

Date: September 27, 1995
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Subject: LandAccess #7: Using the internet

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From: AGodiva@aol.com ()
Subject: LA: Open Letter to Robt. Einsweiler, Res
Sent On: 11/06 01:23 AM PM ET

Date: Mon, 6 Nov 1995 00:10:57 -0500
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Subject: LA: Open Letter to Robt. Einsweiler, Research Dir., Lincoln Inst.

Open Letter to Robert C. Einsweiler, Director of Research, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Dear Mr. Einsweiler,

I have continued to reflect upon your recent presentation at the Policy Roundtable session at the The Jerome Levy Economics Institute conference on Land, Wealth, and Poverty. Of most concern to me are your comments questioning the usefulness and validity of Steve Cord's building permit statistics for two-rate tax cities in Pennsylvania and the Oates and Schwab research on Pittsburgh. You indicated that these studies were either flawed or not sufficiently conclusive to serve as validation for the positive effects of land value tax policies.

These are the only studies to date that land value tax activists have available to confirm the positive benefits of the two-rate system. If what I refer to as evidence is indeed of little value as economic indicators, then I am left with nothing but conjecture and hearsay as to the effects of land value taxation.

If what you say is true, then I am obviously ill-informed and am passing on misinformation to others. Your comments at the conference made me look as though "the lady just doesn't know what she's talkin' about."

If indeed there is no legitimate research indicating the usefulness of Pennsylvania's two-rate approach, and if Lincoln Institute would thus make us (land value tax activists and advocates) out to be ill-informed amateurs or even worse, then perhaps I need to consider disengaging from the land value tax movement and turning my energy towards more direct access approaches to land rights, such as the community land trust movement, which does have tangible and visible results on people's lives, not subject to the obtuse complexities of economic analyses.

Beyond the labyrinthian intricacies of econometric machinations, all I know is this. When mother and father bird sense that it is time to start a family, they gather twigs and build a nest. There are no shelters for distressed and homeless birds, no bird bread lines, and no bird refugee camps.

There is no need for statistics to prove that bird parents freely gather twigs to build nests. Nor must I rely on experts to tell me that baby birds come from the bodies of their bird parents, who will carefully and lovingly attend to those babies, never dreaming of dropping cold latchkeys into the nest when there are wriggling warm worms aplenty.

Somehow, it all seems so simply true. Or is it just for the birds? I suspect that if the day ever dawned that bird culture came to rely on economists and statisticians to make them doubt what is obvious, they will be in as much trouble as we are.

Mr. Einsweiler, intelligent soldiers do not go onto the battlefield without sharp swords. And armchair academics and endowed economists seldom have the courage to fundamentally alter the status quo. If you and your colleagues at the

Lincoln Institute are unable to come..up with excellent statistics that will help activists secure the human birthright to the earth, then would you be so kind as to pick up your marballs and clear the field?
Most sincerely, Alanna Hartzok
