

Changes in Britain's Taxes

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Those of us who have campaigned to get Britain's system of local taxation (the rates) changed to Land Value Taxation, were stunned when we learned that the Thatcher government had adopted a scheme to replace the rates with a Poll Tax. This means, of course, trying to get nearly every one to pay exactly the same, rich and poor alike.

How is it possible for a government to get such an irresponsible act past the electorate? Well, for years, with the help of the press and TV, they bombarded the electorate with statements which, on the surface, might sound reasonable, but which when analysed, are foolish. One of these ideas is that all do not contribute their share toward the rates when, in fact, they contribute indirectly. So, excluded from their figures, are wives, people whose rates are included in their rent, and young people whose contributions are included in money paid for their "keep." They also push aside the fact that, under the Poll Tax, many people (wives without a formal salary, for example) will still have to pay indirectly.

The Poll Tax is going to be extremely costly to implement and maintain - but such considerations don't seem to be a deterrent. Of even less concern is the damage the Poll Tax will do to the economy. At least, part of the rates fell on land values and there is no need to guess what will happen if they are completely removed. It's happening already! Building land in this area is fetching one million pounds per acre.