

Report on CEJ Conference on Money and Land Reform

On June 24th 2010 the Coalition for Economic Justice held a day's workshop at Mandeville Place courtesy of the School of Economic Science to explore how the root causes in LAND AND MONEY relate to the thrust of a number of progressive agencies. The attendees represented over 20 organisations concerned with economic and social issues including Call 4 Reform, National Coalition for Independent Action, Islamic Banking, Work Foundation, Christian Council for Monetary Justice, Christian People's Alliance, and a representative from the Treasury.

The driving force for the event was the belief that as the UK economy faces the biggest crisis it may have ever known. Progressive thinkers need to concentrate on how they can create together a critical mass likely to bring change, creating an alternative to the prescription of the failed economics of the neo-liberal marketeers.

The event was chaired by John Lipetz of the CEJ. The context for it was provided by Josh Ryan-Collins of the New Economic Foundation based on their comprehensive prescription for eco-systemic change, The Great Transition, and key evidence was supplied by Bill Kerry of The Equality Trust from the book The Spirit Level which makes transparent the relationship between social ills and the scale of the rich poor income gap in the OECD countries.

In the remainder of the morning session David Triggs of Henry George Foundation presented in a simple and fresh way the basic case for using the economic rent of land for public revenue in place of conventional forms of taxation. Professor Richard Werner Director of the Centre for banking Finance and Sustainable Development at Southampton University gave an authoritative and insightful presentation on the present financial system and offered a number of routes to reform.

Subsequent discussion helped to make clear how closely the land issue was interlinked with the financial system and hence the strong case for considering both Land and Money Reform as interconnected fundamental issues to be faced in any significant eco-systemic change.

After lunch there was also earnest debate about strengthening networks between the fledgling campaigns that would enhance the mutual awareness that might contribute to that critical mass supporting the change necessary to end the deep injustices in our society. The possibility of a larger coalition emerged possibly connecting the NEF with both CEJ and the newly emerging Call4Reform.

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