

More On Space — Exploration Under Water

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Lina Keller's article in the November HGN, "Sharing the Ocean Wealth," serves as a challenge to Georgists to apply their thesis to the "land" under the waters of the world, as a contribution to the increasing amount of research and development of the knotty problems of exploitation of such lands for the harvesting and extraction of minerals.

Miss Keller referred to the address by Dr. Arvid Pardo, Ambassador to the U.N. from Malta, when he said on November 1, 1967 to the U.N.: "the current international law encourages the appropriation of the ocean floor by those who have the technical competence to exploit it." In July 1967 President Johnson remarked, "under no circumstances, we believe, must we ever allow the prospects of rich harvest and mineral wealth to create a new form of colonial competition among the maritime nations. We must ensure that the deep seas and the ocean bottoms are, and remain, the legacy of all humans." Ambassador Goldberg suggested that the U.N. establish a "committee on the oceans" for the General Assembly, using as a precedent the committee on the Outer Space Treaty.

Dr. Pardo suggested that "an international authority with quite wide powers with regard to the sea bed and the ocean floor—powers to license exploitation of resources—be used exclusively for peaceful purposes." He also included regulatory powers to enforce certain precautions with regard to min-

ing and pollution. He foresaw that the income could ultimately be of the order of five or six billion dollars a year, which could be used for financing exploration of the sea bed and for the assistance, as Miss Keller pointed out, of the poorer nations. A certain amount could be put aside yearly for the international bank.

Information available to me does not state how such eventual vast income actually will be acquired. Would it be through leases, royalties, taxes on production? A temporary U.S. commission on marine resources on which industry is well represented is expected to suggest development of the sea bed's resources by private enterprise through profit incentives.

As a basis for discussion among Georgist groups it would seem logical to permit private industry, with the payment of licensing fees, to explore the ocean bottoms outside any continental shelves and slopes. After ascertaining the extent of mineral resources the claims could be registered. Location values, fully assessed by an international agency to determine rents or leaseholds, would be paid perhaps as royalties in lieu of taxes on production. It could be presumed that socialist or communist countries would be subject to the same processes.

These brief remarks dealing with an enormously complicated problem are set forth merely to encourage discussion and implementation by the Georgist experts among us.

Rebuttal by Lina M. Keller

Don't tear down the old house of national competition but fashion a new roof out of the global environment which will cover and protect it.

Concerning dry land development,

Henry George pointed out that it was the speculator's gain and humanity's loss when society sanctioned a practice under which a private party could buy land at a nominal rate and resell it at a

phenomenal rate—without man's efforts having added to the value of the land in the interim, and without recognition having been accorded to society's right to have land used rather than hoarded.

In wet land development man's option to speculate in this fashion has been removed by the fact that man cannot live under water but can recover the land resources by the use of machinery. It might be said that nature has taken over pragmatically to correct the fault which George pointed out ethically but which man, as a whole, never corrected voluntarily.

As the land speculator has given way to the entrepreneur in wet land development, the private landlord has given way to the governmental landlord—the Johanssen comment (December HGN), "it was fortunate that until the 20th century there was no international organization . . ." to the contrary.

One fact which more than anything else brings about this condition is the necessity to cope with a water depth as land is surveyed and mapped. Only a government can prepare the ocean lease, and only the exclusive use of a particular piece of property as incorporated by the ocean lease can justify the entrepreneur's effort.

If food and minerals are to be recovered from the water and land beneath it, both a governmental landlord and an entrepreneur must have freedom to function—one as manager of land and revenues, the other as a profit-maker once his obligation to society is made in the George way, payment of ground rent at the place where land is taken over for profit.

The question for all those who are interested in the Henry George philosophy is—what shall be done with the monies which have been collected in the George way? National governments

into which continental land is divided—there being at present some 135 of the same—are largely law and order (military) regimes. Is it not time to go beyond the law and order concept to a collaboration of man with nature which, of necessity, means ecological understanding rather than piece-meal exploitation?

This was the reason it was suggested that an Environmental Research and Development Council incorporated within an already existing institution, the United Nations, might be a good idea. Let those who are so quick to censure but study the international cooperation carried out by one agency alone, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, as it contrasts with weapon building and war promotion at the competitive and political levels of national sovereignties.

There is a more urgent reason why public opinion must project a different *kind* of government. Under terms of advanced technology, the world can be destroyed through pollution and oxygen deficiency as well as through bombs. Instead of Bauer's "tough international law that will keep the sea open to all," who, in the words of President Johnson would "race to grab and to hold the lands under the high seas," there should be: one, an ecological science having international jurisdiction to prevent pollution and promote farming of the sea; two, an international landlord of the sea with power to allocate leases and collect rents; three, a budgeting and allocation agency to carry forward points one and two, as well as keep in mind the need for bringing together an air, sea and land complex into an operational unit. This should in no way duplicate national sovereignty but supplement it and provide the global planning which has long been neglected.

The highest service we can perform for others is to help them to help themselves.
—Horace Mann