

cover story

SHEPARD FAIREY'S iconic portrait of Barack Obama has come to symbolise hope and change for America. But the question on everyone's lips remains "what change, exactly?" (see p. 6)



regulars

news 1-5

editorial 3

David Triggs' long view 9

Edward J Dodson's cooperative individualist view 17

diary 21

letters 21

reviews 22-23

Lars Rindsig's view from the right 23

columnists

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news in brief ...

Scottish tidal leases The Crown Estate in Scotland has announced an application process for "sea bed lease options" for the UK's first commercial marine power sites, in the Pentland Firth between the mainland and Orkney. The Estate is owner of the seabed to the 12 nautical miles territorial sea limit. The Firth has one of the UK's most valuable tidal power resources. The first leasing round aims to harness the tide to deliver 700MW of power by 2020. An 'eTendering' system, probably by reverse auction, will be used for procurement.

UK workplace parking levy The UK government is proposing to empower local authorities to bring in workplace parking levy schemes. Authorities, business and campaign groups are already lining up for and against. Pioneer Nottingham City Council plans to impose a levy on businesses with more than 10 workplace parking spaces. A local high-profile anti parking levy campaign is backed by the chamber of commerce and the CBI. The Department for Transport's public consultation period ends on 5th March. Go to www.DfT.gov.uk

New Orleans, old ghettos Worries about catastrophic future weather and a lack of trust in the authorities' response to protecting the city are playing havoc with New Orleans' land prices. Some areas are now uninsurable, rendering them unmortgageable: land values have evaporated and areas are re-ghettoising—along race lines, and to geographic boundaries harking back to segregation. The newly re-elected Louisiana Insurance Commissioner continues to face stout criticism. The authorities' role in raising land values is being laid bare in New Orleans in a very public way.

New UK coalition formed A dozen UK think-tanks, charities and political pressure groups have joined forces in a concerted effort to advance a fresh approach to solving the current global economic crisis. The Coalition for Economic Justice is proceeding on the basis that—as Einstein was reported saying in a previous case — "the world cannot get out of the current state of crisis with the same thinking that got it there in the first place". *L&L*'s publisher the Henry George Foundation is a founding member of the Coalition.

features

6 Obama: defining change
L&L commissions ten American economic reformers to set out a programme for President Obama's White House

10 First come, first served
The Maori Treaty of Waitangi raises questions about what it means to be indigenous

12 A penny for your thoughts?
What's right and what's not when it comes to intellectual property?

16 Beyond recession: what changes for the future?
Without profound social and economic reform we will dig ourselves even deeper into the hole in which we now find ourselves

18 African states of failure
Do we stand on the brink of a complete collapse of governance in Africa, or at the dawn of a New African Age?

20 The Greenspan years
The concluding part of our assessment of the legacy of Alan Greenspan, ex-Chairman of the US Federal Reserve

24 A New People's Budget
As its centenary rolls round will the wisdom of Lloyd George's People's Budget resonate for post-crisis legislators?



12

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