

Here is my reaction to the symposium, "Why Do You Stay With It?" (i.e., promoting the Georgist philosophy) in GJ No. 34.

"Moral suasion alone will never suffice," says Wylie Young. But he does not reveal what to do. "One cannot really believe in anything without doing something about it," Graham Hart says, and points out that we must feature "our common objective to collect the rent of land for revenue." Joseph Jespersen says, "We continue to do what we can to get others to share our conviction." And Joseph Zashin warns us that "it will take time," but that "you must start the task", without informing us what to do. Robert Clancy quotes Henry George in saying that "it must eventually be accepted." But I have asked myself during the years, What can I do in practice to get the rent of land collected for the benefit of all. Here is what I did:

First: The amount of money liable for payment of rent is valued by Somers by means of a land value map. So every time the land problem is discussed in the council of a municipality somewhere in Holland, I produce such a map of a particular quarter - or better, a land rent map - to show everybody how many guilders he will be due, compared with the loss of interest on the capital price of land - and of course promising a lessening of the tax burden. Progress? After some ten years of persistence, the first professionals took over this job and did it better than I did, in the community of Zeist, where the International Conference is being held this year, at the Woudschoten Conference Center.

Second: For the councillors and aldermen in charge of finance I have made calculations showing them the cost and benefit for the local treasury, of leasing the community-owned land for a real commercial rent. Remember that in Holland a tax shift to land is legally impossible.

Third: I have made a "legislative draft" as our friend Bill Pitt of Australia did in "Land Rent Revenue in Lieu of Taxes."

Fourth: I nursed the theoretical back-up, now skillfully assisted by Robert Born of Amsterdam. He can tell us much concerning the consequences of our reform on employment, deflation, wealth, etc.

(We commend Mr. Pot and his colleagues for their continuing efforts. However, the symposium referred to did not ask for specific proposals but asked about motivation for continuing to work, in whatever way, for the Georgist philosophy and movement; it was more about modus vivendi than modus operandi. The participants are indeed involved in "doing." Wylie Young is active gathering data on land values and property taxes for the consideration of the Philadelphia City Council. Graham Hart's pamphlet The Choice and other writings, spells out practical proposals. Joseph Jespersen, in teaching Fundamental Economics, explains the specifics of land value taxation. Joseph Zashin - like Mr. Pot - has developed land value maps for the consideration of officials in Arizona. And I chaired the Committee on Land Taxation (COLT) which produced the draft of a manual on Land Value Taxation. I am hopeful that this work can be resumed and updated. - R.C.)

THE demand for oil lands escalates, causing increased demand for loans, increased money supply, higher interest rates; and this is one way land speculation is linked to inflation. The billions involved in the takeover of Conoco is far greater than the monthly government borrowings. - Samuel Scheck