

OUR OWN COMMUNITY

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Of all the suggestions for making headway in our movement, one that is usually dismissed is that of forming our own community. A short while ago, I too would have dismissed the idea as unrealistic, but now, while still believing it may be a pipe dream, I believe it worthy of consideration.

The reason I have changed my mind is because of the difficulties of altering existing societies. It seems that almost every entrance is sealed and guarded, and that disturbances merely make them double the guard. Tell a socialist that his ideas won't work and he'll say, "Ah, but that's because we don't have enough socialism." And even independent thinkers are often tough nuts to crack - because they want direct benefits and are unable to see the subtleties of land value taxation. They are often home-owners who regard all reform with hostility.

Even minor break-throughs should be viewed with skepticism. Take those places where local taxes are based on the unimproved value; the good these may do may be nullified by other facts. But when things go wrong, the people won't say, "We should have put more taxes on unimproved value." Instead, with customary disillusionment, they turn to other things.

Reluctantly then, we must wonder if setting up our own community is the only way we will achieve our goal. That it would be full of problems is beyond dispute but what about a compromise of the idea?

To find an area of land, to start off from scratch - perhaps in an area as unattractive as the middle of the Brazilian jungle - does not hold much appeal, but what about the emergent nations? If it were possible to find a country which was anxious to avoid the follies of other countries and which did not have the established privileges, then this might offer an opportunity.

Or here is another approach: The vagaries of race, border, religion and sectarianism often produce a number of stateless people in the world. What about setting up such a country (Possibly through the United Nations) to accommodate such people?

Land value taxation would be ideal for such a place. If people paid their site rent they could come and go as they please. There would be none of the problems endemic to other systems.

A charter could state that such a country (apart from health considerations) would never have the right to close its borders to any person or any trade. Thus at one stroke we would have a showpiece for our convictions on economic problems and besides a few lessons to teach people about racialism, prejudice, protection and bigotry.