

CONFUSIONS CONCERNING MONEY AND LAND

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October 23, 2016 / Land Is Free websote

It is not generally understood that the vexed role of money in our society is due entirely to its underpinning by the great vexed, unresolved and ultimately all-underlying land question.

The best key to understanding this is undoubtedly the pictorial presentation of a great natural law: the Law of Rent.* << which can be found at www.henrygeorge.org/rent1.htm >> But it can perhaps also be quite well understood if I quote from the introductory passages to its classic version:

The Iron Law of Wages — The return to labor, however great the potential of the land that is worked, and however great the individual effort put into the work, will never be greater than the return available from the most marginal land in use.

From the foregoing it is clear that money's power to exploit, in our society, is bedded in its power to grant to such a society's "landowners" the power to possess stolen goods.

Where, under the natural Law of Rent, stolen goods are ruled out, when phony landownership is abolished, there money reverts to its original, and solely beneficial, role: as a measuring device which simplifies fair exchange, in people's desire to trade goods with one another. I place the word "landowners" in quotes, in view of Thomas Paine's famous words that so brilliantly pinpoint our all-underlying trouble: "I never heard that the Creator opened an estate-office to issue title-deeds to land." The human-devised deed of land-entitlement is the institutor of robbery in our society — and the creator and originator of today's entire "money problem."

For these entitlement-to-land deeds then proceed falsely to co-opt land into the role of *capital* (land may be God's capital; it's not ours) and thus land comes falsely to assume a monetary value, fixed according to its exchangeability with true items of capital value: things brought into being by human labor.

The total madness of co-opting land into a capital role is that land, gifted to us by a mysterious Creator, cannot be made by man. Therefore the buying and selling of land in the market, as if it were a form of capital, invites its hoarding and monopolizing. This allows the ultimate horror to operate in our society: that of an *all-underlying* monopoly, for nothing can be produced, no labor can be exerted, without access to land.

Advocates of political decentralization such as Kathleen Janaway are entirely lost in advocating that money should be used to buy land. In this urging such folk are "doing

the Devil's work for him"! As we have seen, it is precisely the marketing of land that the false face of money, in our society, arises out of!

Let it be repeated: the original and true role of money in our society is entirely friendly, facilitating the exchange of goods among people by a simple device of measurement. Money's role in accumulating an unjust quantity of goods in the hands of some depends on those goods being *stolen* goods!

Let it further be noted that, even were money in today's society to be done away with, we would rapidly discover who still "held all the chips" — those who hold our society's false deeds of entitlement to land! And let us note in passing that those deeds permeate equally the entire global stock market, and all those phony mortgages (roughly 80% of which are based on the land component) which have cruelly dispossessed people from their homes and caused the banking crash.

In welcome contrast to these confusions (the give-away Law of Rent having been strictly excluded from our educational systems, from bottom to top!) let me acknowledge Kathleen Janaway's profound insight: << in *New Leaves*, the journal of the Movement for Compassionate Living (www.mclveganway.org.uk) >>

There is overwhelming evidence that true democracy cannot function on this scale of the large modern state with central government. In the so-called democracies of today, the good of all the people is certainly not achieved. On the contrary the gap between the rich and poor grows ever greater.

Society's acute need for radical political decentralization is, in fact, responded to by the Natural Law of Rent itself, which in sorting out economic problems carries with it the radical decentralization of political power!

Fortunately, as more and more people are coming today to see, radical political decentralization is not just the only sane way for society to operate, but is also the only *happy* way — as is so excellently expressed in the Irish Celtic saying, "It is in the shelter of each other that people live."

Sidebar:

The unspeakable effrontery involved in commoditising of the Earthly Mother — to bring her to market and sell her like a slave — brings in its wake, inevitably, the commoditising of all of her children, which include the other orders of creation: furred, feathered and finned.