly, Forward, and Labour M.P. for Dundee, in his "History of the Working Classes in Scotland," records that: "Two thousand men joined the Land Restoration League at the conclusion of a meeting in Glasgow addressed by Henry George, who had toured Scotland and had fired masses of men with his passion and eloquence, and among those who he most influenced was James Keir Hardie, the young leader of the Lanarkshire miners". The issue presented to those men was not an anaemic plea for a little on account of their due, but a full-blooded, forthright demand for Justice.

That was 43 years ago, since when, the Georgist Movement has wandered in the wilderness. The reason for this being, in our view, the unfortunate change of name, adopted after George had returned to America, leaving the cause in the charge of Liberal politicians. These sought to turn the enthusiasm of the masses into channels favourable to their political party, but were faced with the opposition of wealthy Whigs, coal "owners", ironmasters, Land Lords, and so forth, who had no intention whatever of "restoring" their lands! To placate that opposition, the fatal course was adopted of whittling down the demand. Instead of "Land Restoration" the "Taxation of Land Values" was substituted, and the fundamental moral issue that George had raised was dragged down to the level of a miserable squabble over a paltry town rate of a penny in the pound. Instead of the demand for Justice, was offered the argument over "taxation", always an unattractive subject to the common people, who feel in a vague sort of way that it cannot matter very much to them how taxes are raised, since they know that it is upon their shoulders the bulk of the burden falls.

Land Restorationists, NOT Land Taxers!

It is easy to be wise after the event, but we cannot help feeling those responsible ought to have realised that by such an alteration in the presentation of the case, all the fire of moral enthusiasm for a right principle would be extinguished. This is what happened; and to-day we have the spectacle of professed Georgists, members of the same organisation, going into an election fight, some as Liberals, to oppose others ranged under the banner of Labour! In such circumstances it is idle to pretend that the Truth that George proclaimed is being served; the respective Georgists may, indeed, they do talk "land Taxation" but the net result is to make themselves look ridiculous while they cancel each other out.

Then, too, it is not a "tax" that is demanded, but the collection of a rent - our rent. Considered quite apart from its merit, there is this to be said for presenting it as a "rent": once the people come to understand that the rent due to themselves is going to others, they quickly will insist upon its collection.

The politicians have not the slightest intention of giving effect to their promises, but are willing to use the "Taxation of Land Values" as bait to help in catching votes. With them, the matter of Land is just one of quite a number of "questions"- and that is all. Realising this, the founders of the C.L.P. sought for several years to get their former colleagues to see the need for a return of first principles. We urged the importance of the correct terminology, and the psychological and moral value of the bold demand for justice. We were not successful in convincing all of them, and so, nearly nine years since, the definite step was taken, we came out from all political parties and essayed the task of preaching the Truth, the Whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, regardless of the politicians might do. That step has been fully justified in the event. Those of us who in pre-war days, and in association with the Liberal party, were hampered in our advocacy of the Truth by reason of that association, now enjoy full liberty of expression and, in consequence, are conscious of a greater power in our service. We could wish that those who fear to trust the people in this matter might be with us to see and feel for themselves. Mixed audiences, men and women and young people standing in the open, and even in the rain, to hear the glad tidings, and to show by their questions (of which there is never any lack) that they understand and approve of the C.L.P. demand.

We would, in all friendliness, urge upon Georgists everywhere, that they rise to the height of our great argument and, discarding all timidity, stand forth fearlessly and uncompromisingly to proclaim the eternal truth entrusted to their charge. In a word: let them proclaim themselves "Land Restorationists", not "Land Taxers".

(This article was published Sept. 3, 1927 in The Commonwealth Vol. VIII No. 36 by J.W. Graham Peace) on behalf of the

COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY

now 58 years ago. Wim Born.

Well, Mr. Aller, radicals like Graham Peace may be extinct and the pro LVT'rs did survive, but at what price?

In the Netherlands, where the movement is a hundred years old, we have had Georgists of all kinds. All have got lost but one: the Grondvest Foundation. During years they advocated the purchase of land on a mortgage base and to redempt these debts from the rents they thought to get. No response from the populous except that a lot of cities and towns have acquired land in the past boom years at prices far above its economic value and leaving the taxpayers with enormous debts. Now Grondvest seems to switch on to advocate tax shift. However, only a couple of men and women are active in the movement, in fact they are powerless.

