

Acknowledgements

READERS WILL RECOGNIZE that the central theme of this book borrows heavily from common knowledge and from the wisdom of the ages as passed down by writers, philosophers, theologians and statesmen, living and dead. Most are unnamed but I am in their debt.

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Helping to keep me from taking the work too seriously was scientist friend Joseph Sucher, whose cynical response to the book's basic formula was a classic: "Nobody will adopt it – it makes too much sense!"

I owe special thanks to an admired mentor, Lowell Harriss, chairman emeritus of the Columbia University economics department. We participated in an intensive study of U.S. assessment practices and served together on the Schalkenbach Foundation board. Touchingly, a few months before his death, at age 97, he sent detailed handwritten suggestions about my draft and phoned to say it was urgent "to get the message out".

Public Management (PM) magazine used an article titled "Retooling Property Taxes" as the lead piece in the magazine's March 2010 issue, which is published by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Washington, D.C. The article was based on successful United States land tax reforms detailed in Chapter 28. The magazine article elicited follow-ups from a number of local government managers. My thanks to *PM* editor Beth Payne.

It was my good fortune that Shephard-Walwyn in London, England, took my manuscript under its wings. Publisher Anthony Werner, along with editor Alice Aldous and designer Jean Desebrock, combined great care and remarkable speed to enable this book to become part of the search for new economic directions. They fully shared the author's eagerness that messages herein would contribute useful guidance to policymakers working to halt the current crisis and to avert future ones.

The usual caveat, as true as it is necessary, is that none of the many who tried to help with the book are to blame for errors of fact or concept, for which the author bears full responsibility.