



First Quarter 2013

the IU view

ECONOMICS for CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION

**A Geo-Justice
Conference**

**The 28th Conference of
the International
Union for Land Value
Taxation**

24-28th July 2013

will convene at

**The School of
Economic Science**

11 Mandeville Place

London, UK

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the IU view

The Newsletter of the
International Union for
Land Value Taxation
theIU.org

General Secretary
the IU view editor

Alanna Hartzok
Box 328, Scotland, PA 17254 USA
alanna(at)earthrights.net
Skype: alanna.hartzok

Membership Secretary
Ole Lefmann
ole.lefmann1(at)virgin.net

UK Address: 41 Coleraine
Road, London N8 0QJ

President
Fernando Scornik-Gerstein

Executive Committee

Chair: Dave Wetzel

Bill Batt - US
Bob Keall – New Zealand
Bruno Moser - Tanzania
Carol Wilcox - UK
Dave Wetzel - UK
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**You are Welcome to
The 2013 IU Conference
convening in London
24th - 28th July.**

We are pleased to inform you that our 2013 IU Conference titled **ECONOMICS for CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION** will convene 24 – 28th July at The School of Economic Science, 11 Mandeville Place, London, UK W1U3AJ.

The conference will explore a wide range of topics relating to Land Value Tax (LVT) and global economic justice including:

- **Land and Geo-Justice**
- **Critique of Current Financial Policies**
- **Claiming Water, Fish & Oil Commons**
- **Why Socializing Rent & Untaxing Production is Good for Labour**
- **Climate Change and New Economics**
- **Inequality: Cause and Cure**

The objectives of the conference are to highlight key principles and policies for the emerging economics paradigm, showing how economics can align with and support the conscious evolution of human and other life on earth.



Our conference logo shows the earth with a white dove with people all around placed in the depths of the universe. The image and our conference theme reflects this thought written by Ron Robins:

The quality of our consciousness and thinking profoundly impacts economics. Consciousness in its fulfilled, developed state will bring the 'dismal science' of economics to an evolved and higher level – to the status of Enlightened Economics.

The conference includes an evening Public Forum titled **Inequality, Climate Change and New Economics**. Saturday, 27th July will be our **London Tour Day**. The tour will look at the economic history of London as a hub of commerce, government, finance, culture and power. At Speakers' Corner we will reaffirm the International Declaration of Individual and Common Rights to Land. This is a chartered bus, river and museum tour with picnic lunch included.

The IU Executive Committee also welcomes you to contribute to the **Barbara Sobrielo Fund**, established to give financial assistance to Georgists worldwide who otherwise would not be able to come to our conferences. There are several young people in Nigeria, Ghana, Egypt, Togo and Kenya who would very much like to participate in the conference if we were able to pay for their round-trip plane ticket to London. Please donate.

The full conference Program, Registration Form and Payment Options form are all now posted on the IU website.

Go to: theIU.org

Note reduced conference fee for PAID UP members of the IU. The IU membership form also on the website.

If you are receiving this newsletter by post this information will also be enclosed.

Please join us for the conference in London!



Quiz: Do you recognize this man?



The photo is that of George Monbiot a journalist for *The Guardian*, a leading UK newspaper. Monbiot has frequently written articles favourable to land value tax policy. In the 1st April 2013 edition in an article titled *Communism, welfare state – what's the next big idea?* Monbiot said:

Last week I ran a small online poll, asking people to nominate inspiring, transfiguring ideas. The two mentioned most often were land value taxation and a basic income. As it happens, both are championed by the Green party. On this and other measures, its policies are by a long way more progressive than Labour's.

I discussed land value taxation in a recent column. A basic income (also known as a citizen's income) gives everyone, rich and poor, without means-testing or conditions, a guaranteed sum every week. It replaces some but not all benefits (there would, for instance, be extra payments for pensioners and people with disabilities). It banishes the fear and

insecurity now stalking the poorer half of the population. Economic survival becomes a right, not a privilege.

A basic income removes the stigma of benefits while also breaking open what politicians call the welfare trap. Because taking work would not reduce your entitlement to social security, there would be no disincentive to find a job – all the money you earn is extra income. The poor are not forced by desperation into the arms of unscrupulous employers: people will work if conditions are good and pay fair, but will refuse to be treated like mules. It redresses the wild imbalance in bargaining power that the current system exacerbates. It could do more than any other measure to dislodge the emotional legacy of serfdom. It would be financed by progressive taxation – in fact it meshes well with land value tax.

These ideas require courage: the courage to confront the government, the opposition, the plutocrats, the media, the suspicions of a wary electorate. But without proposals on this scale, progressive politics is dead. They strike that precious spark, so seldom kindled in this age of triangulation and timidity – the spark of hope.

