

AN OPEN LETTER TO KING CHARLES III ON HIS CORONATION

An Earth Rights Manifesto

from Alanna Hartzok, Earth Rights Visionary and United Nations NGO
Representative for the International Union for Land Value Taxation

His Majesty King Charles III
Buckingham Palace
London SW1A 1AA

Your Majesty,

I write to you as your “astrological twin sister”. Yes, we were both born on the fourteenth day of November 1948. And as the stars appear, within 10 minutes of each other. My mother sometimes laughingly said this about the day she and your mother gave birth to us: “That woman is doing the same thing as I am, why is she getting all the attention?”

I write to you as someone who also raised two children, who loves to garden and ride horses as you do (and both our mothers did), and as one who cares deeply about the state of our world, as you do.

As your astrological twin sister, I write this open letter to you in the hope that you might be moved to engage in a conversation with people from around the world. Together, as King and Commoners, I think that we can find clarity for a way forward, a way to end poverty, homelessness and hunger, and to build a world that works for everyone including the animals and plants, indeed for life itself. Through our sincere conversation I am certain right action will follow and we will create a world where justice will keep the peace and thus will we end the scourge and abomination of war once and for all.¹

UK resident and Irish scholar Kevin Cahill wrote a magnificent book titled Who Owns the World² which is the first compilation of landowners and landownership structures in every single one of the world’s 197 states and 66 territories. Who Owns the World covers the history of landownership as far as written history allows and shows the division of landownership in every region of the globe. Cahill identified the person who owns the largest proportion of the world’s land and documents that person’s landholdings.³ That person was your mother. Now it is you, my dear astrological twin brother.

¹ Ownership of Land and Control of the Earth <https://worldservice.org/issues/febmar96/letter.html>

² Cahill, Kevin. *Who Owns the World: The Hidden Facts Behind Landownership*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Company Ltd. 2007. First published 2006.

³ *Ibid.* 42-48.

With the Crown comes your leadership role in the governments and thus the people of the British Commonwealth. You will bear an enormous responsibility in your vested legal ownership of over one-sixth of the planet's surface. You will reign in 32 countries and territories having a total land mass of 6,698 million acres which will bear your name as superior, or ultimate owner. In contrast, the United States as a country has 2,400 million acres while Russia has 4,200 million acres. As Cahill says, this is "a phenomenon never to be seen elsewhere on earth.... The word "own" is used deliberately, being the word her Canadian Attorney General's office used to describe the legal status of all of Canada's vast territory."⁴

What we commoners know about what you as now King Charles III owns in personal property in the UK is this: "private, or near private, landed possessions in the home territory come to about 637,000 acres."⁵ This makes my three-and-a-half acre family homestead quite minuscule indeed, yet we are so grateful to have it for our beautiful flower, vegetable and water gardens, pasture for animals and woodlot.

In Who Owns the World, Cahill describes in great detail the legal machinations of the Crown's ownership rights. He says that these are a "manifest continuation and legitimisation of feudalism in the modern world". Of the rights asserted in Magna Carta I he tells us that the barons "did not question the King's feudal superiority and his overall ownership of the land of the realm..."⁶

You bear an enormous responsibility as you are technically and legally the ultimate owner and controller of by far the greatest proportion of the earth's territory compared to anyone else. Thus a stunning opportunity will be placed upon your shoulders as the crown is placed upon your head on May 6, your coronation day. You will have a highly visible capacity to ask one of the most important questions of our time, that of not just who owns the world, but of how SHOULD the earth be "owned"? And this question of earth ownership has been central to my own life's quest. I want to share with you some of what I have learned in this regard, as detailed in my award-winning book, The Earth Belongs to Everyone.⁷

During my time since we were born I have come to the realization that the ultimate claim of ownership of the earth's land and natural resources cannot be made on the basis of prior claim, discovery, purchase, military conquest, ability to maintain and secure possession, constitutional law, or length of residency.

Ultimately the only rational, supportable, moral, just and ethical basis upon which a claim of ownership can be made is by birthright to the gifts of nature and that cannot be an exclusive claim. The claim by birthright can only be legitimate if it is acknowledged that all other human beings have an equal claim to land and natural resources. The deepest ethical dimension of

⁴ Ibid. 43.