I suppose the organisations abroad are likewise powerless. What may be the cause?

Firstly: taxation of land-values is a delusion as indicated before.
Secondly: dependant of the state of development of a country, the standard of living, rich or poor countries, either preponderant agrarian or industrial countries the objective is to be achieved in quite different means.

Instead of giving everyone free hand, the phrase TLV + free trade has been lifted up to a dogma like a religious dogma. It is delivered as an eternal truth, beyond all doubts and fettered to an IU declaration that is impenetrable.

The Netherlands is an agrarian country but only 7% of the populous is active in the agrarian sector. I know by experience that farmers prefer to own their lands and prefer paying taxes rather than paying rent. TLV suggests taxing of farmers. However, farmland is not important compared with urban land.

When George was asked: "why do you address meetings in large cities",,, etc, he answered: "because in the large cities the evils of land monopoly are best seen and it is there that I look for the force that is to reform those evils. The urbanisation in America is continuing. (unq)

I think George was right and The Nucleus, written by my son, is dedicated to the sequences of the differences in site-values in the cities. There is the centre of gravity.

Mr. W. H. Pitt wrote: Nucleus is a good production, and I see many points that need to be brought into a work that I am preparing. (unq) I recommend his "site rental manifesto".

Geoff Forster wrote: Glad to hear about your son's efforts and his original approach. It is indeed hard to get the sort of assistance that he is seeking.

Now, what about the second part of the phrase "free trade"? People here say: we live in a free country, we have free trade, what else do you want?

People can't understand what real "free trade" means. In Europe tariffs amount to \pm 20% of the merchandise and it is still thought: we enjoy free trade.

Mr. Aller, I have copied for you and enclose the preface of "protection and free trade" by Henry George as a reminder. Don't you think that the lapse of the movement is caused as well by the sinking into oblivion of these principles?

What is to be done to improve propaganda?

Georgists are decent people but at the same time small capitalists. They enjoy interests from their savings and don't realize that they enjoy the same privilege for which they blame land-owners. That must be recognized.

Necessary is to update Georgian principles to our time, introducing the meaning of banking business, financial policies, credit-giving, loan-negotiations, etc.

I propose to abolish the term TLV + free trade but for all, let us return to the language Henry George used. Let we present us as Georgists and name our movement:

The Georgist Movement, or The Georgist Message, or The Georgist Gospel.

Wim Born



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
Customer Services Department
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Washington, DC 20260-6300

February 19 85

Mr. W. A. Born
3e Helmersstraat 84.II
1054 BM Amsterdam

Dear Customer:

Thank you for your recent stamp subject proposal.

As you will appreciate, we receive thousands of suggestions for stamp subjects each year. Only a few subjects can be selected, however, because of the limited number of stamps and stationery items issued annually.

The Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, a group comprised of individuals from outside the Postal Service, has the task of reviewing all proposals and making recommendation to the Postmaster General for approval.

The Committee previously considered this proposal, but did not recommend such a stamp for issuance. Since it is the Committee's practice to reconsider subjects when there is a new expression of interest, I have requested that your proposal be placed on the Committee's agenda for further review at the next meeting. Your correspondence will be included in the file prepared in support of this proposal for review by the members.

We appreciate your interest in our stamp program.

Sincerely,

Hugh McGonigle

Hugh McGonigle
Philatelic Communications Specialist
Stamp Development Branch

Protection or Free trade by Henry George.

The author's preface.

In this book I have endeavoured to determine whether protection or free trade better accords with the interests of labour, and to bring to a common conclusion on this subject those who really desire to raise wages. (that is my special concern, W.B.)

