



With reference to Archie V. Gerard's letter (March HGN) "privilege income" is not the right term. The words, "tax it as a personal income" prove its incorrectness. Privilege is all right — but it is not an income.

The fruits of land are collected by individuals, but that is *not* their income. They have to transfer it to the treasury and pay "the market value of the site-privilege," as S. S. Gilchrist puts it (in an I.U. newsletter).

Government rents this privilege to the highest bidder, irrespective of the use he makes of it. Maybe I offer the highest bid for a parcel just across the street, so that from the window of my living room I can keep a nice outlook over the meadows and the setting sun. I'm prepared to pay for this privilege. Produce or income from this lot in terms of money is nonsense.

Also "tax" is the wrong term. We should not burden persons or personal income, for we advocate to abolish *all* taxes, and we should not spoil our case by saying "only one." For a tax is a burden, but a rent for a privilege is not a burden — rather an offer at free will.

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Under a recent state court ruling, state and county tax officials are required to make uniform assessments. But they often overlook suburban speculative holdings which comprise one class of realty most frequently underassessed. Even though it may be surrounded by housing or business developments, if it is former farm land the holder demands that it be assessed as agricultural land, until he thinks it is ripe. Then he asks that it be rezoned

and collects a huge gain on which he pays a maximum of 25 percent "capital gains" tax.

While he has held it, the small tax he has paid to the local government has been a deductible item from his income for taxes. Is it any wonder that cities are starving for funds, running hat in hand to state or federal agencies for a handout?

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I am a regular reader of HGN and I think I understand land value taxation. This is no criticism, but I think your paper is too "stuff shirted" in trying to make the public understand the "foul tactics" of land speculation. The history of the great American fortunes is full of dishonest manipulation. Corruption goes on all around us. Perhaps your approach is too "fair."

One of the most ominous of present-day tactics is the eroding of personal freedom. This invasion is a trend away from individual responsibility to collectivist uniformity. The population is hypnotized to believe it is prosperous, yet poverty persists.

The occasional individual who wakes up to what is happening is shouted down. The public is so brainwashed through the mass media that it is willingly and consistently humbugged. Remember Barnum the Prince of Humbugs? He told people to come and see a cherry-colored cat — a black cat. (Some cherries are black). Foul tactics?

Henry George was an honest, fair man, but he was lambasted.

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