⁵ Ibid. 52

⁶ Ibid. 45

⁷ <https://theiu.org/books/>

territorial rights recognizes that humanity is one and indivisible in its fundamental claim to the earth as the birthright of all.⁸

We people of the planet owe a great debt of gratitude as well as profound apologies for the manner in which we have treated indigenous people who have lived longer and closer to the precepts of natural law than most of the several billion of us. Colonization declared their lands “terra nullius” meaning void of human habitation as church and state considered native people to be savages and subhuman.⁹ We can understand the Native American word *wetiko*¹⁰ to mean those whose consciousness is that of being separate from the earth and from each other, whereas native people viewed the world as a whole and all human beings as related to all of nature. They said in their greetings and prayers *Mitákuye Oyás’iŋ* meaning “all my relations.”

John Mohawk,¹¹ a Native American leader and university academic, said this in his essay on *The Problem of the Modern World*: “When land became a “commodity” and lost its status as provider and sustainer of life, Western civilization began its history of subjugation and exploitation of the earth and earth-based cultures. For five centuries people have been coerced from their landholdings. The problem, in the English-speaking world, has its roots in the sixteenth century.”¹²

Mohawk was speaking of the Enclosures Period,¹³ when masses of common people in Britain, Scotland, Ireland, and elsewhere were forced off of their customary commons and other landholdings.

Enclosure could be accomplished by buying the ground rights and all common rights to accomplish exclusive rights of use, which increased the value of the land. The other method was by passing laws causing or forcing enclosure, such as parliamentary enclosures. The latter process was sometimes accompanied by force, resistance, and bloodshed, and remains among the most controversial areas of agricultural and economic history in England.¹⁴

As King Charles III you have a profound opportunity to address and redress massive wealth inequality and also reverse several hundreds of years of Enclosures by welcoming the Commoners back to the Commonwealth for the Common Good. You have in your power several ways to restore the birthright to the Earth of multi-millions of people.

(1) In my favorite interview with you, you talk about the importance of preserving the smallholder way of life, exalting “the combination of natural ecosystems, the forests and the

⁸ Hartzok, Alanna. *The Earth Belongs to Everyone*. The Institute for Economic Democracy Press, 2008.

⁹ <https://www.theindigenousfoundation.org/articles/the-doctrine-of-discovery-and-terra-nullius>

¹⁰ <https://www.innertraditions.com/blog/wetiko-in-a-nutshell>

¹¹ Mohawk, John (1945-2006) <http://www.pbs.org/warrior/content/historian/mohawk.html>

¹² *Thinking Indian: A John Mohawk Reader*. <https://birchbarkbooks.com/products/thinking-in-indian>

¹³ Hartzok, Alanna. “Democracy, Earth Rights and the Next Economy” E. F. Schumacher Lecture 2001 <https://centerforneweconomics.org/publications/democracy-earth-rights-and-the-next-economy/>

¹⁴ <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory2/chapter/the-enclosure-act/>

agricultural areas, together with the human cultural systems.”¹⁵ You could act the wizard and with the wave of your scepter place a substantial portion of your landed wealth into public trusts to establish these kinds of ecological villages where people can create beautiful places to dwell, plant nutritious vegetable gardens and orchards, pasture a few animals and maintain woodlots for home building and furniture making material. Your own estates are well managed and from their hubs you can teach and train people in organic farming and other homesteading skills. People can also learn from the Global Ecovillage Network¹⁶ and permaculture movements.¹⁷

You have probably heard of the community of Findhorn in Scotland, one of the original “planetary light centers” emerging worldwide that are based on harmonization with the laws of nature.¹⁸ I find of great inspiration the Russian Ringing Cedars movement launched by an amazing wise woman, Anastasia, the avatar of Siberia.¹⁹ Her movement succeeded in its efforts to secure land for the people for ecological family domains, actualized by acts passed by the Duma, the Russian Parliament. Thousands of people have been leaving the cities to find their livelihoods in direct connection with Mother Earth.²⁰ You may be aware of the Lammas ecovillage in Wales.²¹