[Click here for the full article.](#)

Note: In 1998 James Robertson organized a Forum at Oxford with speakers on LVT, ecotax, monetary reform and citizen dividends. [Click here for link to the six papers and all proceedings.](#)



IU Executive Committee member Ed Dodson wrote this on 31st March:

Below is a link to Fred Harrison's most recent video warning of the global economic situation. I have never been an alarmist, but Fred Harrison has been remarkably accurate in his forecasts and warnings of what is to come. His most recent video, warning of the global economic situation, in my view needs to be given serious consideration. Please bring this to the attention of others who are concerned about the fate of the world:

[When Did World War 3 Begin? \(youtube\)](#)



Fred Harrison explores the risks of World War III in new his book [The Traumatized Society](#). Together with Peter Challen, Fred has been advocating the ideas in his book around churches in London. More books: ethicaleconomics.org.uk/

Commons Cluster

is an association of diverse NGOs with United Nations ECOSOC consultative status who are convinced that a commons approach can provide valuable solutions to the crisis of our times. The IU General Secretary who is also one of the IU UN NGO representatives to ECOSOC was asked to submit suggested "commons rent" indicators for a survey being prepared by UN Development Program. Here they are:

One

Housing is unaffordable for many because houses, productive capital, and labour are being taxed too heavily and the commons rent of surface land too lightly. What percentage of your government budget comes from surface land rent (for instance via land value tax or land lease fees) compared to taxes on labour and productive capital?

- (10% or less)
- (11 to 20%)
- (21 to 30%)
- (31% or more)

Two

The unearned income (surplus profits or "resource rent") accruing to non-renewable extractive resources should be placed in commons trust funds for the equitable benefit of all citizens and to fund renewable energy technology. What percentage of your government's public finance is resource rent from non-renewable natural resources?

- (10% or less)
- (11 to 20%)
- (21 to 30%)
- (31% or more)

Three

Pigouvian or "green" taxes should be levied on pollution in order to give full incentives to clean up our water, air and land resources. What percentage of your government's public finance comes from green taxes?

- (5% or less)
- (6 to 10%)
- (11 to 15%)
- (16% or more)

Four

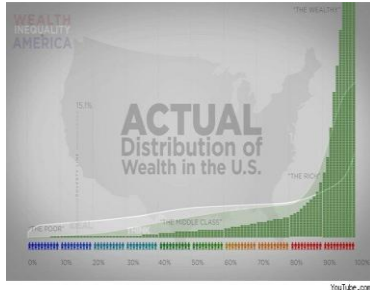
There should be broad public input into decisions concerning the use of the commons, particularly the use of extractive, depletable natural resources that are often damaging to surrounding land, water and air. To what degree does your government actively encourage and support broad based citizen decision making over the use of extractive resource commons?

- (very little)
- (underway)
- (to some degree)
- (actively support input)



UN General Assembly

A Video posted to the internet on 4th March by Bruce Watson showing the [Huge Gap Between the Super Rich and Everyone Else](#) has Gone Viral!

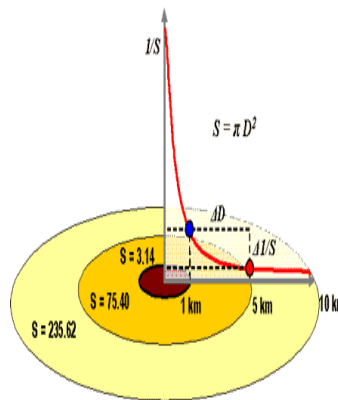


"Wealth Inequality in America," a six-minute video produced by a YouTube user named "Politizane," casts an interesting angle on the plummeting savings rate. Set to depressing piano music and packed with crystal-clear animations, it gives a powerful snapshot of the American economic landscape. Noting that "The top 1 percent own nearly half the country's stocks, bonds, and mutual funds," the video goes on to contrast those impressive holdings with the rest of the country. By comparison, it points out, the bottom 50 percent of earners own only 0.5 percent of those investments.

Speaking of graphic images. IU Executive member Bill Batt often urges us to consider the importance of the work of Johann von Thünen (1783-1850) who developed the first serious treatment of spatial economics,

connecting it with the theory of rent.

"Locational rent" - a term used by von Thünen in his argument - is to be understood as the equivalent to land value and thus is more important to us today for the field of land rent economics than was the work of Ricardo.



The above von Thünen diagram shows the mathematical relationship between the amount of land rent at the centre of a unipolar city and that at the periphery. Note the similarity to this "land value scape" of Johannesburg, RSA prepared by former IU President Godfrey Dunkley and other Georgists in South Africa:



LandValueScape is a word coined by Professional Land Reform Group (PLRG) co-founder Dr. Tony Vickers to describe how modern methods of property valuation and computer mapping can reveal how Location Matters to every society. Through "revealing the landvaluescape" society can gain a better understanding of why Land Value needs to be restored to those who create it - which is **never** the landowner *per se*, says Vickers.

