

"After urging land reform I now know the brute power of our billionaire press", [writes George Monbiot in the Guardian today](#)

about press response to the Labour's proposals, set out in "[Land for the many](#)

", which was published last month. The heavy criticism was well-deserved; there is an incoherent mish-mash of suggestions which reveals a lack of understanding of the fundamental moral and economic principles involved in land policy. The policy package was an inviting target for being shot down in flames.

Astonishingly – and I am in contact with some of the members of the Labour Land Campaign (LLC) – there was no consultation with those in the Campaign when the proposals were being put together. Whoever was responsible for the report had evidently not read and digested what was on the [LLC's excellent website](#) .

The landowning interests will obviously squeal at whatever threatens their privileges, but the classic land reform proposals put forward by the Land Value Taxation Campaign, and by the Labour Land Campaign, are an intellectually defensible position in the way that the Labour Party's latest proposals are not. They were evidently put together by a committee in which all the members had to get their favourite ideas in, regardless of whether they were based on sound ethical and economic principles, or not.

Monbiot attacks Farage and the Brexit party for standing in the way. He seems not to understand that EU trade and economic policy also works for the landowning interest. The CAP is an obvious example, but import tariffs and free movement of labour also drive up rents and drive down wages – a process which the landowning classes have always sought to do. Then there is VAT, a requirement of EU membership; it is not a coincidence that VAT is not charged on rents but on the products of labour; any Marxist - and there are plenty of them in the Labour Party - knows that it is labour alone which adds value.