(2) A relatively few ultra wealthy people own a disproportionate share of urban lands worldwide. Your own metropolitan acreage in London has a notional value of over 4,600 million British pounds.²² In urban areas where land values are greatly concentrated, you can address the increasing poverty and wealth inequality via fundamental tax reform. You could work with Parliament to remove the tax burden from people who work for a living (earned income) while shifting the tax base to the “land rent”, which is unearned income as land value is created by society as a whole. This will remove the urban bits of Mother Earth from speculation, hoarding and private profiteering. This tax shift off of labor and onto land rent would procure ample funds for needed infrastructure and other public goods. As Dr. Paul Collier, Professor of Economics, Oxford University and author of The Bottom Billion says:

Density is valuable and that value is reflected in the price of land. In the urban centers there are enormous rents on rising land values. The taxation of land appreciation offers huge scope for financing the cost of urban infrastructure.

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAcHyl62hoU>

¹⁶ Global Ecovillage Network <https://ecovillage.org> Rob Wheeler is GEN’s United Nations NGO Representative.

¹⁷ Permaculture <https://www.permaculturenews.org> also see many permaculture design courses online.

¹⁸ <https://www.findhorn.org>

¹⁹ <https://anastasia.foundation> and <https://www.ringingcedarsofrussia.org/Main/English/index.php>

²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_on_the_Far_Eastern_Hectare

²¹ <https://lammas.org.uk/en/ecovillage/>

²² Cahill, Kevin. op.cit. 52.

In “A Place to Live – Barriers to Affordable Housing in UK and Worldwide”²³ Heather Wetzel, Chair of the UK Labour Land Campaign, discusses the primary reasons why housing is out of reach to rent or buy for so many. She shares her concerns about our increasingly divided society of rich and poor and consequent social and economic problems. Heather puts forward land value tax and other fundamental policy proposals that can solve the housing and land problem and at the same time address environmental challenges.

Land rent for public finance (aka land value taxation) can be traced back thousands of years, as far in fact as the Vedic period from which came Hinduism and Buddhism.²⁴ It also threads through the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The tax history of China²⁵ tells us that Mencius strongly supported this form of public finance.²⁶

Land value taxation is the golden thread of perennial wisdom teachings on land justice that when implemented has yielded balanced, harmonic and fair societies that are attuned to Natural Law. Charles Avila, a leader in the Philippines and good friend of mine, is the author of the now classic work titled Ownership: Early Christian Teachings.²⁷ Avila tells us that Christianity lost its original economic teachings of Jubilee Justice when it became the religion of the Roman Empire. Land as “the koina” is held as a sacred trust in the Abrahamic faith tradition but under imperial rule became “dominium” which entailed the legalization of land acquired by conquest and plunder.

The American political economist Henry George rediscovered these key economic teachings about land justice and set them forth in his *magnum opus* Progress and Poverty,²⁸ which launched him to worldwide recognition. His lectures throughout the United States and in the UK, Ireland and Australia made a lasting impact as there are numerous organizations working today to implement land value taxation. Among them is the International Union for Land Value Taxation, a United Nations NGO, for which I serve as Administrator.²⁹

Sun Yat-Sen, considered by many to be the “Father of Modern China”, built his Three Principles of the People in part upon the teachings of Henry George. Sun Yat-sen said that land value tax as “the only means of supporting the government is an infinitely just, reasonable, and equitably distributed tax, and on it we will found our new system.”³⁰

²³ Wetzel, Heather. <https://theiu.org/a-place-to-live-barriers-to-affordable-housing-in-uk-and-worldwide/>

²⁴ <https://www.exoticindiaart.com/book/details/economic-principles-in-vedic-tradition-nan104/>

²⁵ <http://globalartscollective.org/China-land-tax-history.htm>

²⁶ Taxes were also progressive, meaning the families that owned larger, more fertile pieces of land would pay more than the families with uniform land allotments. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mencius>

²⁷ Avila, Charles. *Ownership: Early Christian Teachings*. Jointly printed by Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books and London: Sheed and Ward Limited 1983.

