"Men did not make the earth... It is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor owes to the community a ground rent for the land which he holds." Tom Paine (1737-1809)

AFGHANISTAN TO RECEIVE "EXPERT" ECONOMIC ADVICE FROM USA

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, mostly financed by the USA, are preparing to advise Afghanistan on how to reconstruct their demolished economy. We wonder whether these Harvard Business School graduates will again propose the imposition of heavy consumer taxes such as those applied in Thailand which precipitated public riots and business collapse. We wonder whether they will repeat their advice regarding taxes on fuel, which led to public riots in Indonesia.

Nor do we know whether they will advise the doubling of sales taxes and the return of land to previous owners, just as they proposed that expropriated plantations in Viet Nam be returned to the prior French landlords, which lost us the support of Vietnamese peasants in that war.

Nor has it been announced whether the IMF and World Bank will repeat their actions in Eastern Europe and Russia, where they undermined advice by Henry George advocates to tax community created land values rather than production and consumption.

Nor has it yet been reported whether these Keynesian experts will suggest that Afghanistan adopt a program of pork barrel public works and subsidies to special interests in that country, under the title of "economic impetus."

It is obvious that Afghanistan must speedily impose a sound system of taxation since opium production, formerly its main source of revenue, has been almost completely shut off.

According to a State Department report, Afghanistan produced only about 200 tons of opium in 2001 vs. 3,605 tons in 2,000.

Many university economists assert that they might support Henry George’s land value tax proposals if they were adopted at the time of creation of a rational economic system, rather than after a faulty economic system is fully developed and imbedded.

This should give them just such an opportunity.