

LETTER TO AN ACADEMIC

Dear Professor Alston,
A.N.U., Canberra.

As reported in the West Australian 13/7/92, you are doing a necessary service to the nation in recommending a public debate on the subject of Human Rights.

It would take a lifetime to read and examine documents that have been published by the United Nations on the subject, but this however would be a waste of time, because the one essential condition has been carefully omitted.

Unless all people have equality of opportunity to apply their labour, directly or indirectly, to the God-given, freely provided, resources of nature, the land of their country, there can be no ~~security of employment or relief from~~ poverty.

About 10% of the people in most countries, including Australia, have been enabled to acquire 90% of the land value of their respective countries and in consequence, land can only be inhabited by the majority, subject to unearned tribute being paid to the favoured few. In many cases this tribute in the form of site rent, or land price (capitalised rent), cannot be afforded and unemployment is the inevitable result.

The site rental value of land arises because of the presence and industry of all the people in an economic community, and not from the efforts of individual landholders, except as members of the community. The site rental value of land, therefore, is natural public revenue.

Instead of its collection on behalf of the people, to pay the cost of necessary public services, taxes are imposed which fine consumers and producers for satisfying their desires and requirements, and so inhibit production and worsen unemployment.

It is not very helpful to inform a young, homeless unemployed person that although he or she does not have the right of opportunity to work, freedom of speech and the right to defy parents, is nevertheless, permissible.

Enforced idleness and injustice are the basic causes of social disorder.

Suicide has increased nearly 400% since 1965. Violent and fraudulent crime are almost out of control.

Our vast, richly endowed continent, is so sparsely populated that it has become indefensible, while our land-hungry neighbouring countries are populating at an increasing rate.

It is treasonable, under such circumstances, to deny the basic right of

Australians to use Australian land, but to permit land monopolists and speculators to withhold much of the country from use. To secure equality of opportunity for all, it is only necessary for each to pay for the market assessed value of the locational advantages which attach to their holding.

Graham Hart,
Hon. Secretary,
Georgist Education Association (W.A.)