²⁸ George, Henry. Progress and Poverty. <https://www.henrygeorge.org/pcontents.htm>

²⁹ <https://theiu.org> The International Union for Land Value Taxation

³⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Principles_of_the_People Sun Yat-Sen and Henry George

Leo Tolstoy was another fan of Henry George. He had a large portrait of him by his writing desk where he wrote several letters to Tsar Nicholas urging him to implement land value taxation. Tolstoy feared that if the land problem was not addressed a violent revolution could break out. In his last novel Resurrection³¹ there is a scene wherein a nobleman is giving land to his serfs. Asking them how they would fairly share the land, the nobleman reads to them a passage from Henry George's Progress and Poverty.³²

When the universal wisdom teachings of "sacred rule economics"³³ are not put in place, wealth and power inequality grows along with numerous other social problems. Violent revolution is often the result. Such was the case in France after King Louis XIV asked his court physicians, as they had knowledge of how the blood circulates through the body, to study how wealth was circulating throughout his kingdom. Later to be known as The Physiocrats, these founders of classical economics coined the phrase³⁴ "*l'impôt unique*" ("the single tax") and urged the French kings to levy taxes on land instead of labor.³⁵

Mirabeau the Elder said that if enacted the "*l'impôt unique*" would be a "social advance equal to the inventions of writing and money." Alas, the French Kings paid no heed. The monarchy was formally abolished during the French Revolution (1789-99). Louis XVI died at the guillotine in 1793. His death marked the end of a thousand years of uninterrupted French monarchy.³⁶

The insights of classical economics beginning with the Physiocrats continued forward through the next one hundred years when the work and writings of Henry George launched a major movement for land value-based tax reform with his book Progress and Poverty. George was one of the leading figures at the end of the 19th century, being as well-known at the time as Mark Twain and Thomas Edison. His lectures drew great crowds throughout the US, Britain, Ireland and Australia. He was twice a candidate for mayor of New York City.³⁷

But power elites who drew vast amounts of wealth from unearned income derived from land and natural resources saw this movement as a threat to their interests. They financed departments of economics at Columbia, Princeton, Cornell and the Chicago School. Hence the inability of the current reigning body of economic thought – neoliberal economics – to solve the problem of gross wealth inequality while still maintaining the benefits of individual freedom.³⁸ Neoliberal economics corrupted the field of economics as it denies that Land, the classical economics term for all the gifts of nature, is a specific factor of production and considers the Earth itself to be a mere subset of Capital. Classical economics has three factors – Land, Labor

³¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resurrection_\(Tolstoy_novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resurrection_(Tolstoy_novel))

³² https://www.cooperative-individualism.org/tolstoy-leo_on-the-land-policy-of-henry-george-1899.htm

³³ <https://brucedetorres.substack.com/p/roundtable-16-sacred-rule-economics>

³⁴ https://www.worldhistory.org/Louis_XVI_of_France/

³⁵ <https://www.landandliberty.net/the-physiocrats-and-the-meaning-of-their-single-tax/>

³⁶ https://www.worldhistory.org/Louis_XVI_of_France/

³⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_George

³⁸ Universal Declaration of Individual and Commons Rights to Earth <https://theiu.org/international-declaration/>

and Capital – while neoliberal economics has only two - Labor and Capital. The corruption of economics was the great intellectual crime of the 20th century.³⁹

The principles and policies of land value tax are based on Natural Law. Just consider the territorial ways of nature whereby parent birds claim a space (location) in a tree (natural resource), to build a nest out of mud and twigs (natural resources) and once the baby birds are hatched, they labor on land by flying round and about to find worms and insects (nature) to feed and care for their baby birds until they are fully launched into the wide world.

The reason that there is hunger and homelessness on the planet is because humanity is out of step with Natural Law. As King Charles III you have a magnificent opportunity to put in place these principles and policies based on Natural Law. And I, your astrological twin sister, know the very top experts in the world who can be counted on to do the best job of implementing land value taxation throughout the vast areas of land for which you are now responsible. “Your wish is my command” as the saying goes.

