

WHO WANTS ANOTHER TAX?

Morgan Harris

LAND VALUE TAXATION ? WE ALREADY HAVE IT

What do you mean, you want land value taxation? Isn't land taxed in this country?

Well, yes, but...

Isn't it taxed according to its value: worthless land taxed little or nothing, more valuable land taxed more, and the best land taxed the most?

Yes, but...

But what?

WHY DON'T YOU SAY SO?

But we want other taxes eliminated, so that will be the only tax.

If you want to remove other taxes, why don't you say so? Why do you keep talking as though you are proposing to sock people with some new tax?

Well, we thought...

No, you didn't. If you would think -- even for a minute -- you would realize that people will go along with a program of eliminating taxes. But they will be turned off and will turn against you as long as you talk about imposing a tax that they never heard of.

Instead of emphasizing that you are trying to eliminate taxes, you make people think you are trying to impose some additional tax on them. No wonder they're against you.

WHAT HENRY GEORGE ADVOCATED

Henry George never spoke of land value taxation. He was not advocating some new tax. He advocated reducing and repealing taxes on earned incomes.

Those Georgists who have succeeded in getting the phrase "land value taxation" into the language of economics have done a deadly disservice to the movement. They could atone for this by establishing in the field of economics the concept Henry George used: "earned incomes vs. unearned incomes."

TELL THE TRUTH

All you have to do to win people's support is tell the truth. Why don't you tell people that you advocate eliminating taxes on buildings and improvements? Why don't you make it clear that you advocate reducing and eliminating taxes on wages and incomes, on merchandise and manufactured goods, on raw materials, machinery, and other capital goods, on sales, purchases, production, on business and commerce?

TELL THEM THEN

But they'll want to know where the money will come from to run the government.

Tell them then. THEN. When they ask. Not now. Not first. Not before they ask.

A smart salesman does not start to sell a car by talking about the cost. He'd scare his customers away (just like Georgists scare their customers away). He starts by showing and demonstrating to you all the good things about the car. Only after he has you "sold" on wanting to own the car does he tell you the price.

Pity Georgists get too soon old and too late smart.