

# the Henry George News

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## *My Canada and My Ire*

By ARCHIBALD McCOLL

WELL I am home again richer in knowledge and poorer in pelf. I have gathered a small hundred acre place on the edge of Toronto. It was too hilly for good farming, but you would be prosecuted and persecuted if you did anything else with it. The restrictions prevent dividing into less than 25 acres. Thousands of people would gladly pay me \$2000 for a one-acre lot where they can live in rural comfort in a house costing about \$12,000 with a garage and a stable for a couple of hosses for snob appeal. But the real estate board has put through zoning laws to prevent the land being sold by anyone but a licensed subdivider.

The land tax is very high for the farmer, and his crops are assessed if he raises anything. I was going to put in wheat and make a few thousand on the wheat boom, but if I did I would double my taxes which are \$600 now for doing nothing. If I feed livestock they will get me on the buildings, the stock, and the sales taxes.

But if a real estate subdivider gets it the taxes will go down as undeveloped land. If he builds a park and a club it will be a public development and he will get out of taxes. Nobody

line the highway with signs telling that members only are eligible to buy, and those who are eligible can get in at \$5000 an acre. The suckers who rush to pay for a real estate board's schemes will own the half-million-dollar mortgage that builds the roads and clubhouse.

The farmers are the greatest victims of the smooth talking crooks who pass laws in the name of progress to keep them broke so they can get their land. Farmers are not able to resist the urban sprawl under the development planners. Most of them try to continue farming even where it is impossible to meet the tax bill. If they wanted to be "developers" they would be discriminated against by the local council, the court of revision, and the loan companies. So they usually hang on till the bailiff sells their equipment and the tax collector threatens seizure, then the "developer" gets the land for a song—a song that dooms human beings to the slavery of the 30-year mortgage.

So withers freedom's tree! The old fashioned cultivator who has produced food in peace and war for these North American nations and for our governments to give away to people who will not help themselves. (Canada is giving

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\$75 million in wheat, flour, dried peas and beans to India), must continue to produce under a tax load that would set his U.S. cousin to screaming louder than he does now. India has millions more cows than we and maybe they will send us some of their "religious" cattle before we starve to death.

Some reward for trusteeship should go to the freedom loving farmers who with strong backs and oxen built the one-room schoolhouses that educated the next wave of immigrants. Then they showed the third wave of immigrants how to drive horses and operate machines. They took them into their homes and taught them the language and the decent, beautiful life of freedom. The "hired man" who never got less at the table than his employer, became a person of importance and often started a farm or business with a small loan from the farmer.

Yet these old fashioned cultivators did not appreciate the freedom they found here. They are voting now for the Nazi-ism of real estate developers, and are doing it in the name of progress.

There are laws that farmers cannot shoot the wild life, so the pastures fill up with deer and wolves to the detriment of cattle, and the hills abound with marmots dangerous to all livestock. Weasels and skunks are "cute," but gone are the flocks of turkeys, peacocks and guinea hens that kept the grasshoppers under control on every farm in Ontario. So down with freedom, up with food prices. Exterminate the farmer, boost the real estate developers.

Sheep are destroyed by roving packs of loving little family pooches who "would not hurt a thing," but their yapping and barking are death to the sheep, for you can't run with a heavy woolen overcoat without getting a heart attack. So Canada imports "lamb" from Australia, and more than 60,000

carcasses from the U.S. And now our weed controllers are gone, for the sheep are browsers, they clear the fence lines of weeds and keep the woodlot as clean as a park. The veterinarians, graduates of our Department of Agriculture schools, make millions with dog hospitals, but they haven't time to come out to see a cow that may have eaten deadly nightshade or had udder contact with poison ivy—all of which would be eliminated from the face of the land by sheep. I still keep some sheep. It makes the old place look pretty good to have land clean of weeds. Of course I could buy chemicals and kill the weeds and all the birds too, but I believe in freedom for birds and sheep, even if it is unpopular.

The highest priced land is in cemeteries because it is so hard to get a permit to start one. Around Toronto you pay about \$4000 for a family plot, but if you neglect to use it for 40 years they can take it back from you. In any case it can be expropriated for progress, such as making a concrete parking lot for the public good. But I have a sneaking suspicion these cemetery salesmen are in with the developers who want to get plenty of people to starve to death and fill up their cemeteries.

I think I have got it! I will start a dog cemetery and will sell 4' by 2' plots on my hilly farm with \$25 as the basic price. If we conduct the funeral of the dog from his home to his last resting place we will charge \$50, with music and hymns in our chapel, which we will later develop. These cemetery developers get land tax freedom for giving perpetual care. Maybe I can bamboozle enough dog lovers to come to the aid of the dog burier to influence the vote so I too can be tax free. Well, as this country is trying to go to the dogs anyway, why not?

But we are so rich and have so much to steal that we hardly miss the take

for the politicians, the land grabbers, the planners (who want to run our lives), and the welfare and social workers (who want to manufacture poverty to keep themselves in a job and supply a reserve threat to the workers who dare ask for better wages). So we speak of poverty as something that occurs in the hinterland of New Brunswick, or among the quaint starving Indians of the James Bay region (who are not resourceful nowadays, in spite of the efforts of a \$10,000 a year Indian Affairs agent who hands out the treaty money and makes sure they do not get out of the rut so he can keep the job).

Or maybe poverty exists only among the indigent Eskimaux of the shacktown of Whitehorse, Yukon, or among those happy booze drinking Algonquin chiefs of the Muskoka who guide tourists in the summer to pleasant hunting and fishing grounds and do not have sense enough to provide for the winter and pay taxes. They just laugh at us, produce an old parchment from some ancient box of junk, show us a great red seal and the signature of King Charles II (he was a happy drunk too) or Queen Victoria (she was not), and

"Arch" McColl, bridge builder and fifth generation Canadian, was the project manager for the Chatham Bridge (3,817 feet). He has lived and worked in North, South and Central America, also in Greece, French Africa, Nicaragua and Haiti. While in the Miramichi area of New Brunswick he made many friends and often spoke out against the tax inequities, trying to make local people aware of their tremendous natural advantages. (See HGN Jul. & Nov. 1964; April. p. 11, '65; Jan. p. 6, Jun. p. 11 & Aug. '66).

then go buy more booze with the treaty money. None of them have ever gone to the bughouse for trying to figure out an income tax form.

Well, let them laugh and drink. They live in the richest country on earth. There are monopolists who own much of the world's copper, practically all of the nickel, all of the asbestos and most of the potash, not to mention oil. Canadians already use more power for man-hour of work than any other country. There is an abundance of land in Canada worth \$5 million an acre paying a tax of only 5 cents an acre, and there is still plenty of opportunity for freedom lovers to get some of it before it is all gone.

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Mr. Robert Clancy,  
33-53 82nd St.,  
Jackson Heights, L.I., N.Y. 11300