I have not only gone over the ground generally traversed, and examined the arguments commonly used, but, carrying the inquiry farther than the controversialists on either side have ventured to go, I have sought to discover why protection retains such popular strength in spite of all exposures in its fallacies; to trace the connection between the tariff question and those still more important social questions, now rapidly becoming the "burning questions" of our times; (the overall "neglected questions" in my time. W.B.) 1985 and to show to what radical measures the principle of free trade logically leads. While pointing out the falsity of the belief that tariffs can protect labour, I have not failed to recognise the facts which give this belief vitality, and, by an examination of these facts, have shown, not only how little the working classes can hope from that mere "revenue reform" which is miscalled "free trade" but how much they have to hope from real free trade. By thus harmonising the truths which free traders perceive with the facts that to protectionists make their own theory plausible, I believe I have opened ground upon which those separated by seemingly irreconcilable differences of opinion may unite for that full application of the free-trade principle which would secure both the largest production and the fairest distribution of wealth.

By thus carrying the inquiry beyond the point where Adam Smith and the writers who have followed him have stopped, I believe I have stripped the vexed tariff question of its greatest difficulties, and have cleared the way for the settlement of a dispute which otherwise might go on interminably. The conclusions thus reached raise the doctrine of free trade from the emasculated form in which it has been taught by the English economists to the fullness in which it was held by the predecessors of Adam Smith, those illustrious Frenchman with whom originated the motto Laissez faire, and who, whatever may have been the confusions of their terminology or the faults of their method grasped a central truth which free traders since their time have ignored.

My effort, in short, has been to make such a candid and thorough examination of the tariff question, in all its phases, as would aid men to whom the subject is now a perplexing maze to reach clear and firm conclusions. In this I trust I have done something to inspire a movement now fainthearted with the earnestness and strength of radical conviction, to prevent the division into hostile camps of those whom a common purpose ought to unite, to give to efforts for the emancipation of labour greater definiteness of purpose, and to eradicate that belief in the opposition of national interests which leads peoples, even of the same blood and tongue, to regard each other as natural antagonists.

Henry George.

Wim Born.

From Single Tax
The Scottish Land Restoration Union Journal
October 1894!!!

"I warn ministers, I warn landowners and the aristocracy of this country, against forcing upon the attention of the middle and industrial classes the subject of taxation. For great as I believe the grievance of the protective system, mighty as I consider the fraud and injustice of the Corn Laws, I verily believe if you ...examine... the history of taxation in Britain for the last 150 years you will find as black a record against the landowners as even in the Corn Law itself. I warn them against (indoctrinating?) the subject of taxation. If they (don't) want another League at the death of this one---if they (don't) want another organisation and a motive---then let them force (get?) the middle and industrial classes to understand how they have been cheated, robbed and bamboozled."

Richard Cobden.

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Believe it or not!

March 1985

The Union originated in GLASGOW in 1884 with the sole object of collecting GROUNDRENT as COMMUNITY revenue instead of TAXATION. That title "Land Restoration" does not describe nor divulge its true purpose. It is GROUND-RENT as State revenue, not land, which is the objective. GROUND-RENT IS DETERMINED BY THE LOCATION.

I.E. Strathmore or Oxford Circus as it happens. Except in leasehold it is immoral for a person, a group, or the State to own, buy or sell LAND. RES COMMUNES! Like the free natural gifts of AIR, RAIN and SUNLIGHT, LAND has no ^{money} value. When people fail to understand phenomena they coin abstract terms and self-contradictory phrases. Sciologist economics perpetuate land-owning. The Union failed to understand the wide implications of Cobden's warning. Nor see in a LABOUR MARKET with its rat-race, poverty-trap and needless human suffering amid potential plenty---A SOCIAL INCONGRUITY---cheated robbed and bamboozled.

James H. MacMurchie
99, Main Street
East Kilbride
Glasgow G74 4LN
21st March 1985.

I think this communication of James fit to enclose a copy of it into my letter to Mr. Pat Aller, Assistant Director of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York

Wim Born

(this letter to Mr. Pat Aller has been compiled by
W.A. Born, 3e Helmersstraat 84.II 1054 BM Amsterdam-Holland
Born at Amsterdam 1906 and active in the movement since 1930.
The very Nucleus of the economy, written by my son, is
obtainable free of charge. I have taken the costs to my charge
but actually I didn't pay for it. I have my savings too and
used the interest for publishing. So, the borrowers of my money
paid for it. No one need to be ashamed to ask for a copy!

Wim Born