

GEORGISM FOR THE MASSES (from page 1)

don't look at it as a point where they can despoil the land to make it worthless. We say 'what is the maximum best use of that land?' and anything that's so taking away from that basically use is something that we would tax and we would take up take that back.

AM: Karl Marx famously called Georgeism, "Capitalism's last ditch" and he criticized the philosophy as not only preserve Capitalism's domination, but expand it. How do you respond?

SB: Yeah, well this is the interesting thing. You know, Henry George was no friend of Karl Marx or his philosophy and vice versa. So, sometimes people accuse Georgism of being Communism and it's...it's actually funny because it's almost the opposite. It's laissez-faire in terms of production and people keeping whatever they produce for themselves but on the other hand we are somewhat aligned with Marx so in terms of taking the economic rent. And even he agreed that, you know, that property owners should pay the rent on the land back into the community. So, it's funny because Adam Smith and Karl Marx and Henry George all agree on that point all they emphasize that to different degrees.

AM: Right but...but go on the Capitalism critique of what he said about that aspect of it.

SB: Well, it's not that we would...I guess in a way it's ... it's not a last-ditch, but it certainly would be a way of saving Capitalism from imploding because of the extreme wealth inequity that we see that's causing destabilization all

over the world. You know, Oxfam this came out with this report that 85 people have as much wealth as the bottom half of humanity - three and a half billion - this is an untenable and unsustainable situation. It causes revolutions, riots, and even when it's not doing that, it's just inefficient and unsustainable. So, we say the reason that there's so much wealth so concentrated, *primarily*, is because of monopoly on land. Now, within our Georgist/Geoist community, we also argue about monopoly on money and whether that should be included...and, happily George also agreed that money should not be the exclusive creation a Banks. He said it was too important to be left to the banks, so he believed the government should also produce the money as well.

AM: Scott Baker, president of the common ground New York City, thanks.

SB: Thank you.

(Footnote: They cut about a minute of Scott Baker talking about Common Ground-NYC's, local efforts to pass local legislation and bring attention to the gross inequity of land taxation in New York, but it was still a good interview and probably an eye-opener to their global audience. Common Ground - NYC president Scott Baker may be emailed at ssbaker305@yahoo.com.) <<