(3) Let us consider the problem of the exploitation of oil, minerals, gold, silver, diamonds and other gifts of nature. Millions of people have died in fights over land and natural resource control.⁴⁰ Oil and other natural resource extraction should be made strictly on the basis of (1) agreement of those living near the extraction sites; (2) on a not-for-profit basis yet with fair returns to labor and capital; (3) clearly detailed environmental rules and regulations and (4) full socialization of the resource rents (surplus value/unearned income). Natural resources and their rents should be carefully utilized and fairly distributed in order to uplift the standard of living of all. Careful stewardship of mineral resources would entail maximum efforts for recycling as well as using the resource rents to fund renewable energy and other needed public goods local to global.⁴¹

The Alaska Permanent Fund (APF) is an important model for establishing fair share rights to oil and other mineral resources.⁴² The APF, with a current total fund value of over \$75 billion, collects substantial oil royalties based on the Alaska State Constitution⁴³ as the state retains the rights to all minerals and other natural resources.⁴⁴

The APF Dividend Program⁴⁵ gives each person in Alaska an annual payment based on an equal share of the dividend amount. The 2022 Permanent Fund Dividend was \$3,284, the highest ever in the history of the Fund. For a family of four this would be over \$13,000.⁴⁶

³⁹ Gaffney, Mason. *The Corruption of Economics*. London: Shephard-Walwyn Ltd. 1994.

⁴⁰ <https://www.addictedtowar.com/about-what-ive-learned> and The recent Cree Massacre in Saskatchewan <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gMGhrkoncA> and children’s animation <https://www.netflix.com/title/81354432>

⁴¹ Hartzok, Alanna. *op.cit.* 109-133.

⁴² <https://apfc.org>

⁴³ <https://www.adn.com/opinions/2021/11/20/alaska-must-remain-the-sole-owner-of-its-natural-resources/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.adn.com/opinions/2021/11/20/alaska-must-remain-the-sole-owner-of-its-natural-resources/>

⁴⁵ <https://pfd.alaska.gov>

⁴⁶ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265647236_Alaska%27s_Permanent_Fund_Dividend_Examining_its_Suitability_as_a_Model

(4) Many tax havens are controlled by the Crown for which you now bear major responsibility. Tax havens as you would know are generally small islands with mostly immigrant foreigners engaged in the trades of banker, lawyer and accountant. These “Crown Dependencies” operate out of the control of the UK Government and Parliament.

Cahill’s research shows us that these territories “handle most of the trillions of dollars held outside the main financial systems...” He informs us that the UK and the world as a whole has lost countless billions in tax revenue due to these tax havens.⁴⁷ Tax havens should not exist. UK chancellor Gordon Brown asserted that he would “return the tax havens to the status of holiday resorts”.⁴⁸

John Christensen, a forensic auditor and economist who chairs the board of the UK based *Tax Justice Network* (TJN),⁴⁹ tells us that tax havens enable the “systemic looting of oil and mineral resources and of the syphoning of proceeds of embezzlement and fraud to the financial markets of London, New York and Zurich.” He estimates that up to \$36 trillion of privately owned financial assets are managed from tax havens which enable the laundering of multi-billions of dollars, pounds and Euros acquired from illicit activities such as drug dealing and human trafficking.⁵⁰

As King you are in a key position to stop the kleptocrats from continuing in their nefarious world damaging ways. John Christensen would surely be delighted to receive your assistance in addressing the multifarious inequities of the tax haven system. I urge you to contact him at the *Tax Justice Network*. Since unearned income derived from tax cheating and the looting of natural resources is so often used to buy real estate, land-based taxes can capture significant amounts of this money and use it to advance the common good.

At the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty I presented a paper titled “Socializing Land Rent while Untaxing Production.”⁵¹ This paper begins with this succinct statement from the founding document for the UN Center for Human Settlements (Habitat): “The unearned increment resulting from the rise in land values resulting from change in use of land, from public investment or decision or due to the general growth of community must be subject to appropriate recapture by public bodies (the community).”

“Socializing Land Rent while Untaxing Production”⁵² is a good summary of the key ideas I am writing to you about and presents a clear way forward beyond right and left that harmonizes the needs of both the individual and society. The sufficiency of rent from unearned income for funding public goods is set forth in both theory and practice.