THE MISSION OF PLRG IS "TO DEBATE AND DEVELOP IDEAS AND POLICIES ON LAND USE AND TAX REFORM, AMONG PROFESSIONALS OF ALL KINDS, IN ORDER TO PROMOTE LAND VALUE CAPTURE TO FINANCE INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE FAIR AND EFFICIENT USE OF ALL NATURAL RESOURCES ON A SUSTAINABLE BASIS."

The PLRG, the Coalition for Economic Justice and several members of the IU are strongly supporting passage of a bill put forth by Green Party member of Parliament Caroline Lucas that *would require the Secretary of State to commission a programme of research into the merits of replacing the Council Tax and Non-domestic rates in England with an annual levy on the unimproved value of all land, including transitional arrangements.* [Click for more information on this and other PLRG items.](#)

Good News!



Dave Wetzel

Dave Wetzel, IU Executive Committee Chair has recently compiled a list of several individuals and organizations now supporting land value tax policy in the United Kingdom. This list of “good signs” are embedded in his thought piece titled

A Windfall Land Levy

A Windfall Land Levy: A Draft Proposal for Partial Implementation of Land Value Tax in 2015 in UK.

For his proposal contact Dave at: davewetzel42@gmail.com

- Both the Green Party and the Co-operative Party had LVT in their manifestos for the 2010 General Election. The Green MP has a Private Members Bill calling on the Government to study LVT. The Labour Left-wing campaign group – The Labour Representation Committee had LVT in their manifesto for 2010.
- Two major Trade Unions, RMT (railway workers) and PCS (civil servants) have expressed support for LVT and in 2011 the TUC (Trades Unions Congress) passed a long resolution on the economy which included a sentence supporting LVT.
- In recent Labour Party leadership contests two candidates, John McDonnell MP and Andy Burnham MP have publicly supported LVT. Labour’s current Shadow Housing Minister, Jack Dromey, now advocates LVT to address the housing problem.
- Several MPs in the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government support LVT. Vince Cable, the Lib/Dem Business Minister supports LVT and before he became the new Conservative Planning Minister, Nick Boles MP had written in the Financial Times supporting LVT.
- A group from Manchester University produced a 2011 paper addressing the UK’s North/South divide. Remedies proposed include cutting National Insurance and implementing LVT.
- The *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Morning Star*, *Economist* and *Money Week* are sometimes publishing articles supporting LVT.
- The neoclassical Institute of Economic Affairs has published a book by Fred Harrison “Wheels of Fortune” which is available for free download on their website.
- Dr. Peter Latham has an excellent chapter on LVT in his book “The State & Local Government: Towards a new basis for local democracy and the defeat of big business control.”
- The respected right-wing Institute of Fiscal Studies has conducted a four year study to improve the UK tax system under the Chairmanship of the Nobel prize-winning economist Sir James Mirrlees. In chapter 16 of his report he suggests the abolition of business rates on buildings to be replaced by LVT on business sites and farmland.

A Note to Our Members from IU Membership Secretary Ole Lefmann

In a few months' time the IU's President, Señor Fernando Scornik Gerstein, will welcome attendees to the 2013 International IU Conference that will take place in London from Wednesday the 24th until Sunday the 28th of July. We are grateful to the School of Economic Science for the use of its beautiful building at Mandeville Place located in the centre of London, near the Bond Street Tube Station.

The program and all registration details are posted on the IU website at: www.theIU.org. If you are receiving this newsletter by post then this information is enclosed.

The **IU's GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING** will take place during the evening of the first and second conference days. All members of the IU who have paid their membership fee up to 31st March 2013, the end of the financial year, have the right to vote at the General Business Meeting. One order of business will be the election of the coming period's President and other officers of the IU as per the IU Constitution to be found on the IU website or as an enclosed copy. Documents concerning Voting Procedure and Power to Vote are also enclosed or attached to the email along with this newsletter.

In the period between 24th April and 14th July 2013 the IU members may NOMINATE persons who they would like to stand for election to the posts as the IU's PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRESIDENT, GENERAL SECRETARY, ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY, TREASURER, plus one VICE PRESIDENT from any sovereign country having members of the IU, plus one additional Executive Committee member for each 15 paid-up member from the country in question.

Your nominations should indicate the nationality of the nominees, and be signed by you (sufficient if received from your email address) and (at the meeting) another IU-member who will second it; see attached or enclosed Nomination Form.

Please, send your nominations by email or post to the IU's Membership Secretary:

Ole Lefmann, 41 Coleraine Road, London N8 OQJ, United Kingdom
or e-mail to: ole.lefmann@virgin.net
early enough to arrive at the **latest 14th July 2013**.

Other items on our Business Meeting Agenda will include consideration of a name change of the organization, discussion for advancing the work of the IU worldwide, and possible venues for future IU conferences. IU members are welcome to make suggestions for the Agenda.

We welcome your continuing support of the IU and hope to see you in London for our conference. If you are not yet an IU member, please join us at theIU.org. – Ole