⁴⁷ Cahill, Kevin. *op.cit.* 49-57.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 50.

⁴⁹ Tax Justice Network <https://taxjustice.net>

⁵⁰ <https://newint.org/features/2020/02/10/thief-ways-stealing>

⁵¹ Hartzok, Alanna. *Socializing Land Rent while Untaxing Production*. Presented at the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty, 2013. <https://theiu.org/socializing-land-rent-untaxing-production-2>

⁵² <https://www.earthsharing.org.au/2013/04/hartzok-socialising-land-rent-and-untaxing-production/>

I hereby request that you consider playing a major role in the 2024 Earth Day celebration held at the United Nations on the Spring Equinox. We will bring forth the key principles and policies of Earth Rights – both caring for and sharing Mother Earth.

John McConnell was the founder of this original equinox Earth Day, first proclaimed by the City Council of San Francisco in 1970. McConnell was clear about principles for the global economy and for an economics of peace. When he spoke of justice he meant “economic justice” which he defined as “an equal sharing in all the worlds’ natural resources.” In his “Planetary Inheritance Declaration” he wrote:

Among the equal rights of men is the right to an equal share in nature’s bounty, a right of each man to his planetary inheritance – his share of land, water, minerals... No one can, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity or any other man’s posterity, of the right to his portion of Earth.⁵³

We can address and remedy the systemic roots and intent of organized violence, of what my colleague and UK author Fred Harrison calls The Predator Culture. “Understanding the territorial basis of political power and wealth is the pre-requisite,” he says, “for making sense of issues as diverse as genocide, narco-gangsterism, terrorism and fascism. The struggle over land and resources is at the root of all of today’s global crises.”⁵⁴

Charles, my dear astrological twin brother, will you help the Commoners of the world turn the world away from the forces of dispossession, depopulation, and destruction and to move into a consciousness of profound respect for the creative forces unfolding evolution, of harmoniously blending with the “autopoiesis”– life’s capacity to be self-organizing. There is a universal wisdom that is so much deeper than any human science. This wisdom can help us put in place an economic system that will enable each and every member of our human family to secure basic material needs while protecting the earth’s ecosystems for future generations. Everyone can then enjoy the adventure of mental, creative and spiritual expansion during their brief sojourn on Mother Earth.

You come from the bloodlines of the *ancien regime*. I ask that you stand with all of humanity. I ask that you use your power of good will for all by joining with us with the clear intention of securing the birthright of all people to the Earth, our planet home, that we may ALL take responsibility for her care and protection. How we hold the earth is how we hold each other. Securing the birthright to the Earth for each and every one of us is part and parcel of the environmental sustainability that you espouse.

⁵³ Weir, Robert M. *Peace, Justice, Care of Earth: The Vision of John McConnell, Founder of Earth Day*. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Press On Publishing, 2007. 198.

⁵⁴ Harrison, Fred. *The Predator Culture: The Systemic Roots and Intent of Organised Violence*. London: Shepherd-Walwyn, Ltd. 2010. (quote from back cover)

Billions of us know that this life on our small planet has brought you to a position of enormous privilege and power. You have vast potential to set the world aright. In closing, I trust you will use all that you have been given with great care and wisdom.

With warm regards and my very best wishes,

Alanna Hartzok, Earth Rights Visionary and United Nations NGO Representative
for the International Union for Land Value Taxation

Email: alannahartzok@gmail.com Phone: 1-717-357-7617

Hartzok speaking at the UN about Financing Public Goods

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EYQP-tLVms>

Declaration of Individual and Common Rights to Earth

<https://theiu.org/international-declaration/>

Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould, as the featured speakers of the Roundtable Series created the Economics Justice and World Peace Proposal and its kick off campaign, "AN OPEN LETTER TO KING CHARLES III."

Email: gould.fitzgerald@verizon.net Phone: 781-729-7701

R.A. Kris Millegan, writer/researcher and publisher of TrineDay; and host of THE JOURNEY podcast and the monthly Roundtable Series started in September of 2021.

Email: trineday@icloud.com Phone: 800-556-2012